

Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	46 Grafton Street, Chevy Chase	Meeting Date:	11/16/2022
Resource:	Contributing Resource Chevy Chase Village Historic District	Report Date:	11/9/2022
Applicant:	Mary Beth McDaniel	Public Notice:	11/2/2022
Review:	Historic Area Work Permit	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
Proposal:	Painting Unpainted Masonry		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the applicant make the revisions recommended by the HPC, submit any requested documentation, and return for a HAWP.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing Resource within the Chevy Chase Village Historic District
STYLE: Colonial Revival
DATE: 1923



Figure 1: 46 Grafton St. is located at the corner of Grafton St. and Cedar Pkwy.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to paint the unpainted brick exterior of the house.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

When reviewing alterations and new construction within the Chevy Chase Village Historic District several documents are to be utilized as guidelines to assist the Commission in developing their decision. These documents include the historic preservation review guidelines in the approved and adopted amendment for the Chevy Chase Village Historic District (*Guidelines*), *Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A)*, and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards)*. The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

Chevy Chase Village Historic District Guidelines

The *Guidelines* break down specific projects into three levels of review - Lenient, Moderate and Strict Scrutiny.

“Lenient Scrutiny” means that the emphasis of the review should be on issues of general massing and scale, and compatibility with the surrounding streetscape, and should allow for a very liberal interpretation of preservation rules. Most changes should be permitted unless there are major problems with massing, scale or compatibility.

“Moderate Scrutiny” involves a higher standard of review than “lenient scrutiny.” Besides issues of massing, scale and compatibility, preserving the integrity of the resource is taken into account. Alterations should be designed so that the altered structure still contributes to the district. Use of compatible new materials, rather than the original building materials, should be permitted. Planned changes should be compatible with the structure’s existing design, but should not be required to replicate its architectural style.

“Strict Scrutiny” means that the planned changes should be reviewed to insure that the integrity of the significant exterior architectural or landscaping features and details is not compromised. However, strict scrutiny should not be “strict in theory but fatal in fact” i.e. it does not mean that there can be no changes but simply that the proposed changes should be reviewed with extra care.

There isn’t a specific guideline that addresses the finish of exterior surfaces, however, the *Guidelines* include the statement that:

The following principles are not intended to cover all possible types of exterior alterations, changes, and/or additions. HAWP applications for other types of exterior alterations, changes and/or additions should be reviewed in a manner that is consistent with the two paramount principles identified above – fostering the Village’s shared commitment to evolving eclecticism while maintaining its open park-like character.

- The *Guidelines* state five basic policies that should be adhered to, including:
 - Preserving the integrity of the Chevy Chase Village Historic District. Any alterations should, at a minimum, perpetuate the ability to perceive the sense of time and place portrayed by the district.
 - Preserving the integrity of contributing structures. Alterations should be designed in such a way that the altered structure still contributes to the district.
 - Maintaining the variety of architectural styles and the tradition of architectural excellence.
 - Design review emphasis should be restricted to changes that will be visible from the front or side public right-of-way, or that would be visible in the absence of vegetation or landscaping.
 - Alterations to the portion of a property that are not visible from the public-right-of-way should be subject to a very lenient review. Most changes to the rear of the properties should be approved as a matter of course.

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, archeological, 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
- (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.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

- 2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- 3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
- 5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- 6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
- 7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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

The subject property is a two-story, brick, Colonial Revival house with a side gable roof with front gable dormers.

The applicant proposes to paint the unfinished exterior brick. The applicant additionally proposes to paint the existing trim and shutters; however, as these features are already painted, a HAWP is not necessary for this work.

Painting unpainted masonry is generally not a recommended treatment for several reasons including the impact on the building's historic character (the brick exterior is a character defining feature), because of impacts on the historic material, and because it is an irreversible treatment.

First, the subject property is distinct in that it is one of only two unpainted brick buildings on its block (the neighboring property at 44 Grafton St. is a painted brick house, but HP records do not indicate if this house was painted before the District's 1998 designation). The block has a variety of sidings including clapboard, stucco, wood shingle, and natural stone. Staff finds the exposed brick is one of several elements on the subject property that contributes to the architectural eclecticism found throughout the district (a goal stated in the *District Guidelines*) and would contravene Standard 2 by obscuring the house's distinctive exterior finish.

