

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	6700 Needwood Rd., Derwood	Meeting Date:	5/10/2023
Resource:	Master Plan Site #22/35 Needwood Mansion	Report Date:	5/3/2023
Applicant:	Montgomery Parks	Public Notice:	4/26/2023
Review:	HAWP	Tax Credit:	N/A
Permit Number:	1028557	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
Proposal:	Railing Installation		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) **approve** the HAWP application.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Master Plan Historic Site (*Needwood 22/35*)

STYLE: Federal

DATE: ca. 1856

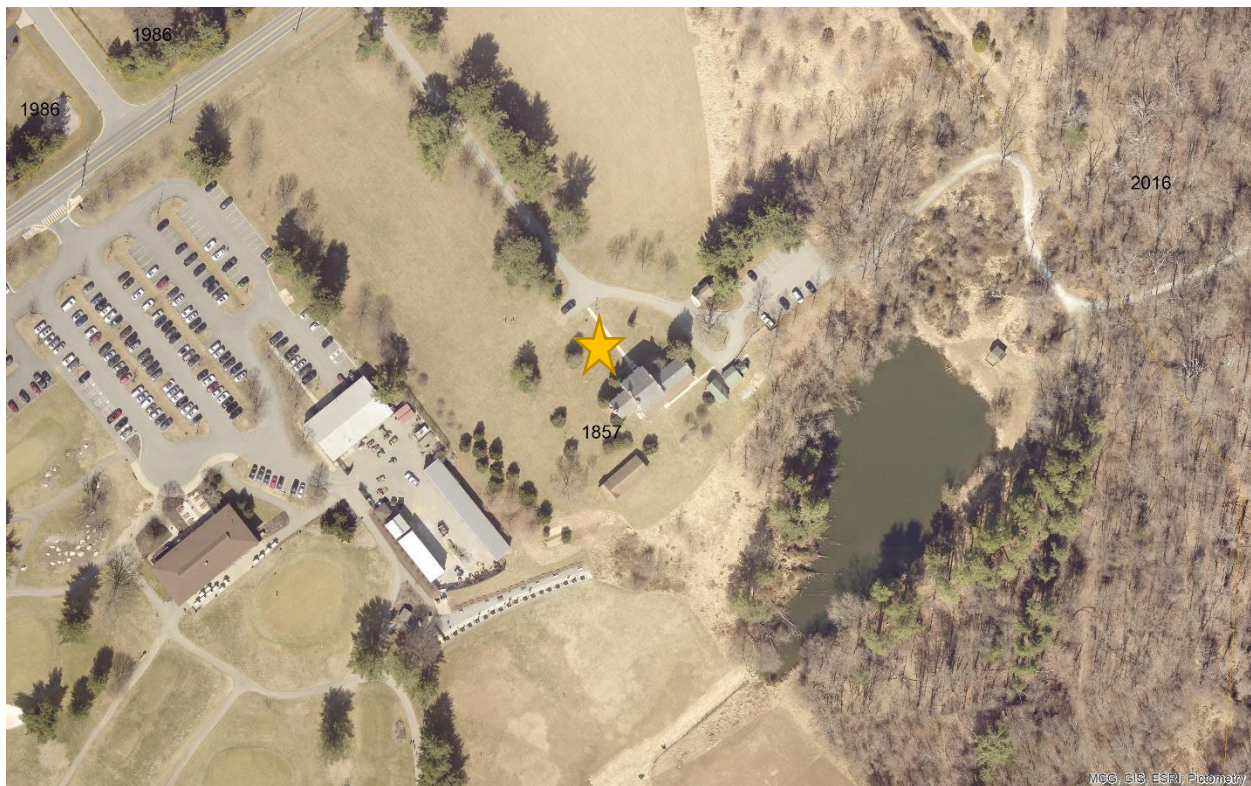


Figure 1: Needwood Mansion is located next to the clubhouse for the Needwood Golf Course.

