



Community Development
Department

STAFF REPORT

Town Council Meeting Date:	August 8, 2023
Agenda Title:	33 N. Calhoun Street Cistern
Requested Action:	Work Session
Decision Deadline:	N/A
Staff Lead:	Casey Squyres, Preservation Planner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May, 2023 the Town of Warrenton entered into a lease agreement with Fauquier County for 33 N. Calhoun Street. The subject property, known as the previous Visitors Center, contains a cistern located in front of the building. The County is requesting to remove the cistern to allow for direct ADA access from the parking lot.

BACKGROUND

The Town of Warrenton owns the property at 33 N. Calhoun Street which contains a cistern in front of the building and is located within the Historic District. The property was part of the historic Brentmoor property that is subject to a historic preservation easement held by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources and administered by the Department of Historic Resources (DHR). The cistern is not listed as a contributing structure on the historic surveys conducted in 2019.

Fauquier County is exploring the option to remove the cistern to allow for direct ADA access from the parking lot to the building. The County approached DHR that found the proposed work of abandoning the cistern/well, removing the low wall and railing, and bricking over with pavers consistent with the walkway to be consistent with the Terms of the easement and the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation* (Attached Letter).

The Town of Warrenton Zoning Ordinance 3-5.3.4.5 states the demolition of a structure within the historic district may be approved by the Town Council if the structure has been identified as non-contributing.

The discussion of removing the cistern has also been brought up at the County/Town Liaison meeting and before the Architectural Review Board (ARB). While the ARB does not have purview over the potential demolition discussion, the Board indicated they are not opposed to its removal in an informal discussion.

Town staff has requested the County provide a layout of the proposal and a site visit with the County staff.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Town staff conducted site visits to the property and offer the following for consideration during the work session:

- 1) If Town Council approves the demolition of the cistern, the bricks may be re-laid in a circular fashion, or in some other manner, to demark where the cistern was historically located.
- 2) Town Council may consider the removal of an existing tree to the left of the building, which would allow ADA clearance from the existing ADA marked parking space. This would allow the cistern to remain as is, or Council may allow the County to modify it in a manner that would allow for landscaping.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) DHR Letter to Fauquier County
- 2) Fauquier County COA Form
- 3) Submitted Pictures