MASONRY: STONE, BRICK, TERRA COTTA, CONCRETE, ADOBE, STUCCO, AND MORTAR	
RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED
Identifying, retaining and preserving masonry features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building (such as walls, brackets, railings, cornices, window and door surrounds, steps, and columns) and decorative ornament and other details, such as tooling and bonding patterns, coatings, and color.	<p>Removing or substantially changing masonry features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.</p> <p>Replacing or rebuilding a major portion of exterior masonry walls that could be repaired, thereby destroying the historic integrity of the building.</p> <p>Applying paint or other coatings (such as stucco) to masonry that has been historically unpainted or uncoated to create a new appearance.</p> <p>Removing paint from historically-painted masonry.</p>

Figure 2: Selection from The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Second, painting the exterior of a previously unfinished surface can cause long-term harm to the historic materials. Bricks are naturally breathable and porous which allows for a certain amount of water vapor to travel through the bricks. Painting bricks with a non-porous paint seals the brick so vapor cannot escape and can lead to brick spawling or crumbling. Additionally, with excess moisture trapped inside the brick, the winter freeze/thaw cycle can damage the brick and/or mortar's structural integrity and cause additional damage to the house's exterior. That is why this treatment violates Standard 7.

Third, painting brick is not a recommended treatment because it is not reversible. While the paint may weather over time, it is nearly impossible to remove all of the paint at a later date without causing irreparable damage to the brick and mortar – typical treatments to remove paint from masonry include sandblasting, dry ice blasting, soda blasting, and chemical removers. For this reason, painting the exterior brick violates Standard 7.

In 2019, the HPC approved painting the exterior of a brick house a block away from the property at 34 W.

Kirke St.¹ The applicant submitted documentation with the HAWP application that identified the existing problems (interior mold and brick deterioration and efflorescence) and additional documentation showing the proposed intervention (a tinted limewash) was appropriate in limited applications. In the Staff Report, HP Staff found that the masonry deterioration and the proposed limewash were the necessary and appropriate actions to protect the building, satisfying Standards 2, 5, and 7.

In this instance, the applicant presents the proposal as an aesthetic choice and has not demonstrated through material or other evidence that this is a necessary preservation treatment. Staff cannot find a justification in the requisite guidance for approving this work. Unless the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal is intended to correct a material failure, Staff would be inclined to recommend the HPC deny a HAWP to paint the exterior of the subject property under Standards 2, 5, and 7; and 24A-8(b)(1) and (2).

If the applicant can provide additional documentation that the proposed painting is needed to protect the building, that information needs to be submitted with the HAWP application. Additionally, the applicant needs to submit a material specification for the proposed paint so it may be evaluated for its appropriateness.

Staff requests the HPC's feedback on:

- The appropriateness of the proposed work;
- The form of documentation necessary to justify an exterior finish on the brick;
- Recommended products or treatments; and
- Any additional comments.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the applicant make the revisions recommended by the HPC, submit any requested documentation, and return for a HAWP.

¹ The Staff Report and application for the HAWP at 34 W. Kirke St. is available here:
<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/IJ-34-W.-Kirke-Street-Chevy-Chase.pdf>.



FOR STAFF ONLY:
HAWP# 1010954
DATE ASSIGNED _____

**APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301.563.3400

APPLICANT:

Name: Mary Beth McDaniel E-mail: mbmcd46@gmail.com
Address: 46 Grafton St City: Chevy Chase Zip: 20815
Daytime Phone: 301-529-1797 Tax Account No.: _____
none - home owner

AGENT/CONTACT (If applicable):

Name: NA E-mail: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____
Daytime Phone: _____ Contractor Registration No.: _____

LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE: MIHP # of Historic Property 46 Grafton St
Chevy Chase MD
Is the Property Located within an Historic District? ☒ Yes/District Name Chevy Chase Village
20815
☐ No/Individual Site Name _____

Is there an Historic Preservation/Land Trust/Environmental Easement on the Property? If YES, include a map of the easement, and documentation from the Easement Holder supporting this application. no

Are other Planning and/or Hearing Examiner Approvals /Reviews Required as part of this Application? (Conditional Use, Variance, Record Plat, etc.?) If YES, include information on these reviews as supplemental information. no

Building Number: 46 Street: Grafton
Town/City: Chevy Chase Nearest Cross Street: Cedar Parkway
Chevy Chase
Lot: _____ Block: _____ Subdivision: Village Parcel: _____

TYPE OF WORK PROPOSED: See the checklist on Page 4 to verify that all supporting items for proposed work are submitted with this application. Incomplete Applications will not be accepted for review. Check all that apply:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Deck/Porch | <input type="checkbox"/> Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addition | <input type="checkbox"/> Fence | <input type="checkbox"/> Solar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition | <input type="checkbox"/> Hardscape/Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree removal/planting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grading/Excavation | <input type="checkbox"/> Roof | <input type="checkbox"/> Window/Door |
| | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Paint Brick House</u> |

I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the foregoing application, that the application is correct and accurate and that the construction will comply with plans reviewed and approved by all necessary agencies and hereby acknowledge and accept this to be a condition for the issuance of this permit.