From Places from the Past:

“This three-story, late-Federal brick residence, the main block of the present building, is a locally early example of a formal, consciously styled dwelling. William George Robertson built the house in 1856. An insurance policy, which he took the following year, described the residence as “a new two-story brick dwelling with slate, and adjoining former wooden buildings—five rooms and 2 passages—2 chimneys—built and finished in a substantial manner.” The three-bay, double-pile house has a side entrance. Parapets on each gable end link paired chimneys. Brick is laid in common bond, lintels are wooden with a raised molding, and sills are stone. Three-part windows are found on each level above the front entrance. The original doorway had sidelights that were replaced in 1948 by the present doorframe.

William George inherited the 759-acre tract from his father William Robertson in 1842. William G. did not live long to enjoy his new home. In 1861, a lightning bolt killed him just as he turned his horse into Needwood’s main gate. Robertson left a widow, Mary Victorine Key Scott, and eleven children. The family continued to own and/or occupy Needwood until 1881. Lightning struck again in 1913, severely damaging a log house pre-dating the brick house and attached to the east side. The east frame wing (barely visible at left) replaces the log house. The west wing dates from 1958. Nearby stand a notable two-story stone outbuilding and a log outbuilding. M-NCPPC owns the property.”

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to install a metal pipe railing on the rear porch steps.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

In accordance with section 1.5 of the Historic Preservation Commission Rules, Guidelines, and Procedures (Regulation No. 27-97) (“Regulations”), in developing its decision when reviewing a Historic Area Work Permit application for an undertaking at a Master Plan site, the Commission uses the *Montgomery County Code* (“Chapter 24A”), the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation (Standards)*, and pertinent guidance in applicable master plans. [Note: where guidance in an applicable master plan is inconsistent with the Standards, the master plan guidance shall take precedence (section 1.5(b) of the Regulations).] The pertinent information in these documents, incorporated in their entirety by reference herein, is outlined below.

Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A-8

The following guidance which pertains to this project are as follows:

- (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 ensure 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

- (4) The proposal is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied.

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 applicable *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

Needwood Mansion operates as the office for the Cultural Resources Section of Montgomery Parks. At the rear of the house, there is a full-width porch which was constructed sometime between 1913 and 1947. The applicant proposes to construct an ADA-compliant metal pipe railing to the non-historic rear porch stairs. The pipe railing will be set in concrete.

Staff supports approval of this HAWP for two primary reasons. First, the existing stairs, without any railing, do not satisfy the contemporary building code (see 24A-8(b)(4)). Second, because the building is open to the public, having an accessible method of egress allows the building to be used by more people (see 24A-8(b)(3)). While the pipe metal railing is not consistent with the house's architecture, Staff finds the utilitarian appearance will visually recede. Finally, Staff finds the proposed stairs will not impact any of the house's historic materials. Staff recommends the HPC approve the HAWP.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) **approve** the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(1), (3), and (4), having found that the proposal 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 an electronic set 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 final project design details, not specifically delineated by the Commission, shall be approved by HPC staff or brought back to the Commission as a revised HAWP application at staff's discretion;

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 dan.bruechert@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.



APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301.563.3400

FOR STAFF ONLY:
HAWP#
DATE ASSIGNED

APPLICANT:

Name:
Address:
Daytime Phone:
E-mail:
City:
Zip:
Tax Account No.:

AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):

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

LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE: MIHP # of Historic Property

Is the Property Located within an Historic District? Yes/District Name
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.

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.

Building Number: Street:

Town/City: Nearest Cross Street:

Lot: Block: Subdivision: 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:

- Checklist of work types: New Construction, Addition, Demolition, Grading/Excavation, Deck/Porch, Fence, Hardscape/Landscape, Roof, Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure, Solar, Tree removal/planting, Window/Door, Other.

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.

Signature of owner or authorized agent

Date

Tree Survey: NA, no impact to trees

Adjacent and Confronting Properties:

16413 Equestrian LN, Rockville MD 20855

16409 Equestrian LN, Rockville MD 20855

16401 Equestrian LN, Rockville MD 20855

16400 Equestrian LN, Rockville MD 20855

16301 Jousting TER, Rockville MD 20855

16300 Jousting TER, Rockville MD 20855

6801 Needwood Rd, Derwood MD 20855

6811 Needwood Rd, Derwood MD 20855

6825 Needwood Rd, Derwood MD 20855

6829 Needwood Rd, Derwood MD 20855

6833 Needwood Rd, Derwood MD 20855

6837 Needwood Rd, Derwood MD 20855

6930 Needwood Rd, Derwood MD 20855

16112 Deer Lake Rd, Rockville, MD 20855

16116 Deer Lake Rd, Rockville, MD 20855

16120 Deer Lake Rd, Rockville, MD 20855

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

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

Work Item 1: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

Work Item 2: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

Work Item 3: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

Description:

