



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 130-0006-0395

Purpose of Evaluation

Please use the following space to explain briefly why you are seeking an evaluation of this property.

It has been a pleasure to live and care for this beautiful "old lady."

Are you interested in applying for State and/or Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes No X

Are you interested in receiving more information about DHR's easement program? Yes No X

1. General Property Information

Property name: Vaughan House

Property address: 1014 Washington Ave.

City or Town: Town of South Boston

Zip code: 24592

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Halifax County

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building X Site Structure Object

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 1 acre

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban Suburban Town X Village Hamlet Rural

Briefly describe the property's overall setting, including any notable landscape features:

The Vaughan House stands on a one-acre lot in the midst of South Boston's principal historic residential neighborhood, a component of the South Boston Historic District. Surrounding houses on Washington Avenue include examples of the Queen Anne, Tudor Revival, and Craftsman styles. Washington Avenue has been described by architectural historians Anne Carter Lee and others as the location of "some of South Boston's most impressive domestic architecture." A large deodar cedar stands on a front corner of the lot. The tree is said to have been a candidate for the National Christmas Tree. Along the sidewalk is a low poured concrete retaining wall with a quarry-faced concrete block pier, and on the street is a stone curb.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Italianate

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: (see discussion in text)

If the builder is known, please list here: (see discussion in text)

Date of construction (can be approximate): ca. 1888

**Narrative Description:**

In the space below, briefly describe the general characteristics of the entire property, such as its current use (and historic use if different), as well as the primary building or structure on the property (such as a house, store, mill, factory, depot, bridge, etc.). Include the architectural style, materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions, remodelings, or other alterations.

The Vaughan House at 1014 Washington Avenue in South Boston, Virginia, is an Italianate style residence built ca. 1888. The two-story frame house has novelty weatherboard siding, a low-pitched metal-sheathed hip roof, and a brick foundation. Italianate influence is seen mostly in the bracketed cornice and round-arched windows and glass front door panels (there are also square-headed windows). The elaborate wooden ornamentation includes a small front gable with a sawn and turned arched motif, fringed hoods over some windows, and pierced rectangular vents in the cornice frieze. The one-story front porch with its turned posts and sawn detail is a modern recreation from photos of the original porch (it replaces a Craftsman porch from the 1920s-30s period). Other exterior features include one and two-story bay windows, a parapeted shed roof to the rear (a treatment more typical of period commercial construction), a second-story rear bank of windows suggestive of a sleeping porch, and a modern carport addition.

Rich ornamentation also characterizes the two-room-deep, center-passage-plan interior. Wood floors, four-panel doors, reeded and molded trim, and plaster walls and ceilings are typical. The passage stair has square newels with urn finials, turned balusters, sawn tread brackets, and an unusual drum-like form of the ends of the bases for the two bottom steps. The passage ceiling has an ornate oil lamp (electrified) which hangs from a plaster medallion with strapwork detail (there are other medallions in the principal downstairs rooms with varied forms and detail). The righthand rooms are connected by an opening with a sawn frame and sliding French pocket doors. The front right room has the interior's most ornate mantel, a two-stage composition with three mirrored panels in the overmantel, colonnettes, and other classical detail. The room's fireplace and other fireplaces in the house have vividly colored glazed tiles with color combinations including cream with yellow slashes and dabs of pink; tan and dark green; and tan, black, cream, and yellow. Other mantels in the house have colonnettes or raised panels in a variety of geometric forms. Other interior features include an ornate cast iron and mica-paned coal insert manufactured by W. E. Wood and Co. of Baltimore; a transom with a stained-glass bud motif; a spindle archway originally in the first-floor center passage but now in an upstairs room; and a modernized kitchen in a one-story rear wing. The house is in excellent condition.

Briefly describe any outbuildings or secondary resources (such as barns, sheds, dam and mill pond, storage tanks, scales, railroad spurs, etc.), including their condition and their estimated construction dates.

Behind the house stands a brick outbuilding with an overhanging gable roof (probably originally a smokehouse; later used as a coal bin).

#### 4. Property's History and Significance

In the space below, briefly describe the history of the property, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property. Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

