

STAFF REPORT
for
AUGUST 4, 2021 HRC MEETING

Case #: COA2021-050
Staff: Michelle M. McCullough

Applicant: Franklin Vagnone
Old Salem Museums and Gardens

LOCATION

District: Old Salem Historic District
Street: Various locations as proposed in the application
Building: Various locations as proposed in the application
Status: N/A
Local Historic
Landmark#: N/A

REQUEST(S)

- **Installation of signs for Salem Pathways Program**

APPLICABLE DESIGN REVIEW STANDARDS

Old Salem Historic District: Guide to the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Process and Design Review Guidelines available at <https://www.cityofws.org/DocumentCenter/View/3451/Old-Salem-Historic-District-Design-Guidelines-PDF>

STAFF COMMENTS

On July 15, 2020, an application for permission to install seven small wooden boxes for Salem Pathways throughout the Old Salem Historic District was approved as a Minor Work COA. The boxes are 14" high by 12" wide by 6" deep. Period cut nails were used in construction. The boxes are similar to wooden mailboxes in the District. However, due to the educational purpose of the boxes, they are installed on the sidewalk side of fences and new wooden posts adjacent to the sidewalk. Staff believed the work as proposed met the *Guidelines* for the District and was in keeping with the character of the District. Specifically, staff found that the project met Guidelines 4 and 9 of the *Accessory Features* section of the *Old Salem Guidelines*. The following condition was added to the approval: any box installed on a painted fence shall be painted the same color as the fence. Staff received a complaint and verified that signage had been attached to these wooden boxes that were approved with COA2020-082. The signage on the boxes was removed in July of 2021.

STAFF FINDINGS

Commission staff finds that the work is not incongruous with the character of the Old Salem Historic District because:

- 1) The project installs one 8 ½" x 11" sign on each existing box. The signs are made of linen-embossed outdoor vinyl and will be attached to the existing wood boxes with handcrafted nails. The new signage is compatible in material, size, scale, typeface, and character with other educational or promotional signs found within the district. The new signage is attached to existing wood boxes and will be made to look like linen so that it appears to be indistinguishable from wood. The new signage will not obstruct or cover any building facades, any significant architectural features, or block streetscape views. The proposed signs are removable. The mounting and handcrafted nails, complement and enhance the sign's design. (*Signage*, Old Salem Guidelines #2, 3, 4, 5, and 9)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the preceding findings, staff recommends that the Commission approve COA2021-050 for the installation of signage at various locations throughout the Old Salem Historic District, with the following conditions:

- 1) The applicant shall receive, prior to commencement of the work, all other required permits or permissions from governmental agencies;
- 2) Commission staff shall review and approve any revisions or deviations to any portion of the as-submitted work, that qualifies as a minor work, prior to commencement of that portion of the project; and,
- 3) The applicant shall submit the *Certificate of Appropriateness Request for Certification of Completed Work* and photo documentation of the completed project to HRC staff within ten (10) days of its completion.