MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Address:

8823 Hawkins Lane, Chevy Chase

Meeting Date:

4/10/2018

Resource:

Contributing Resource

Report Date:

4/3/2018

F

Hawkins Lane Historic District

Public Notice:

3/28/2018

Applicant:

Kathy Sessions

Tax Credit:

N/A

Review:

HAWP

Staff:

Michael Kyne

Case Number:

35/54-18A

PROPOSAL:

Site alterations

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the HPC approve with conditions the HAWP application.

- 1) Additional details will be submitted for the proposed raised bed, with final review and approval delegated to staff.
- 2) Additional details will be submitted for the proposed trash enclosure and plant trellis, with final review and approval delegated to staff.
- 3) Additional details will be submitted for all other permanent above grade landscaping structures not specifically identified in the application, with final review and approval delegated to staff.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE:

Contributing Resource within the Hawkins Lane Historic District

STYLE:

Vernacular

DATE:

1938

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes the following work items at the subject property:

- Install two galvanized steel window wells at the basement-level windows on the left side of the historic house.
- Replace the existing front walkways.
- Construct additional walkways at the front and left side/rear of property.
- Install landscape timbers behind an existing shed at the rear/left side of the property.
- Construct a flagstone patio at the rear of the property.
- Construct a trash enclosure/corral and plant trellis at the front of the property adjacent to Hawkins Lane.
- Construct a wooden L-shaped raised planting bed at the front of the property.

The following work items are also proposed, but are not within the HPC's purview:

- Regrading of the driveway.
- Regrading at the front/right corner of the historic house and in areas adjacent to the left side of the historic house to remediate water management issues.
- Removal of a mature redbud tree from the front of the property, which has been assessed as dying by a certified arborist.
- Ornamental plantings.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

When reviewing alterations and new construction within the Hawkins Lane Historic District, four documents are to be utilized as guidelines to assist the Historic Preservation Commission in developing their decision. These documents include:

- 1. The Hawkins Lane Historic District Vision (Vision) in the Amendment to the Approved and Adopted Master Plan for Historic Preservation in Montgomery County, Maryland: Hawkins Lane and Jones Bridge Road Resources (Amendment);
- 2. The Hawkins Lane Historic District Development Guidelines Handbook (Guidelines);
- 3. Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A); and,
- 4. the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards).

The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

1. Hawkins Lane Historic District Vision

Some of the particular elements which contribute to the Hawkins Lane Historic District's distinctive historic character include the rural character of the area – enhanced by the wooded surroundings, mature trees, and unfenced property lines – and the small scale of the homes which are clustered close to the unpaved lane.

2. Hawkins Lane Historic District Development Guidelines Handbook (Hawkins Lane Historic District Guidelines)

Setting: The Historic District

The character of the district is a result of a combination of factors, some natural and some manmade. As noted above, one of the most important is the pleasant setting provided by adjoining publicly-owned properties. In addition, within the district, such factors as vegetation, topography, open space, and the appearance of Hawkins Lane itself all contribute to the district's visual character.

Vegetation and Topography

The district's rural character is enhanced by an abundance of vegetation, particularly on Hawkins Lane, where, in the summer, trees and bushes screen residences from busy Jones Bridge Road and provide a park-like setting. On Jones Bridge Road, where there is less vegetation, heavily-treed rear lots provide a thick green canopy in the summer.

A survey of the vegetation in the district found that the principal hard wood trees are tulip poplars, white oaks, red oaks, box elders, and sugar maples. Ornamental trees include dogwoods, Japanese red maples, and red buds.

In addition, a number of evergreens, such as cedars, hemlock, and southern pine, are used to delineate boundaries and to serve as hedges.

Many of these trees, particularly the hard woods, are in excess of 10 inches in diameter and are mature, stately trees that significantly contribute to the rural appearance of the lane and its sense of separateness from the surrounding urban landscape. In addition, these trees serve as a major source of food and shelter for the over 35 species of birds that may be observed in the confines of the historic district. Their preservation is <u>sine qua non</u> of the district's ambience.