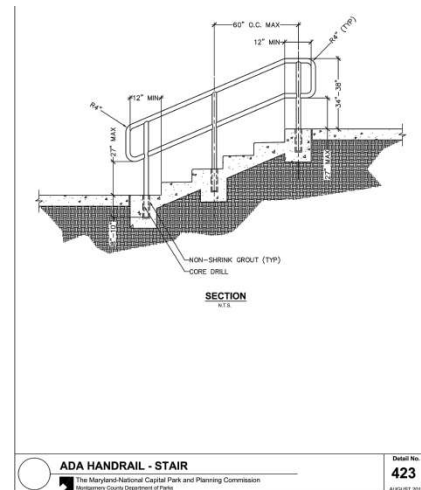
The main block of Needwood Mansion was constructed in 1856. The side-passage, three-bay, three-story brick house is flanked to the east by a two-story wood frame wing added in 1913 (altered) and to the west by a two-bay, two-story brick masonry wing added in 1954. The house is now used as Montgomery Parks offices and houses the Cultural Resources Section and its archaeology lab and archives. The offices, lab and archive are used heavily by the public, including the archaeology program's large cohort of volunteers, researchers, youth participants in summer archaeology camps, and visitors attending various archaeology-based public events.

A one-story screened porch spans the entirety of south (rear) elevation of the main, three-bay section and the 1913 addition. This porch is not original to the 1856 house. The porch's construction date is not known, but it possibly was added during the construction of the wood-framed east wing, ca. 1913 and it (or a section of it) likely pre-dates 1947, as a small section of the porch is visible in a photograph dated 1947. The existing steps are not original to the porch, post-dating 1985. A set of wooden steps are visible in a circa 1985 photograph of the then existing condition of the porch.

Scope of work:

Install a new ADA-compliant metal pipe railing on rear porch steps.

The principal access to the offices located in Needwood Mansion is via the rear porch (the 'front' door in the north (front) façade is not used for entrance/egress). The existing, non-historic porch steps are poured-in-place concrete, with risers faced with a red stone veneer and white stone treads. The steps, which rise a total of six steps from the landing to the porch deck, have no handrail, creating a non-code-compliant condition and a safety hazard for building users (code requires a handrail/guard in conditions where the rise is more than 30" above grade). Montgomery Parks is proposing installing the standard, ADA-compliant metal pipe railing used in similar applications across the parks system (see detail, below). To mount the proposed railing, an approximately three-inch diameter hole will be drilled into the top step and the concrete landing at the bottom of the steps. The railing posts will be set in concrete in these borings (a third hole may be drilled in an intermediate stair tread if it is determined that a third, mid-span post is necessary to stabilize the railing and fix it securely in place). The railing will be painted black, to minimize appearance.