Mary Beth McDaniel
Signature of owner or authorized agent

10-7-22
Date

Description of Property: Please describe the building and surrounding environment. Include information on significant structures, landscape features, or other significant features of the property:

Corner Brick house located
on 46 Grafton St. Chevy Chase MD.
* House sits on the corner of
Grafton St. & Cedar Parkway
Chevy Chase Village

Description of Work Proposed: Please give an overview of the work to be undertaken:

want to paint a brick
house - to

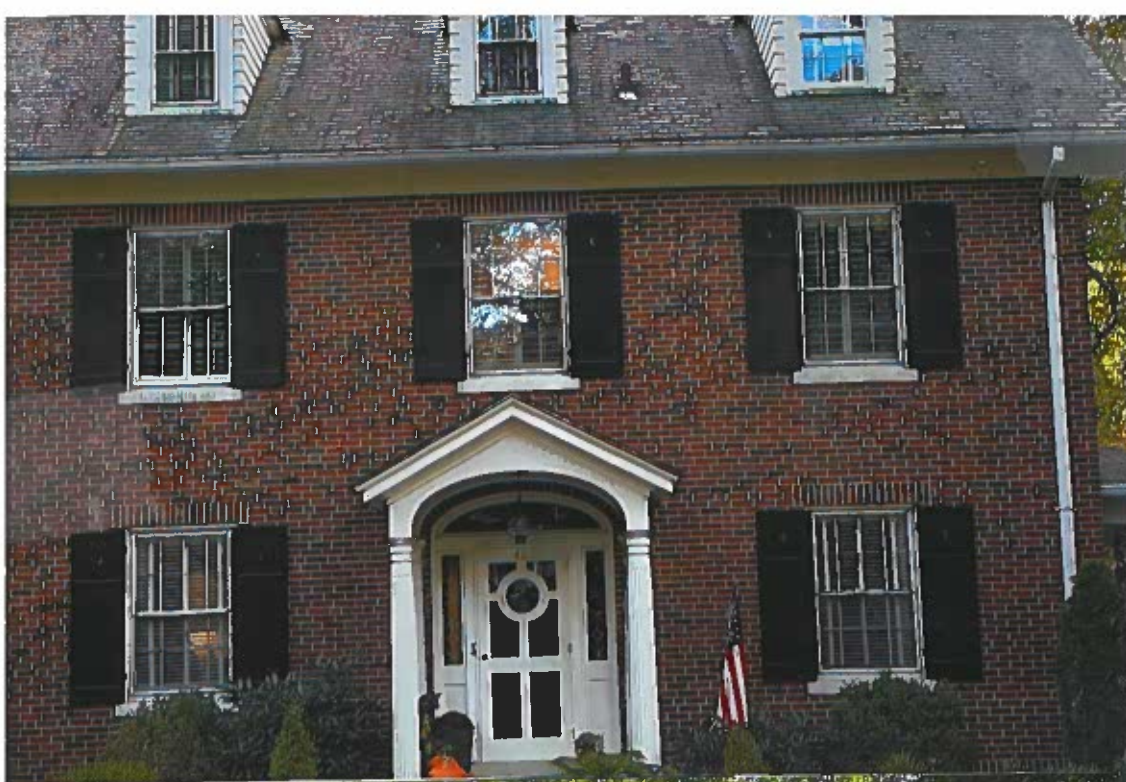
Off white paint to Brick

Color -

Agreeable Gray

Trim -

Shutter - Dove White



→ 46

Grafton St
Cherry Chase Village
Paint Brick
" "
Agreeable
Gray



44 Grafton St.
→
Robert
Axelrod



→
25
Grafton Street
Michael
Keller

HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFYING
[Owner, Owner's Agent, Adjacent and Confronting Property Owners]

Doug McDaniel

Owner's mailing address

*46 Grafton Street R
 Chevy Chase, MD.
 20815*

Owner's Agent's mailing address

Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses

*Robert Axelrod
 44 Grafton Street
 Chevy Chase, MD.
 20815*

3933 Oliver Street
 Chevy Chase, MD 20815

*Michael Helleher
 25 Grafton Street*

5700 Cedar Parkway
 Chevy Chase, MD 20815

100 Grafton Street
 Chevy Chase, MD 20815

101 Grafton Street
 Chevy Chase, MD 20815