The naturally uneven topography of the district has been retained, particularly on Hawkins Lane, further adding to the rural character.

A Historic Area Work Permit is necessary for major changes to the landscape in a historic district, including the removal of trees 6" or greater in diameter.

Guidelines:

- Existing trees and major shrubs within the historic district should be maintained.
- Plans for new development should provide for the retention of existing vegetation.
- Plans for new development or alterations to existing buildings and sites should provide for the retention of the natural topography of the land.
- Where trees or major shrubs must be removed (because of natural causes or construction damage), provision should be made for their replacement.

Site Details

"Site Details" are those visual features associated most directly with district buildings and the sites on which they are located. Site details include building architecture or style, materials, scale, and massing; building siting and setback; fences and other property markers; residential driveways, parking areas, and walkways; and landscaping. Building "side-lots" and rear yards are also noteworthy site details.

On Hawkins Lane, the rural character of the district is reinforced by the fact that property boundaries are, for the most part, unmarked except by shrubs and other vegetation; landscaping around buildings is informal, and, in some cases, minimal; and there are a significant number of unpaved driveways and walkways, where they exist at all. In addition, the buildings are small-scale and exhibit a range of styles, materials, and massing more frequently associated with the unplanned development of rural areas than with suburbs. The "patterns" created by building siting and setback also contribute to the visual character of the historic district.

Site details must be taken into account in planning for changes to buildings and/or the landscape or for new construction, if the visual character of the historic district is to be preserved.

Landscaping

Landscaping in the historic district is informal, with most lots having small front lawns and a variety of foundation or boundary plantings.

Guideline:

· Landscaping around new construction or existing buildings should be informal, in

keeping with the existing landscaping.

Driveways, Parking Areas, and Walkways

Both paved and unpaved driveways and parking areas can be found on Hawkins Lane, with the majority being unpaved and covered with gravel; the two driveways serving houses in the district on Jones Bridge Road are paved. On the Lane, driveways range from 10-20 feet in width, with the average being 14 feet. On Jones Bridge Road, one driveway is approximately 8 feet wide, the other approximately 12 feet.

The entrances to some district residences are served by short, paved walkways and, in two instances, houses are surrounded on three sides with a walkway. The general absence of walkways, however, reinforces the rural character of the district.

Guidelines:

- New driveways, parking areas, and walkways on Hawkins Lane and Jones Bridge Road should be compatible, in width, appearance and surface covering, with existing driveways, parking areas, and walkways.
- The preferred driveway/parking area/walkway surfacing material on Hawkins Lane is gravel or dirt, since these materials are more compatible with the rural character of the district.

3. Montgomery County Code; Chapter 24A-8

- (b) The commission shall instruct the director to issue a permit, or issue a permit subject to such conditions as are found to be necessary to insure conformity with the purposes and requirements of this chapter, if it finds that:
 - (1) The proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of an historic site or historic resource within an historic district; or
 - (2) The proposal is compatible in character and nature with the historical, archaeological, architectural or cultural features of the historic site or the historic district in which an historic resource is located and would not be detrimental thereto or to the achievement of the purposes of this chapter; or
 - (3) The proposal would enhance or aid in the protection, preservation and public or private utilization of the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district in a manner compatible with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural value of the historic site or historic district in which an historic resource is located; or
 - (4) The proposal is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied; or
 - (5) The proposal is necessary in order that the owner of the subject property not be deprived of reasonable use of the property or suffer undue hardship; or
 - (6) In balancing the interests of the public in preserving the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district, with the interests of the public from the use and benefit of the alternative proposal, the general public welfare is better served by granting the permit.

- (c)It is not the intent of this chapter to limit new construction, alteration or repairs to any 1 period or architectural style.
- (d) In the case of an application for work on an historic resource located within an historic district, the commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historical or design significance or for plans involving new construction, unless such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding historic resources or would impair the character of the historic district. (Ord. No. 9-4, § 1; Ord. No. 11-59.)

4. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

The Secretary of the Interior defines rehabilitation as "the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values." The Standards are as follows:

- 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
- 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 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.

STAFF DISCUSSION

Window Wells

The applicant is proposing to install two window wells at the basement-level windows on the left side of the house. The proposed window wells will be constructed from galvanized steel and will be mostly below grade, where they will not detract from the streetscape or character-defining features of the historic district.

Walkways

The applicant proposes to remove the two existing concrete walkways (one central walkway and one from the central walkway to the driveway at the left side of the property) and to construct irregular flagstone walkways in their place. The central walkway will be set in concrete, while the walkway to the left will be set in stone dust. There will be an area of flagstone set in stone dust in the location of a proposed raised planting bed adjacent to the walkway to the left. A third flagstone walkway set in stone dust will be constructed to the right of the central walkway, leading to a bird feeder area. A fourth flagstone walkway set in stone dust is proposed from the driveway at the left side of the house to the proposed flagstone patio at the rear of the property.

The Guidelines (written in 1991) state the following:

The entrances to some district residences are served by short, paved walkways and, in two
instances, houses are surrounded on three sides with a walkway. The general absence of

walkways, however, reinforces the rural character of the district.

• The preferred driveway/parking area/walkway surfacing material on Hawkins Lane is gravel or dirt, since these materials are more compatible with the rural character of the district.

However, staff finds that there are currently a variety of walkway materials at the properties on Hawkins Lane, including concrete, pavers, and irregular flagstone. The *Guidelines* state that there are two instances of properties surrounded with a walkway on three sides, and staff notes that there currently several examples of multiple walkways at the front. While the *Guidelines* stress that the preferred walkway material is gravel or dirt, staff finds that the proposed irregular flagstone walkways are compatible with the rustic and rural character of the historic district and surrounding streetscape.

Patio

The applicant proposes to construct a permeable irregular flagstone patio with boulder edge at the rear of the property. The proposed patio materials and design are compatible with the rustic and rural character of the historic district. In addition, the patio will be located at grade at the rear of the property, where it will be minimally visible from the public right-of-way. The proposed patio will not detract from the character-defining features of the historic district.

Landscaping Features

The applicant proposes to install landscaping timbers at the rear of an existing shed at the rear/left side of the property, install a wooden L-shaped raised planting bed at the front of the property, and a trash enclosure/corral and plant trellis at the front of the property adjacent to Hawkins Lane. The applicant has indicated that the raised planting bed will be wooden, with varying heights from 16" to 18" (depending on grade). The applicant has also indicated that the proposed trash enclosure/corral will be 8'-6" wide; however, as of this writing, no other details have been provided for these features. Staff recommends that the Commission condition the approval of the applicant's proposal upon the submission of additional details, with final review and approval delegated to staff.

Trees

The applicant proposes to remove a mature redbud tree from the front of the property, which has been assessed as dying by a certified arborist (see Circle 16). It is the Commission's policy to provide a waiver letter for the removal of trees greater than 6" in diameter that have been assessed by a certified arborist as dead, dying, or an imminent threat, and the proposed tree removal is not subject to the HPC's review. However, the applicant proposes to replant two dogwood trees at the rear of the property, which is entirely consistent with the following *Guidelines*:

- A survey of the vegetation in the district found that the principal hard wood trees are tulip poplars, white oaks, red oaks, box elders, and sugar maples. *Ornamental trees include dogwoods*, *Japanese red maples*, *and red buds* [emphasis added].
- Where trees or major shrubs must be removed (because of natural causes or construction damage), provision should be made for their replacement.

