



HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD
ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS STAFF REPORT

TO: Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB)
FROM: Mical Tawney, Historic Preservation Associate Planner
DATE: March 12, 2024
SUBJECT: CoA 24-06, 6733 Langston Boulevard, Eastman-Fenwick House Local Historic District (LHD)

Background Information

The Eastman-Fenwick House was constructed in 1876 by builders under contract with the original owner Albert Prescott Eastman. The two-story T-shaped house was built in the Victorian style and features a wood-frame structure clad in weatherboard siding that sits on a mixed stone and stretcher-bond brick foundation. The cross-gabled roof is sheathed in standing-seam metal and features overhanging eaves, jig-sawn brackets, a plain frieze, and cornice returns. The house has multi-light square windows, 2/2 double-hung-sash, wood windows, and two-light wood awning windows. It also has a one-story front porch supported by wood posts.

The Arlington County Board designated the Eastman-Fenwick House as a LHD in May 1980. At the time, the designation encompassed 1.25 acres of land which included the historic house as well as a large stable and work shed in the rear of the property. In 1993, a developer purchased the property and approached the County about constructing townhouses in the rear of the lot while preserving the historic Eastman-Fenwick House on a new, smaller lot. An agreement was reached to do so, and that same year, the County Board approved General Land Use Plan Amendment (GP231-92-1) and Rezoning (Z-2408-92-2) that allowed for the construction of the adjacent Fenwick Court Townhouses. In March 1994, the HALRB approved a CoA for the construction of the townhouses, the demolition of an outbuilding related to the Eastman-Fenwick House (conditional upon the receipt of HABS documentation of the outbuilding), and the proposed landscape plan. Nineteen of the 30 three-story townhouses, which were constructed in 1995, are located within the Eastman-Fenwick House LHD boundary. While the Fenwick Court Townhouses have design guidelines, there are no design guidelines for the Eastman-Fenwick House.

In January 2010, the HALRB approved CoA 10-01 to allow for the following exterior alterations:

- Opening of a 2nd story shuttered window frame and the installation of a new wood window;
- Installation of chimney dampers;
- Removal of the existing driveway-side porch, stoop, and door;
- Alteration of a window in the bay on the first floor;
- Installation of period-appropriate, wood doors; and
- Partial demolition and construction of a 4' x 4' expansion on the existing bump-out on the north elevation.

In February 2013, the HALRB approved retroactive CoA 13-03 for the installation of a footbridge and light pole in the adjacent community area. Finally, in August 2020, the HALRB approved CoA 20-13 for the installation of one additional streetlight near unit 2330 North Van Buren Court.

Proposal

The applicant is proposing several modifications to the exterior of the house and the surrounding site:

- Replacement of three exterior water faucets with frost-free wall hydrants and removable faucets in the same location.
- Installation of a 100-gallon rain barrel with an internal electric pump that will attach to the northwest corner gutter downspout; the barrel would be a used wine/spirits barrel and would help manage rainwater runoff from the roof. The silver banding on the barrel would be painted brown or black.
- Installation of a whole-home battery (two Tesla Powerwall batteries) on a small concrete pad along the northeast elevation of the house. The battery would be wired into the house through up to two new exterior wall penetration measuring 3” in diameter.
- Re-grounding of the lightning rods on the northern part of the roofline by extending the current grounding wire with matching additional wire and changing the route of the wire to avoid compressors and other existing wires. The wire would be painted to blend with its surroundings.
- Installation of four security cameras: one on the front porch, one on a tree overlooking the patio, and two on a tree near the driveway. Two network switches would be installed along the rear and front of the house’s foundation. These switches would require two new penetrations measuring approximately 1.5” in diameter (one per switch) to be made near the foundation line and cable wires inserted into the house. The security cameras on the trees would each be attached to a small wood block painted black (to match the cameras) and then secured by a double-sided treehouse screw.

Design Review Committee (DRC) Review

The DRC considered this application at its March 6, 2024, hybrid meeting. The Historic Preservation Program (HPP) staff asked if the grounding wire would be white or painted a different color; the property owner Mr. Chandler confirmed that the wire will be painted to match whichever area it crosses so that it blends with the exterior. Mr. Davis asked if the whole-home battery would be the size of what was depicted in the application. Mr. Chandler confirmed that it would be that size and explained it would need to rest on concrete, but that it would fit below the window. Mr. Wenchel asked if the applicant would be willing to paint the silver bands on the rain barrel brown or black so that the barrel would blend in further. Mr. Chandler agreed he would be willing to make that change. The DRC members placed this item on the Consent Agenda for the March 20, 2024, hybrid HALRB public hearing.

Recommendation

The HPP staff recommends approval of the subject application. The proposed projects are unobtrusive and allow for the continued maintenance and usability of the property. None of these projects would be obvious and/or visible from the public right-of-way. Additionally, if they were removed in the future, the historic building would not be damaged, and its character would remain intact. Thus, the proposal abides by Standards #9 and #10 of *The Secretary’s Standards for Rehabilitation*:

#9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and



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shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

#10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.