##### *Draft Statement of Significance Summary*

The ca. 1888 Vaughan House is a prominent example of the Italianate style in South Boston, the chief town of Halifax County, Virginia. The two-story frame house, described in the South Boston Historic District National Register nomination as “the best example of a wood frame Italianate house” in the district, is distinguished by elaborate ornamentation including a bracketed and vented cornice, fringed window heads, and an assortment of mantels with colonnettes and other decorative features. The principal rooms boast intricate ceiling medallions and fireplaces with brightly hued tilework. The house was built for Halifax County Clerk of Court Edgar H. Vaughan, and he lived there with his second wife, Ida Rogers Vaughan, who founded South Boston’s public library in 1915. After Edgar’s death in 1893, Ida married his younger brother, Aaron H. Vaughan, and their son, Aaron H. “Monk” Vaughan, toured the nation as bandmaster for Vaughan’s Virginians, a 1920s-30s ensemble. Another son, Page Haskins Vaughan, was the first president of the National Tobacco Festival held in South Boston in the 1930s and early 1940s. **The Vaughan House, which is a contributing building in the South Boston Historic District, is potentially individually eligible for the National Register under Criterion C in the Architecture area of significance for its elaborate Italianate detail and other distinctive and notable features. The house is also potentially eligible under Criterion B in the Education area of significance for its association with Ida Rogers Vaughan, founder of South Boston’s public library in 1915; under Criterion B in the Performing Arts area of significance for its association with musician Aaron Hugh “Monk” Vaughan; and under Criterion B in the Social History area of significance for its association with promoter Page Haskins Vaughan. The house is potentially eligible at the local level of significance.**

##### *Historic Context*

Edgar Hopson Vaughan (1843-93), who as a young man served in a cavalry unit of the Confederate States Army, went into the mercantile business in South Boston after the war and in 1879 was elected county clerk of court, a position he held at the time of his death in 1893 due to a hunting accident. His first wife was Almira Traver, whom he married in 1867. His second wife was Ida Rogers Vaughan (1863-1957), described in her obituary as “a faithful patron of public education” who “became the first library board chairman and was a leading figure in the establishment of the town’s first public library.” Historian Pocahontas Edmunds, who knew Vaughan beginning in the 1930s, praised her “spunk” and called her “the godmother or good fairy of the library dream here.” Vaughan opened the South Boston Library in a room above the Planters and Merchant Bank in 1915. The library moved from space to space until 1935 when the Carrington Memorial Library was built. “It wasn’t much,” Ida Vaughan recalled of the library during its peripatetic years, “but it was there.” Ida Vaughan is the source of the 1888 date for the Vaughan House. In the ca. 1956 interview in which the date appears, it is stated that the date may be an estimate.

In 1897 Ida married her late husband’s younger brother, Aaron Hugh Vaughan (1861-1914). Aaron Vaughan was South Boston’s mayor at the time of his death. An obituary noted that he was “twice president of the First National Bank, president of the Bannister Brick Company, director of the local building and loan association, and one of the proprietors of the Vaughan Meat and Coal Company.” Another obituary noted that he was also president of the Vaughan Undertaking Company and suggested the meat and coal enterprises were separate businesses (the A. H. Vaughan Coal Co. and the Vaughan & Terry Meat Co.).

Ida and Aaron had two sons. Aaron Hugh Vaughan (1900-64; same name as his father), who went by the stage name “Monk” Vaughan, headed a musical ensemble called Vaughan’s Virginians in the 1920s and 1930s. The band is known to have played in Houston and Galveston, Texas, and Atlanta, Georgia. A photo of the band published in a 1925 issue of the *Houston Chronicle* shows wind and brass instruments, a banjo, a drum set, and a grand piano. The band played for the Greater Movie Season Ball at the Houston City Auditorium in 1925; the same band, or a successor, which may have been a swing band, played at a Halifax County venue known as The Riverview. Aaron returned to South Boston where he lived in the Vaughan House and played organ at Trinity Episcopal Church and was an organizer of the Community Concert Series. His Steinway piano, which remained in the house until recent years, was disassembled and reassembled at the auditorium of C. H. Friend High School (built 1939) for use by visiting concert pianists as part of the series. Aaron, who did not go by the name Monk while in South Boston, was known to local residents as the owner of a monkey that was kept on a wooden stand in the front yard of the house.

The other son, Page Haskins Vaughan (1904-40), was the first president of the National Tobacco Festival, a popular promotional event held in the county in the 1930s. He worked in the insurance business in South Boston and was a commander of the South Boston National Guard. The town armory, completed around the time of Vaughan’s death, was named for him. Page also lived in the Vaughan House during his adult life.

The builder of the house is not currently known, although it is perhaps significant that E. H. Vaughan’s first wife, Almira Traver, has the same surname as local contractor James Traver who moved to the area in the 1850s to build South Boston’s covered bridge over the Dan River. James Traver remained active into the 1880s and 1890s when he built such buildings as Spring Hill Presbyterian Church near Cluster Springs and the Throm House and John Easley House in South Boston. According to Ida and Aaron’s granddaughter, Sallie Anne Vaughan Powell, the Hamilton family construction firm, headed by African American contractor John Henderson Hamilton (b. 1864), undertook construction and/or repair projects on the property during the early and/or mid-twentieth century. The coal insert in the front left parlor was manufactured by the W. E. Wood company of Baltimore, which also installed heating systems for apartment buildings in Baltimore around 1900. The intricately patterned and brightly colored glazed tiles used for the house’s fireplace hearths and surrounds may have been produced by local brickmason and tile manufacturer Howard Welton Cosby, the grandson of builder Dabney Cosby Sr. Tiles with similar patterns, though different colors, are found in H. W. Cosby’s house Ellerslie (1888) in Halifax.