Other

Although, the Commission does not typically review ornamental plantings, temporary landscaping features, or regrading, staff recommends that the applicant be mindful of the *Guidelines* regarding the informal landscaping and natural topography, which contribute to the character of the historic district. The applicant should strive to maintain and preserve these features at the subject property and ensure that the

proposed alterations are generally consistent with the surrounding streetscape.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve with the conditions specified on Circle 1 the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b), having found that the proposal is consistent with the *Hawkins Lane Historic District Vision* and *Hawkins Lane Historic District Guidelines* identified above, and therefore will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in character with the district and the purposes of Chapter 24A;

and with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #2, 9, and 10;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall present the 3 permit sets of drawings, if applicable to Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) staff for review and stamping prior to submission for the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) building permits;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall notify the Historic Preservation Staff if they propose to make **any alterations** to the approved plans. Once the work is completed the applicant will contact the staff person assigned to this application at 301-563-3400 or michael.kyne@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.





Edit 6/21/99



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION 301/563-3400

APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

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Tax Account N	o.:	004300	53									
Name of Prope	e of Property Owner: Kathy Sessions						Ozytime Phone No.:		(301)	(301) 367-8564		
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SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR INSTRUCTIONS

(8)

1. Written Description of Project

a) Description of existing structure and environmental setting, including their historical features and significance:

The property at 8823 Hawkins Lane is a modest, three-story residence within the Hawkins Lane Historic District. The district, established in 1991, encompasses a parcel of land which for decades was an African American kinship community. The street remains unpaved gravel, and the housing styles simple, though many have been modestly expanded over the years. The tiny historic district is bordered by a county park on one side and the Uniformed Services University Health Services (i.e. Bethesda Naval Medical Center) on the other.

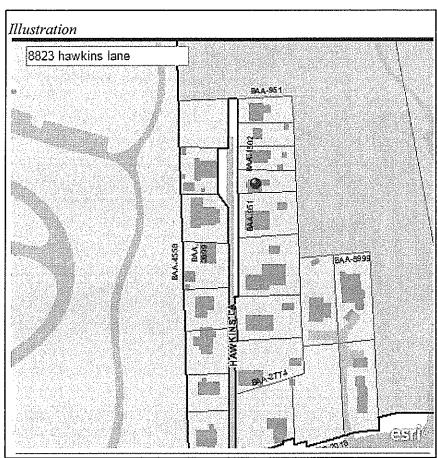
The original structure at 8823 was expanded prior to the historic designation, with the addition of a kitchen and deck on the back of the house and an extended third floor. In 2007, after the designation of Hawkins Lane as a historical district, with MC-HPC approval the structure was modified to enclose the space under the deck and kitchen. The front facade and front sections of the house remained unchanged. Materials and paint colors for the new sections complement but differentiate the new additions from the historic part of the home.

b) General description of the project and its effect on the historic resource, the environmental setting and where applicable, the historic district.

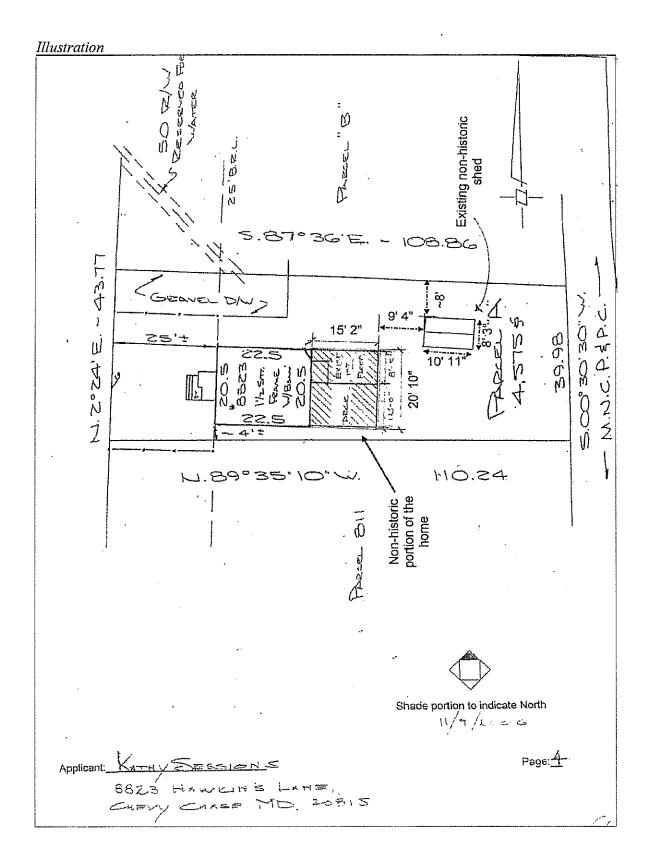
The proposed project would help protect the historic structure by remediating water management issues. It would enhance the property and neighborhood by replacing broken walkways, corralling trash containers, and adding a backyard patio, wooden raised bed and herb garden containers, and rustic landscaping. Project elements include the following:

