

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	17017 Georgia Avenue, Olney	Meeting Date:	10/8/2025
Resource:	Master Plan Site #23/104 (<i>Berry-Mackall House</i>)	Report Date:	10/1/2025
Applicant:	Juan Arias, Inglesia Evangelica Cristo Promesa Inc. (Husam Albattrawi, Architect)	Public Notice:	9/24/2025
Review:	RETROACTIVE HAWP	Tax Credit:	No
Permit No.:	1131134	Staff:	Laura DiPasquale
Proposal:	Site work, minor grading, gravel <u>and concrete</u> paving		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the HPC **approve** the HAWP application.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

SIGNIFICANCE: Master Plan Site #23/104, *Berry-Mackall House*
 STYLE: Vernacular Farmhouse
 DATE: 1853-57; 1868-75

Excerpt from *Places from the Past*:

The Berry-Mackall House, originally built between 1852 and 1857, is a well-recognized, pre-Civil War landmark along the Washington-Brookeville Turnpike (now Georgia Avenue). The dwelling was built by Elisha Berry, whose ancestors were among the early settlers of Montgomery County. In 1868, the property was acquired by Robert McGill Mackall, a member of Mosby's Raiders during the Civil War, who significantly improved the property by adding the two-story frame building to the front of the original structure, and by constructing the still-extant carriage house on the site. The Berry-Mackall House is a good illustration of the evolution of the rural domestic building in Montgomery County. The house was built in three distinct phases. In the 1850s, Elisha Berry built a modest, two-story frame structure. By 1875, Mackall added a new, side-passage house on front of the original house, and, during the first quarter of the 20th century, a two-story rear wing with a shed roof was further appended to the dwelling, giving the house its three-part appearance. The farmstead features a Gothic Revival carriage house, built 1859-1868, (currently a secondary residence), a smokehouse from the original period of construction, and a 20th-century barn.

The property was designated as a Master Plan site as part of the *Approved and Adopted Master Plan for Historic Preservation: Olney-Sandy Spring-Goshen* areas in 2002.

PROPOSAL:

The applicants seek retroactive approval for site work conducted at the property, including widening of the main driveway entrance from approximately 15 feet to approximately 22 feet, installation of a retaining wall on either side of the entrance drive, installation of a concrete parking pad, and addition of gravel paving with a CMU and timber border.

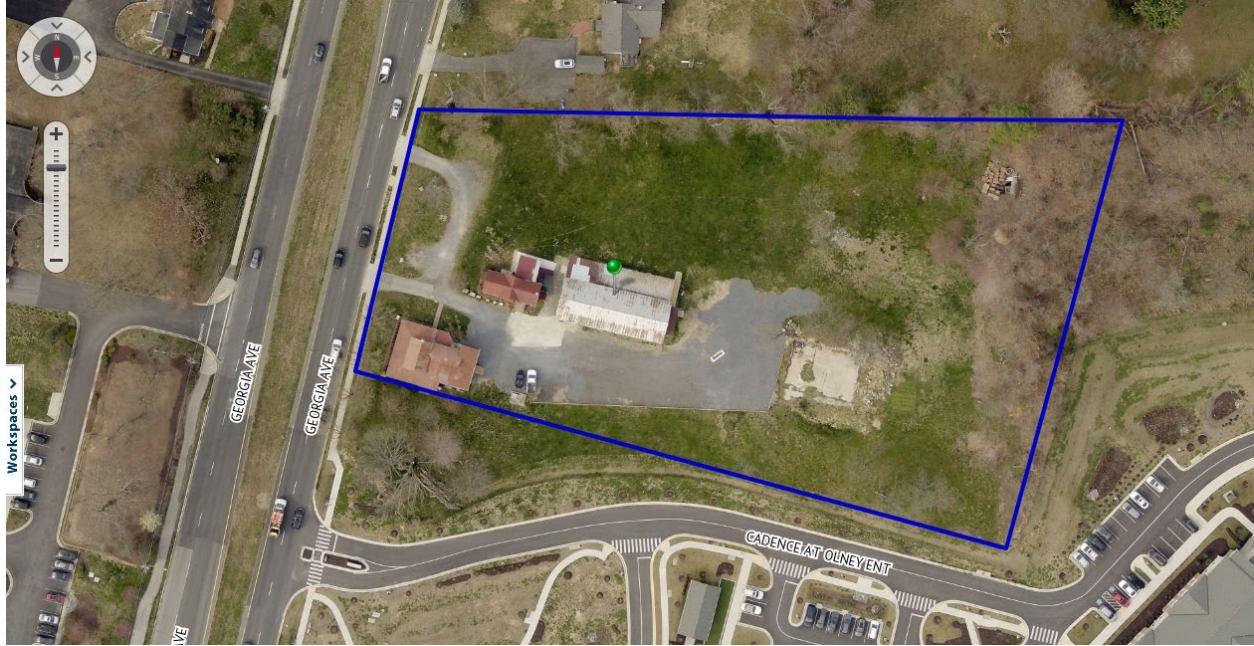


Figure 1: Aerial view of the Berry-Mackall House property at 17017 Georgia Avenue, March 2025, with the property boundary in blue (ConnectExplorer).