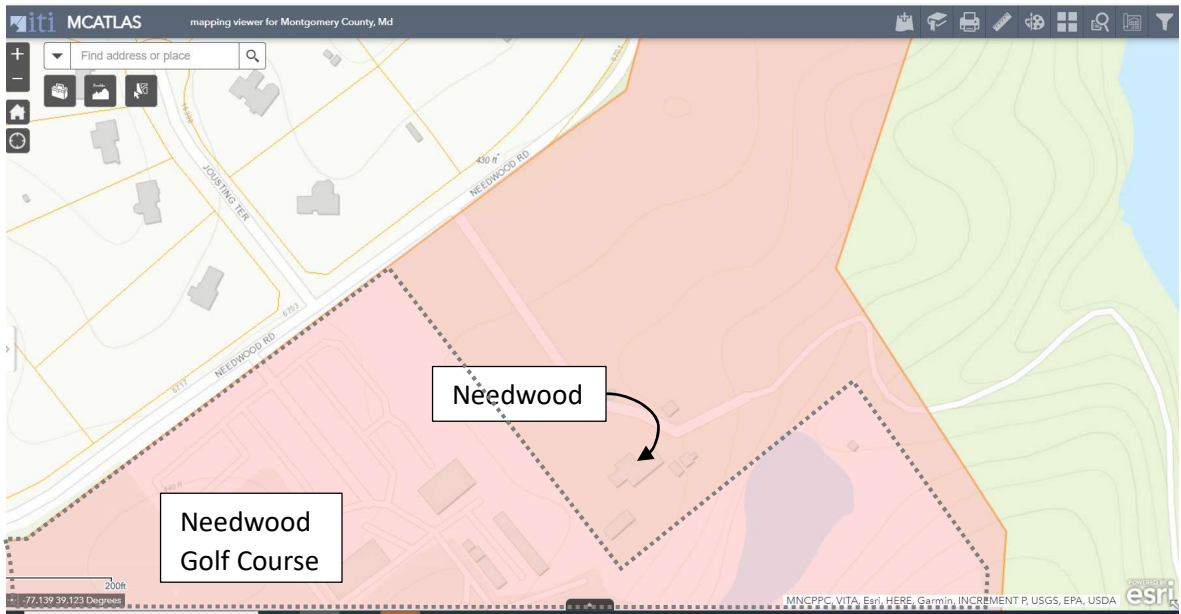
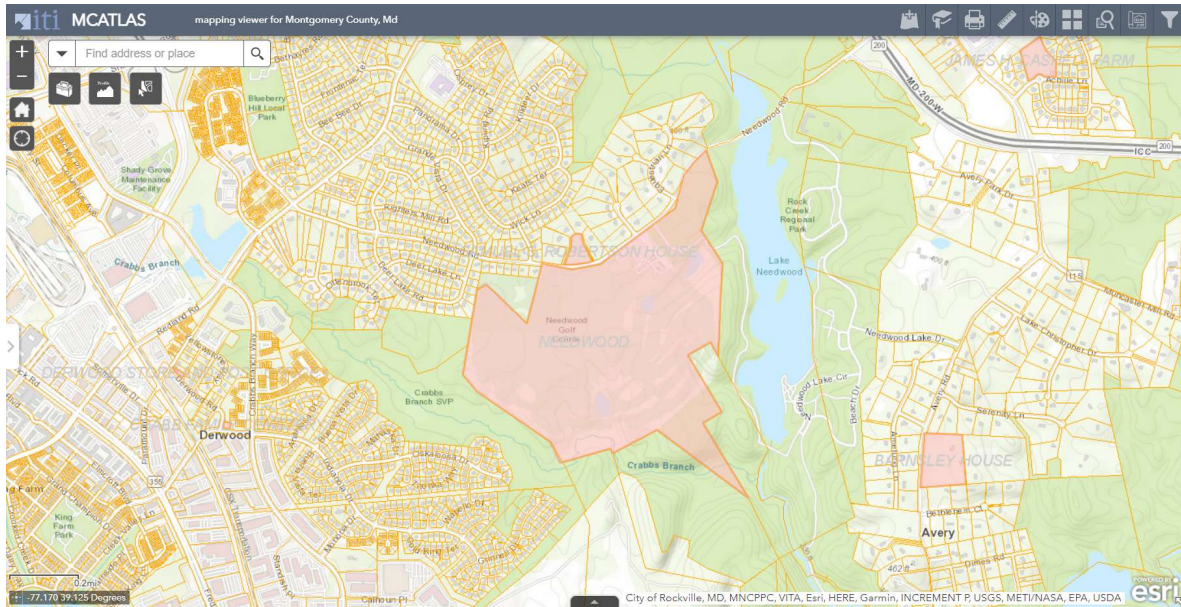
The porch has been modified significantly over time. Alterations to improve access to Needwood's basement, which houses archaeology lab and collections spaces, included the installation of a metal pipe railing at the basement areaway stairs (the railing in the application under consideration does not match the existing railing, installed some years ago, since the previously installed railing does not meet current Parks standards based in part on ADA requirements).