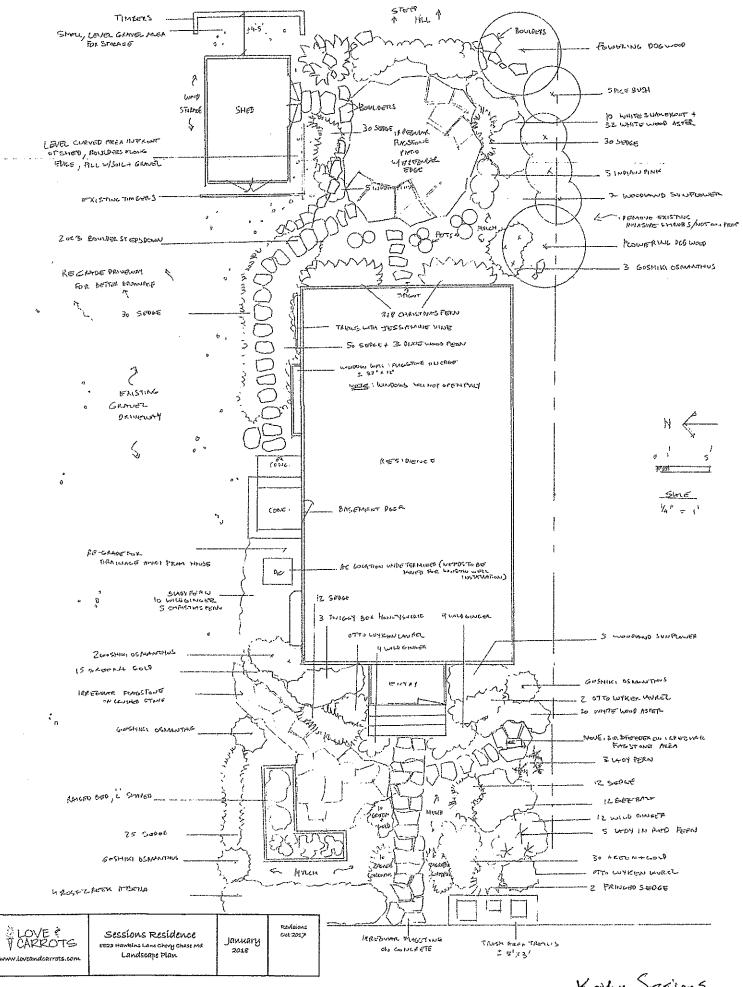
- Replace current walkways (currently a hazardous mix of broken, uneven, and mismatched
 concrete and tiles) in the front yard with flagstone walkways. New walkways would be
 irregular Pennsylvania flagstone. The primary walkway to the house would be set in
 concrete. All other walkways would be on a crushed stone base.
- Remediate water management issues, related to grades sloping towards the house that create indoor water problems during heavy rainstorms, through a combination of regrading, window wells, and vegetation.
- Consolidate and partially enclose trash containers currently sitting at the edge of the property by adding an 8'6" trash corral and plant trellis.
- Add a backyard patio, with permeable irregular Pennsylvania flagstone and a few boulders
 along the edges, one of which would be a natural birdbath. Add irregular Pennsylvania
 flagstone and mulch paths between the driveway / driveway door to the patio, with a few
 stone steps along the slope.
- Remove a dying redbud tree in the front yard, on the western side of the property adjacent to the driveway. Plant two flowering dogwoods in the southeast and southwest corners of the back yard. We plan to replace the front yard tree (dying and dropping branches on cars in the driveway) with two new trees planted in in back, after a seasonal sunlight assessment determined that the southwest corner of the front yard is the only spot (other than the driveway) on the property that could support a modest viable vegetable bed.