### *Sources*

Several individuals contributed information and other support to the production of this report, among them Mark and Deborah Morris, Donna and Ned Strange, Sallie Anne Vaughan Powell, and Virginia Gentry.

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- Strange, Donna. Personal communication with the author, October 2017.
- Vaughan Family Collection

**5. Property Ownership** (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: X Public\Local \_\_\_\_\_ Public\State \_\_\_\_\_ Public\Federal \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property** (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: See attached

organization: \_\_\_\_\_

street & number: \_\_\_\_\_

city or town: \_\_\_\_\_ state: \_\_\_\_\_ zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Owner's Signature: See attached Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••**

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Information** (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)

name/title: Dan Pezzoni

organization: Landmark Preservation Associates

street & number: 6 Houston St.

city or town: Lexington state: VA zip code: 24450

e-mail: gilespezzoni@rockbridge.net telephone: (540) 464-5315

**6. Notification**

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.

name/title: Mr. James M. Halasz, County Administrator

locality: Halifax County

street & number: 1030 Cowford Rd., Suite LL1 (PO Box 699)

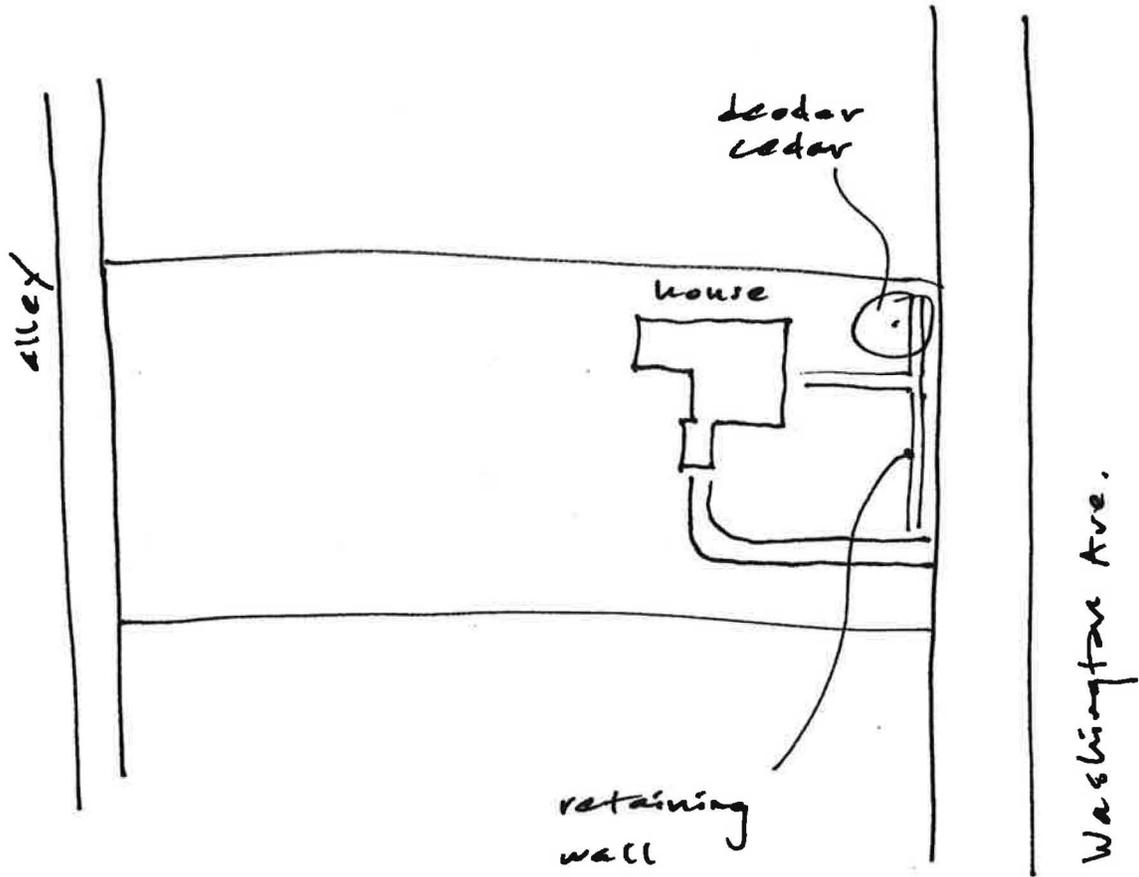
city or town: Halifax state: VA zip code: 24558

telephone: (434) 476-3300

Vaughan House  
1014 Washington Ave.,  
South Boston, Va.

10/2017

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