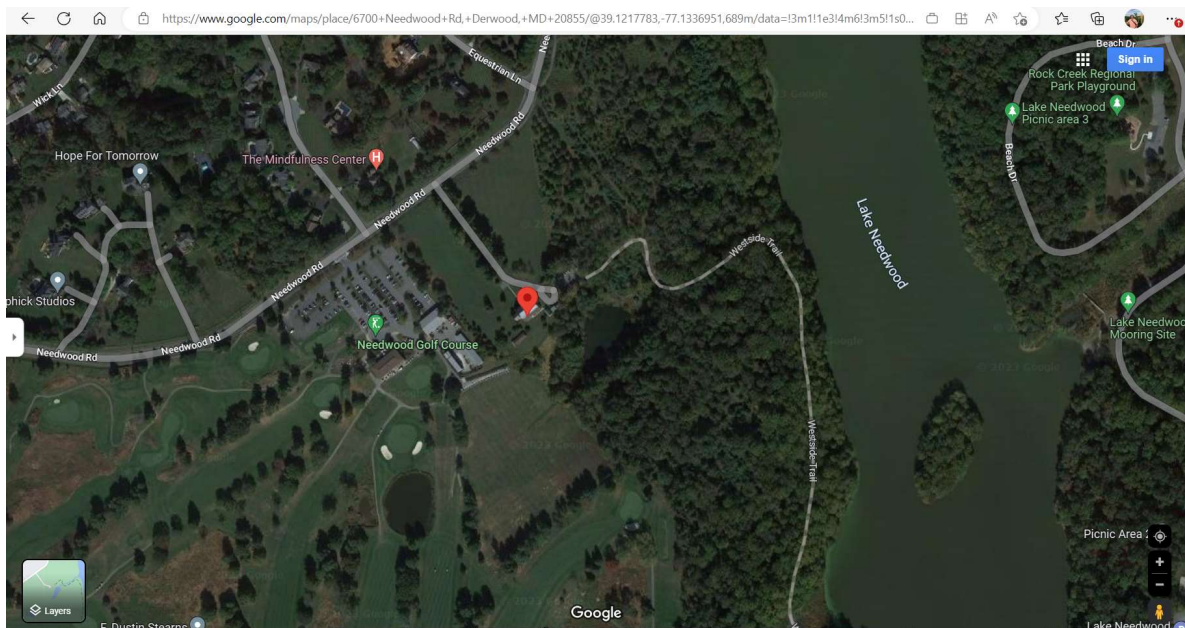
Needwood Mansion is located in a park, so the public can access the grounds around the building. However, in most cases the only people who will notice the railing are those individuals who will benefit

from using it when they are trying to safely use the stairs to gain access to or exit the offices. The house sits approximately 550 feet from the Needwood Road right-of-way, with the stairs on the rear elevation, so the stair railing is not visible from the street. The nearest paved driveway access is approximately 70 feet from the stairs so the railing will not be apparent to the casual observer using the shared parking lot that serves park trail users and the Needwood Mansion office staff and visitors.

Another type of railing might be appropriate if Needwood was still in residential use. However, given the office use and public access to the building, an ADA-compatible treatment is warranted to improve the safety of all building visitors and enhance accessibility, and necessary for consistency with commercial building codes. This safety intervention is a compatible alteration to a secondary elevation, with minor impact to non-original building fabric, in a location with limited visibility for all but those visiting the offices or immediate grounds.