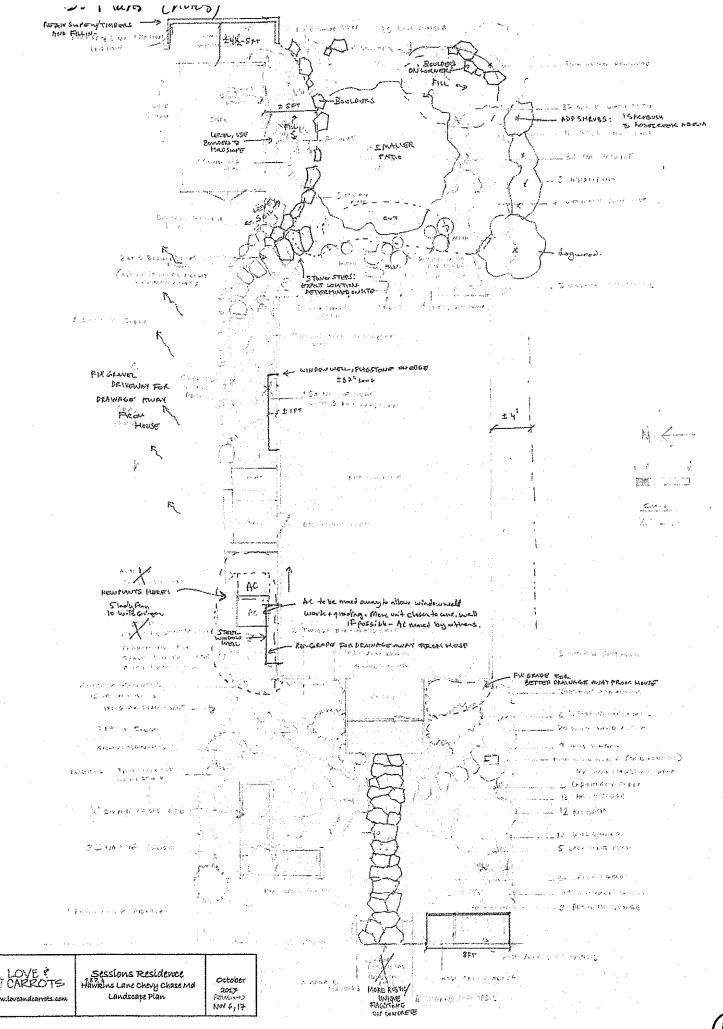
- Additional landscaping work (not subject to HAWP) will include: plantings of deerresistant, bird- and pollinator-friendly, native plants in the front and back yards; an Lshaped, wooden raised bed for vegetables in the front yard, at heights varying from 16"-18"
 with grade changes; and wooden container-planted herbs in the back yard.
- Add landscaping to the front and back yards with a focus on deer-resistant, bird- and pollinator-friendly, native plants.



2. Site Plan









FINE EARTH LANDSCAPE INC.

16815 Budd Road, Poolesville, MD 20837 www.FineEarth.com MD/DC (301) 972-8810 VA (703) 893-3040 Fax: (301) 972-7285

CONTRACT

MD Home Improvement License No. 9809 DC Home Improvement License No. 02764 VA Home Improvement License No. 2705 025430A Maryland Pesticide License No. 26807 DC Pesticide License No. 6601689 Plant Dealer's License No. 1111

Better Business Bureau Accredited Business Landscape Contractors Association DC/MD/V/ Maryland Nursery and Landscape Association Professional Landcare Network International Society of Arboriculture

> 23 January 2017 Page 1 of 1

Kathy Sessions 8823 Hawkins Lane Chevy Chase, MD 20815

sessionskg@gmail.com

Note: This proposal includes no mulching (to be done by others)

For an arborist letter concerning the health of Red Bud Tree (refundable toward cost of installation)

