STAFF REPORT
AUGUST 3, 2022 HRC MEETING

Case #: COA2022-042
Staff: Michelle M. McCullough
Applicant: James W. Lester Jr.

LOCATION
District: Old Salem Historic District
Street: 823 South Church Street, Winston-Salem
Building: Anna Johanna Vogler House
Status: Contributing
Local Historic Landmark#: 35

REQUEST(S)
• Removal of an American Holly tree

APPLICABLE DESIGN REVIEW STANDARDS

STAFF FINDINGS
Commission staff finds that the project is not incongruous with the character of the Landmark and Old Salem Historic District because:

1) On December 2, 2020, the Commission approved COA2020-126. One part of the application requested to repave the current inappropriate asphalt driveway with pea gravel exposed aggregate concrete. The new material, pea gravel, was found to be compatible in size, shape, appearance, color, and texture with the Landmark site and District. The American Holly tree that is being proposed for removal is located adjacent to the driveway and is causing damage to the driveway. The tree is not listed as a Forsyth County Treasure Tree, which is a designation that recognizes the county’s largest, rarest, and oldest trees. Also, there is no documentation that this tree was part of the historic landscape, therefore it could be considered a volunteer on the property. As such, its removal will not alter the historic environment in the district. (Site Features and Plantings, Landmark Standard 6; and Significant Landscape Features, Old Salem Standard 3)

2) Due to the property boundaries, the location of the garage, and the location of the garage doors, the driveway cannot be relocated. The approved driveway project, COA2020-126, will make the driveway more congruous with the Landmark and the District. A significant amount of the root mass of the tree will be compromised during the project, and the tree roots cannot be protected because the tree is less than five feet from the driveway. It is impossible to maintain the minimum approach distances for the protection zone and to replace the existing deteriorated driveway. The driveway project will also damage large diameter roots due to excavation which will take place within the structural root plate, potentially causing structural instability or tree mortality issues. (Significant Landscape Features, Old Salem Standard 5)
STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the preceding findings, staff recommends that the Commission approve COA2022-042 at the Anna Johanna Vogler House, Local Historic Landmark #35, located at 823 South Church Street, Winston-Salem (PIN 6835-32-4072), with the following conditions:

1) The tree shall be removed in its entirety and the tree stump shall be ground or removed mechanically to below the existing grade;

2) If during the removal any archaeological features are uncovered, the work shall stop immediately, and historic resources staff shall be contacted to assist with a recovery plan;

3) The applicant shall receive, prior to commencement of the work, all other required permits or permissions from governmental agencies;

4) 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

5) The applicant shall submit the Certificate of Appropriateness Request for Certification of Completed Work form and photo documentation of the completed project to HRC staff within ten (10) days of its completion.