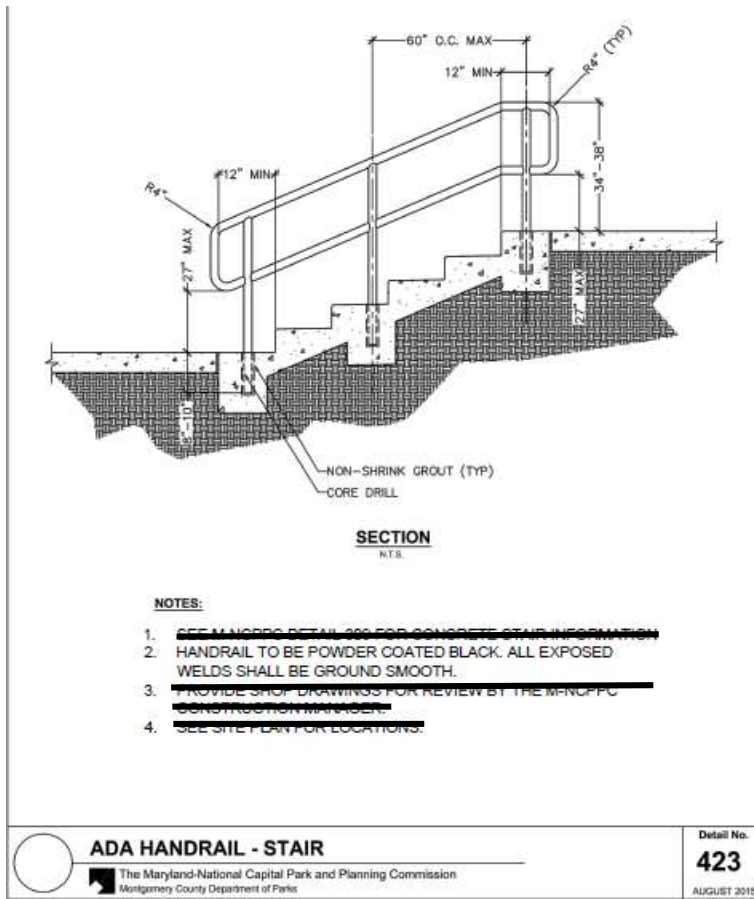
Site plans:







Material specifications: railing

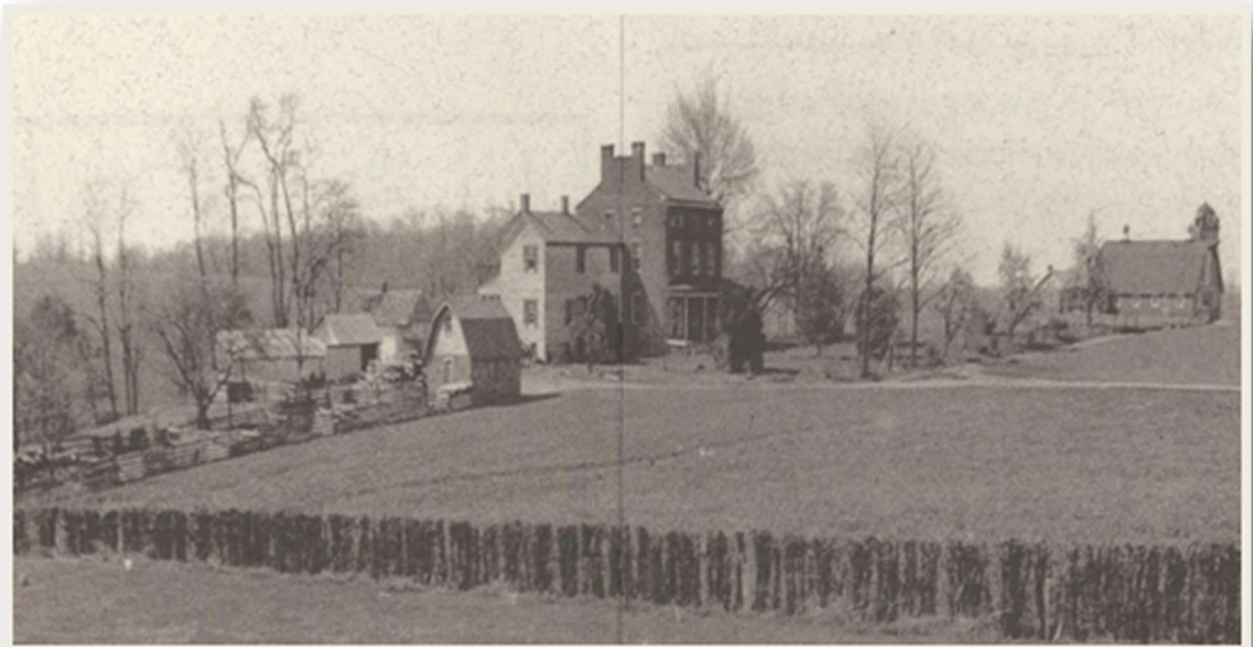


Montgomery Parks standard specification: ADA Handrail -- Stair

Photographs:



Photo dated 1947 (prior to the construction of the 1954 wing) showing north and east elevations of the original block and 1913 frame addition (now altered). Note porch at rear of 1913 addition.



