PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) __________________________

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

The goal of this application is to determine if this property is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. This property is significant as one of the original surviving structures dating to the founding of the Village of Aldie. It has evolved over time with several additions being added through the 19th century but the most remarkable feature is the original condition of the core structure. The property served as a tavern in the 1840’s and being situated within Aldie’s “core battlefield area”, witnessed the events of June 17th 1863 – one of a series of small battles commonly referred to as the “prelude to Gettysburg”. This property has stood as the first dwelling welcoming travelers entering the village from the east for over 200 years. We hope that the recognition provided by addition to the National Register will encourage preservation efforts by current and future owners, ensuring its continued prominence within the village of Aldie and its architectural significance within the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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:  _The Aldie Tavern_____________________________________________
Property address:  _39491 John Mosby Highway_________________________________________
City or Town:  _Aldie, VA_______________
Zip code:  __20105________________
Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: _Loudoun County_____

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):
Building  _X___  Site _____  Structure _____  Object _____

2. Physical Aspects
Acreage:  ____2.71_____________________________
Setting (choose only one of the following):
Urban _____ Suburban _____ Town _____ Village  _X___ Hamlet _____ Rural_____

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

The 2.71 acre lot runs south from John Mosby Highway and is the first lot on the south side within the historic village of Aldie. The property is sited on a relatively steep slope at the north end of the Bull Run Mountain range. The main house or “tavern” structure is “L” shaped in plan and is positioned near the Highway. Vehicle access to the property is via a driveway to the west, leading to a black-top paved area extending to the western
edge of the property. The property extends to the south and is terraced as it extends up the end of the mountain. The acreage along the south end of the property is densely wooded, while the land near the house is open with several large, established trees.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Vernacular - Late Federal, Adams style

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: Unknown

If the builder is known, please list here: Unknown

Date of construction (can be approximate): ca. 1810, additions -1820’s, 1830’s, 1850’s, mid-20th C.

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.

Citation: The text and research below is mostly borrowed from the “Site and Historic Survey” Report, drafted by EHT Traceries and submitted to the Loudoun County Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure in 2017.

An analysis of exterior and interior elements suggests that the house at 39491 John Mosby Highway likely dates to c. 1820 or earlier, and represents a vernacular late Federal dwelling that was altered during the mid-nineteenth century.

The original, main block of the house is an example of a center-passage, single-pile plan. The center-passage, single-pile plan gained popularity during the 1800s and was widespread by the 1840s. Center-passage houses of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century usually feature the parlor and dining room located on the first floor to either side of the hall, and these rooms feature a more sophisticated level of interior finish than the upstairs rooms. In addition, examples built prior to 1820 usually have unfinished attic spaces. These traits are all present at 39491 John Mosby Highway.

Center-passage houses constructed during the first half of the nineteenth century are typically symmetrical with five-ranked facades. That the west side of the house is longer than the east side suggests that the western most bay was added later, and this interpretation is supported by the change in floorboards of the first-floor dining room. The cornice of the main block partially extends into the gables, creating the impression of a classical pediment. This feature is associated with the Greek Revival style (c. 1825-1860), and further dates the addition to the mid-nineteenth century. It appears that the original east gable was also altered at this time to match the new west gable. The stucco exterior cladding was probably applied at the time of the addition to disguise the change in masonry (stone on the east and brick additions to the west).

Other exterior elements are more characteristic of the Adam style (c. 1780-1840). The north elevation entrance incorporates a rectangular three-light transom that is associated with both the Adam and Greek Revival styles, but is most likely an original Adam feature, rather than a mid-nineteenth century alteration. The centered front gable of the north wing is an element that is typically associated with the Centered Gable variant of the Adam style.
style or the Early Classical Revival style (c.1770-1830). The front steps appear to be constructed of stone blocks covered in a thick coat of lime mortar, and the light, delicate quality of the wrought-iron railing is consistent with that found on certain Adam-style houses.  