\$ 100.00

FRONT YARD WALKWAYS AND GRADING

- Entry Walk: construct an irregular flagstone walkway on a 4" concrete base as shown on plan
- Side Walkways: irregular flagstone path on a crushed stone base from main walkway to driveway and also path on right including little bird feeder area
- Flagstone near vegetable beds: irregular flagstone on crushed stone base
- fix grade at right corner of house for drainage away from house

\$6,352.00

NORTH SIDE OF HOUSEGRADING AND WINDOW WELLS

- Regrade area where A/C unit was moved out of and install a steel window well (67" x 18" x 18" galvanized steel) at corner window (A/C moved by others)
- Fix driveway grade to make water drain away from house
- Construct a window well of flagstone on edge approximately one foot out from large set of windows (±87" long). Note: window will not be able to fully open

\$ 2,142.00

Add gravel to driveway surface (your side only)

\$1,679.00

BACK YARD GRADING, STONE PATHS, STONE STEPS

- Level an area along existing shed, place some boulders along edge of soil to retain it as shown
- Slightly change grade of patio area to make it a bit less sloped. Add a few boulders along east corner to retain soil there. (Soil will remain higher toward house, similar to how it is now)
- Install a stone stepper (2' x 2') path from basement door to corner of house. Construct a set of stone steps going down into lower patio area- stone steppers approximately 3' x 2' x 8" high. Place some small boulders as needed around steps to hold soil and give it a rustic look.

\$6,301.00

Install irregular flagstone patio on a crushed stone base as shown on plan.

\$4,131.00

Install a set of landscape timbers behind shed to make a small usable gravel area approximately 41/2' out from shed.

\$ 1,921.00

Please add applicable sales taxes: DC Sales Tax 5.75%, VA Sales Tax 6%, MD Sales Tax 0%.

Payment Schedule: one third upon acceptance, one third when 80% of the materials are on the job site, and the remainder due upon completion.

- THE RIGHT TO RECISION: The client or the company can cancel this contract until midnight at the end of 72 hours. If client cancels contract after 72 hours, client is responsible for a minimum of 25% of the contract price as liquidated damages.

 Fine Earth is responsible for public utility lines normally marked by MIss Utility. Client is responsible for all private utility lines (examples: dog fence, irrigation, private electric/gas).

 Client to obtain any neighborhood or civic association permits.

 Client to pay 22% per month finance charge on belances over 30 days and all costs, including storney's fees, incurred by Fine Earth in the collection of outstanding belance. Guarantee void if balance is not paid according to contract.

 Two year warranty on plantings and construction. Details available at www.FineEarth.com.

 All MD Home Improvement contractors and subcontractors must be licensed by the MD Home Improvement Commission. Inquiries about a contract should be transmitted to the Home Improvement Commission telephone (AIM) 230-6309.

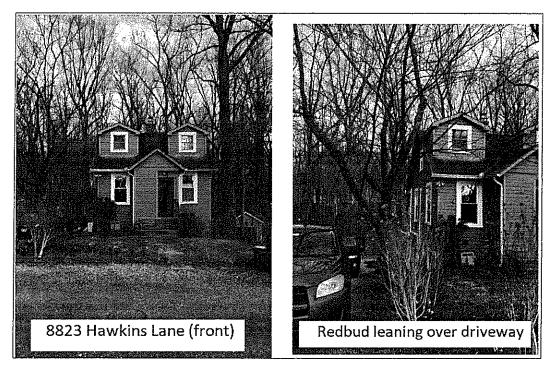
- Improvement Commission, telephone (410) 230-6309.