Undated photograph of north and east elevations of the main mass and 1913 frame addition. This photograph is thought to pre-date the 1947 photo above. Note porch at rear of 1913 addition.

Photographs and plans: *Railing*

GEIER BROWN RENNOW ARCHITECTS
 1200 15TH STREET, N.W., SUITE 403
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005, 202-452-9424

NEEDWOOD MANSION EXTERIOR REPAIRS

NEEDWOOD GOLF COURSE
 SHEET TITLE
 ELEVATIONS

SCALE
 REVISIONS
 NO. | DESCRIPTION | DATE

PROJECT NUMBER
 SHEET NUMBER
 DATE
 2-11-05

A3

04-100
 04-101 TYP
 04-102

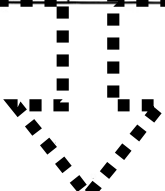
04-101 TYP
 04-102
 04-103 TYP, 04-104
 04-100
 04-101 TYP
 04-102 TYP

07-101
 06-114
 06-113
 06-108
 07-101
 09-100
 02-102, TYP, 06-106, 09-100
 02-100, 06-103, 09-100
 02-101, 06-107
 06-105
 09-102
 06-103
 06-102 TYP
 06-104, TYP

07-101
 09-109
 07-102
 02-105, 06-105, 09-100
 06-111
 06-110
 07-104
 06-112

07-101
 06-114
 06-113
 06-108
 07-101
 09-100
 02-102, TYP, 06-106, 09-100
 02-100, 06-103, 09-100
 02-101, 06-107
 06-105
 09-102
 06-103
 06-102 TYP
 06-104, TYP

1 WEST ELEVATION
 3 SOUTH ELEVATION
 4 EAST ELEVATION



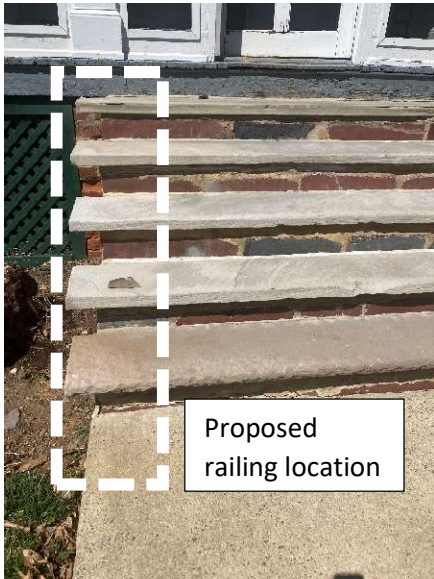
Sheet from 1985 scope of work for exterior repairs at Needwood

07-101
 06-114
 06-113
 06-108
 07-101
 09-100
 02-102, TYP, 06-106, 09-100
 02-100, 06-103, 09-100
 02-101, 06-107
 06-105
 09-102
 06-103
 06-102 TYP
 06-104, TYP

3 SOUTH ELEVATION
 A3



South (rear) elevation: Main block, flanked by 1913 addition (right) and 1954 addition (left); porch steps are center of the frame





Approach to steps (in distance) from parking lot

Approach to steps from parking lot



Areaway to basement, showing existing (noncurrent-standard) pipe railing

North (front) elevation: *main mass*



North (front) elevation: *1913 addition*



North (front) elevation: *1954 addition*



East elevation: 1913 addition



West elevation: 1954 addition



South (rear) elevation: *main mass (center), 1913 addition (right) and 1954 addition (left)*



South (rear) elevation: *main mass*



South (rear) elevation: *1913 addition*



South (rear) elevation: *1954 addition*





DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING SERVICES

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Rabbiah Sabbakhan
Director

HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT APPLICATION

Application Date: 4/20/2023

Application No: 1028557
AP Type: HISTORIC
Customer No: 1379330

Comments

NA

Affidavit Acknowledgement

The Homeowner is the Primary applicant
This application does not violate any covenants and deed restrictions

Primary Applicant Information

Address 6700 NEEDWOOD RD
ROCKVILLE, MD 20855
Homeowner MC Parks Facilities Management (Primary)

Historic Area Work Permit Details

Work Type ALTER
Scope of Work Add metal handrail to steps at primary (rear) entrance.