Figure 2: Aerial view of the subject property, April 2015 (ConnectExplorer), prior to current ownership.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES:

When reviewing alterations and new construction at Master Plan Sites several documents are to be utilized as guidelines to assist the Commission in developing their decision. These documents include *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.

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 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

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

- 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.

STAFF DISCUSSION:***Background***

In November 2024, staff conducted an initial site visit to the subject property regarding a proposed addition. At that time, staff noticed that many elements of the property appeared new or recently-installed. Upon reviewing the HPC's files, aerial and Google Streetview imagery of the property, staff concluded that numerous alterations had been made to the property in recent years without the requisite Historic Area Work Permits or building permits. At the request of staff, the Department of Permitting Services issued five citations to the property on April 23, 2025. Historic Preservation staff met with the applicants on May 19, 2025 to discuss the work items and to assist them in bringing the property into compliance with the requirements of *Chapter 24A*. On September 2, 2025, the applicants applied for five Historic Area Work Permits seeking retroactive approval of the work items.

HAWP application 1131134

This application addresses site work, grading, and paving completed at the property over the course of the current ownership since 2015. While the initial violation issued for this scope in April 2025 did not include the widening of the driveway and installation of adjacent retaining walls, this work was also completed without a HAWP in early May 2025. The applicants have indicated that the driveway widening was completed to allow food bank delivery trucks and larger vehicles to enter the property. The driveway apron was not widened, but a concrete block wall with bluestone capping was added along either side of the drive.



Figure 3: View of the subject property and driveway entrance prior to modifications, July 2024 (Google Streetview).



Figure 4: View of the subject property from Georgia Avenue, September 2025 (Historic Preservation Office).



Figure 5: Birdseye view looking north at a portion of 17017 Georgia Avenue, March 2025 (ConnectExplorer showing the expanded gravel and concrete parking areas, but prior to widening of the entrance drive and construction of retaining walls.



Figure 6: View west from the rear corner of the gravel area, June 2025 (Historic Preservation Office).

Staff finds that the driveway entrance to the subject property has been modified over time, particularly following the widening of Georgia Avenue in the late-1980s. Prior to that widening, a gravel driveway ran directly in front of and alongside the historic farmhouse (*Figure 7*). Staff finds that the driveway widening had a minimal impact on the site and that the installation of the bluestone-capped wall is compatible with the historic resource, per Chapter 24A-8(b)(1) and (2) and did not destroy historic materials and is compatible with, but differentiated from the old, per *Standard 9*. Additionally, staff finds that the small concrete pad adjacent to the carriage house and additional gravel paving that has been added at the rear of the property has limited visibility from the public right-of-way, did not disturb any significant landscape features of the site, and does not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic site. This meets the requirements of *Standard 2*, and is compatible with the character of the site, per Chapter 24A-8(b)(1) and (2).



Figure 7: Undated but likely c. 1975 photograph of the subject property showing a previous iteration of the driveway prior to the widening of Georgia Avenue (Historic Preservation Office, MCAAtlas).



Figure 8: View of the north elevation of the main house from the sidewalk along Georgia Avenue with the widened driveway and retaining wall, September 2025 (Historic Preservation Office).



Figure 9: View from the driveway towards Georgia Avenue, September 2025 (Historic Preservation Office).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve** the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-(b)(1) and (2), having found that the proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in character with the purposes of Chapter 24A;

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

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 301-495-2167 or laura.dipasquale@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.



FOR STAFF ONLY:
HAWP# 1131134
DATE ASSIGNED _____

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

APPLICANT:

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Tax Account No.: _____

AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

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: 17017 Street: Georgia Avenue

Town/City: Olney 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:

☐ New Construction

☐ Deck/Porch

☐ Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure

☐ Addition

☐ Fence

☐ Solar

☐ Demolition

☐ Hardscape/Landscape

☐ Tree removal/planting

☐ Grading/Excavation

☐ Roof

☐ 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.