 7. Fine Earth may use driveway for delivery and storage of materials and is only responsible for a broom cleaning at completion. Driveway reseating and/or patching is not included in this bid

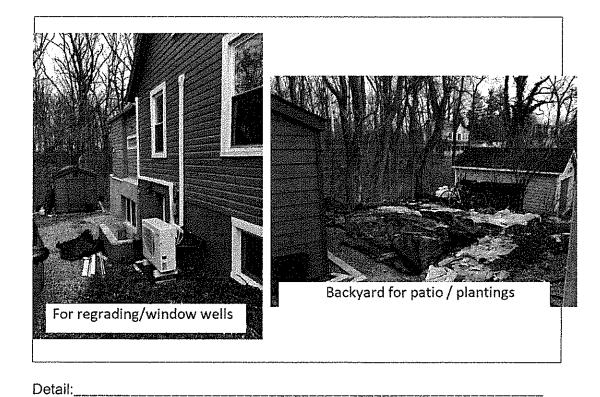
THE EARTH LANDSCAPE INC. SALESMAN

DATE

5. Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)



Detail:_____



Applicant: Kathy Sessions, 8823 Hawkins Lane, Chevy Chase, MD

Page:___



FINE EARTH LANDSCAPE INC.

16815 Budd Road, Poolesville, MD 20837 www.fineearth.com MD/DC (301) 972-8810 VA (703) 893-3040 Fax: (301) 972-7285

March 16, 2018

Kathy Sessions 8823 Hawkins Lane Chevy Chase, MD 20815

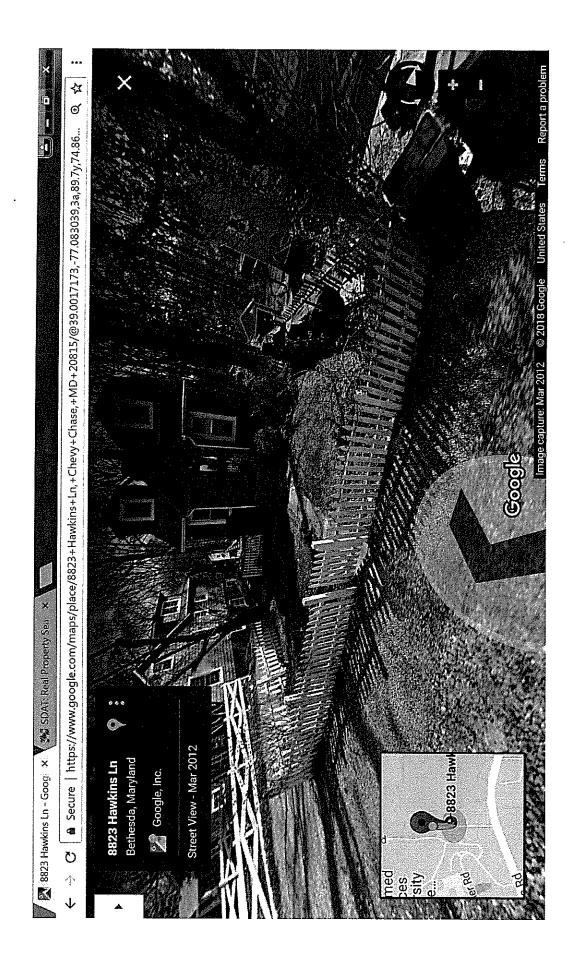
Dear Ms. Sessions,

This letter is in regard to the Cercis Canadensis Redbud in your front yard.

This tree has a large amount of decay and a large cavity in the main trunk. This decay will continue and lead to the death of the tree. In addition, the large cavity creates a weak point, causing a possible dangerous situation.

Sincerely,

Bernie A. Mihm ISA Certified Arborist #M5223A Landscape Architect #3713



HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFING [Owner, Owner's Agent, Adjacent and Confronting Property Owners]						
Owner's mailing address	Owner's Agent's mailing address					
Kathy Sessions 8823 Hawkins Lane Chevy Chase, MD 20815						
Adjacent and confro	onting Property Owners mailing addresses					
Adjacent: Ana P. Baide (owner) or Sarah Lundal (renter) 8825 Hawkins Lane Chevy Chase, MD 20815						
Adjacent: Steve Grant 8817 Hawkins Lane Chevy Chase, MD 20815						
Confronting: Scott Wallace 8822 Hawkins Lane Chevy Chase, MD 20815						