



CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS STAFF REPORT

TO: Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB)
FROM: Serena Bolliger, Historic Preservation Planner
DATE: September 15, 2022
SUBJECT: 4102 North Old Glebe Road, CoA 22-19, Walker Chapel and Cemetery Historic District

Background Information

The Walker Chapel and Cemetery was designated a Local Historic District (LHD) on October 3, 1978. Its congregation is the third oldest in Arlington County. The original church building was demolished between 1936 and 1952. The current chapel was constructed by 1962. The Walker Cemetery is still active, and the entire parcel consists of approximately 2.13 acres. The publication entitled *Graveyards of Arlington County, Virginia*, compiled by the Arlington Genealogy Club in 1985, states:

The Walker family started using the “Walker Graveyard” as a family burial site in 1848 when David Walker was buried there.

The cemetery as it is today was deeded in three parts. The first part was conveyed by Elizabeth Bowen on 1 December 1858 to “William, James and Robert Walker, and James and John Reid as trustees, the lot to be used as a graveyard.” (William, James, and Robert were sons of David Walker).

The second part was conveyed by Elizabeth Bowen on 3 August 1871 to five trustees (including Robert and William Walker) “to be held as a site for a Methodist Protestant Church and Burial Grounds.” This parcel comprised the remainder of the original cemetery. The first Walker Chapel Church was built on this site and was dedicated in 1875.

On 1 October 1879, Robert Walker conveyed a triangular parcel of land to the trustees of Walker Chapel for a nominal consideration of \$1. This is the parcel on which the present edifice and the other part of the cemetery is located.

In April 2022, the HALRB approved CoA 22-09 for new air handlers at the basement well level of the rear portion of the church. More recently in August 2022, the HALRB approved CoA 22-17 for the removal of a defunct fire escape on the rear of the building and to infill the door with a window with a cruciform inlay.

As the LHD was designated in 1978 before design guidelines were individually developed for districts, *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Cultural Landscapes (SISR)* are used to guide design review.

Proposal

The applicant proposes to install a free-standing shed in the rear of the cemetery. The shed will be a front-gable plastic shed measuring 4' deep x 8' long with 4½" tall eaves. The shed will have swinging double plastic doors with inset six-lite fixed panes. The shed will be placed close to the fence line along the northeast side of the property. It will be sited outside of the zoning setback requirements for sheds and situated parallel with the L15-L20 grave row section.

DRC Review

The DRC heard this case at its September 7, 2022, hybrid meeting. The members had no questions and placed the item on the consent agenda for the September 21, 2022, HALRB hybrid public hearing.

Recommendation

The Historic Preservation Program staff recommends approval of the application. Given that this is still an active cemetery, staff supports the installation of storage on the grounds to aid the stewards in their upkeep and maintenance of the site. The installation of the shed will allow easier access to maintenance tools which are currently stored inside the church. Given that there is no evidence of a historic shed on the property and there are no LHD-specific design guidelines outlining appropriate shed materials or designs, staff considers the proposed use of plastic as a means of differentiating this shed as a new addition to the landscape. The proposed location of the shed is inobtrusive, will not interfere with any historic views of the cemetery or church buildings, and could be removed in the future without affecting the historic features of the site. These findings conform with Standard #9 of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*:

New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will 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.