husam albatrawi

Signature of owner or authorized agent

Date

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

Owner's mailing address

Owner's Agent's mailing address

Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses

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: _____

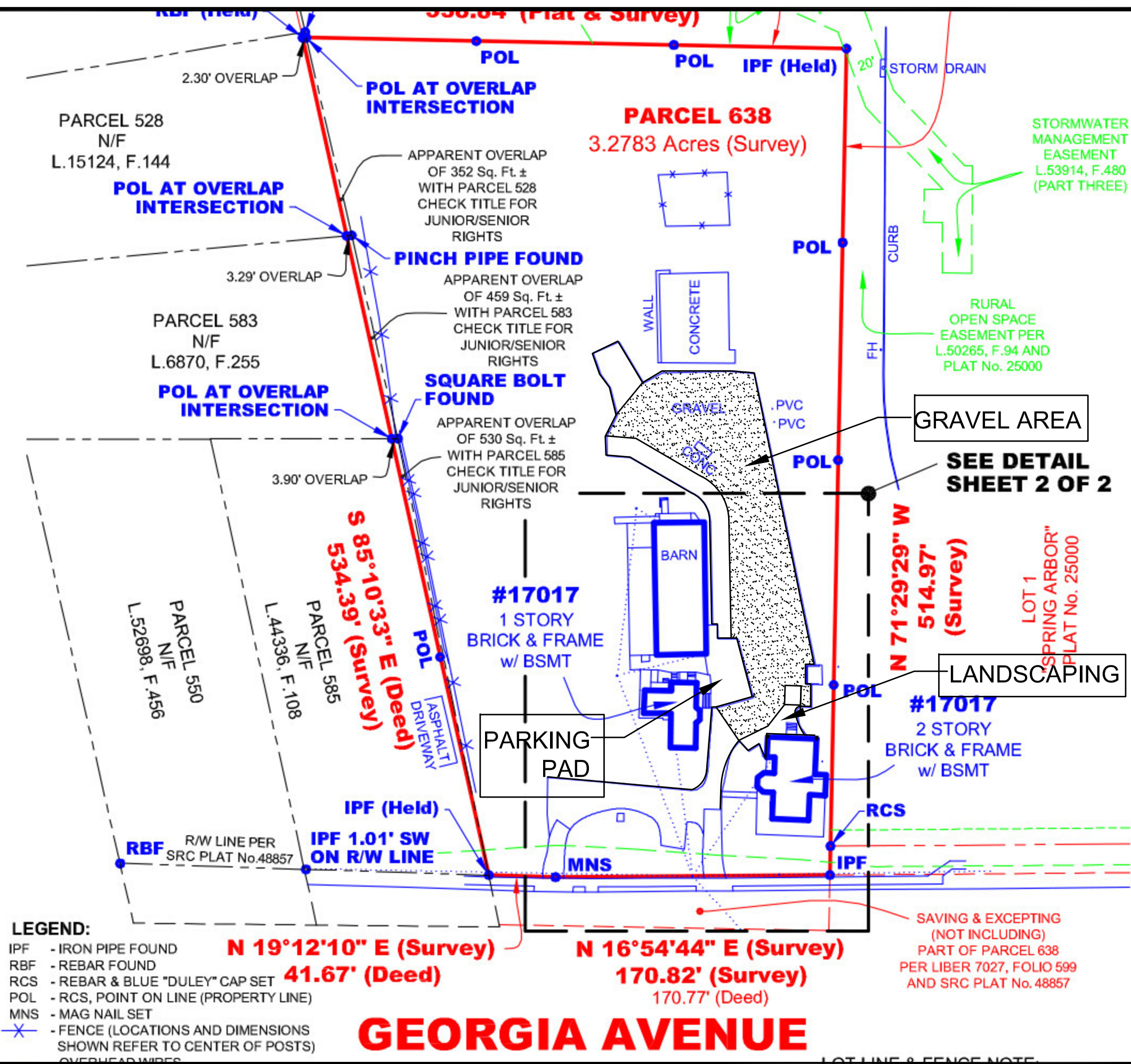
Description of Current Condition:

Proposed Work:

HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT CHECKLIST OF APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

	Required Attachments						
Proposed Work	I. Written Description	2. Site Plan	3. Plans/ Elevations	4. Material Specifications	5. Photographs	6. Tree Survey	7. Property Owner Addresses
New Construction	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Additions/ Alterations	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Demolition	*	*	*		*		*
Deck/Porch	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Fence/Wall	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Driveway/ Parking Area	*	*		*	*	*	*
Grading/Excavation/ Landscaping	*	*		*	*	*	*
Tree Removal	*	*		*	*	*	*
Siding/ Roof Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Window/ Door Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Masonry Repair/ Repoint	*	*	*	*	*		*
Signs	*	*	*	*	*		*

① SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1/64"=1'-0"



REVISIONS

17017 GEORGIA AVE
SMOKEHOUSE SHED
17017 GEORGIA AVE.
OLNEY, MD 20832

SITE PLAN

SHEET
Z001

06/29/2025