The interior of the north wing also contains several original features that are characteristic of the Adam style, which was expressed through a lighter, more refined interpretation of neoclassical elements than seen in the Colonial Period. The fireplace surrounds of the first-floor parlor and dining room display simple reeded pilasters and rectangular panels, which are very similar to documented southern examples from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The narrow, eight and four-paneled doors which are situated to either side of the fireplace in the parlor, as well as the inset lateral and soffit paneling of several first-floor window and door surrounds, is characteristic of the exuberant wall and door paneling observed in Adam-style interiors. The staircase of the main block features straight balusters and a simple polished handrail has been documented in Adam houses, such as the Patrick Duncan House (1816) located in Charleston, South Carolina.

In summary, based on the overall form of the house, its interior floorplan, and the presence of Adam details, the house at 39491 John Mosby Highway was likely constructed prior to 1820. The western bay, and possibly the rear addition, were built c. 1851-1854 by James S. Oden. The house along with the Aldie Mill complex and Mercer House represent the oldest structures in the Village of Aldie. Resources that date from this time period are rare in Loudoun County and VDHR records show that only twenty rural, late-Federal houses have been documented in Loudoun County. Importantly, the house maintains a very high degree of integrity which the other buildings of this period throughout Loudoun County may not, increasing its significance to the county. In his 1976 architectural survey of Aldie, John G. Lewis of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission noted that the house was “worthy of preservation,” and that it was an “important element to the east end approach of the village.”

The tavern is currently uninhabited and is boarded up to prevent unauthorized entry and is owned by Loudoun County. It was acquired with intentions of using the land for the construction of a new fire station but these plans have changed and the property is likely to remain intact.

1. To the west of the main house is a two storey smokehouse which was likely built in the early to mid 19th century. It is mostly original and in good condition with lower level stone walls and original floor joists of pine logs. Access to the lower level is through a door on the north side. The upper floor is accessed through a door located on the terraced south side of the structure. The roof structure appears to be an early 20th century restoration but is sympathetic to the original design.
2. Immediately to the west of the smokehouse is a mid 20th century, two-stall garage with cinder block walls and a gable roof. This structure is in poor condition and is deemed “not contributing”.
3. Directly to the south of the main house, up the hill and into the wooded lot is a small and badly dilapidated barn. This structure is likely late 19th to early 20th century with one main span and an equipment stall to the east.
4. To the north-west of the barn is a badly deteriorated modern in-ground swimming pool.

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.

2  Lanier and Herman, 31-32.
3  McAlester, 179-84.
4  McAlester, 153-58; 169-72.
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.

Deeds for 39491 John Mosby Highway “Aldie Tavern” document sales and transactions to 1740. Originally, the property was located within the 1740 land grant to Thomas Owsley. The land transferred from Owsley to Charles Fenton Mercer, known as the founder of the village of Aldie. Between 1810 and 1813, Abraham Fulton purchased a two acre lot from Charles Fenton Mercer. Although the deed for this transaction has not been located, the property is mentioned in the August 1, 1815 deed between Charles Fenton Mercer and William Noland. Noland purchased 693 acres from Mercer, but the deed excluded several pieces of land geographically located within the parcel, including Abraham Fulton’s “two acre lots now in his possession fronting the Little River turnpike road and included or designed to be included in the Town of Aldie...these lots all lie on the turnpike aforesaid and upon the southeast side of Little River.” Fulton’s property was adjacent and to the east of Aaron Marsteller’s property, purchased from Mercer in 1813. Fulton’s parcel shared its west boundary with the Marsteller property, and the parcels south boundaries were on the same plane.

After Mercer purchased the property in 1803, a survey of the Aldie area was completed. The 1807 survey map depicted one small, square building with a fence within the area located to the south of the Little River Turnpike and to the east of the Little River. It is unlikely that a building was located on Marsteller’s property, as no improvements to the parcel are noted in the 1813 deed. As such, it may be possible that a building was situated on this parcel by that date. However, it is important to note that prior to Fulton’s purchase of the property, the parcel was part of a large estate owned by one wealthy landowner, who did not live on the parcel. Therefore, it is likely that any building located on the property prior to 1807 would have been a more modest building, perhaps associated with a tenant of the larger estate.

In the 1820 Tax Record for Loudoun County, Abraham Fulton owned four lots of property within Aldie, with a land value of $450 and a building value of $550. According to Wynne Saffer, a Loudoun County Historian, the town’s lots were originally all about the same size, with fifty feet of street frontage and measuring approximately one-half acre apiece. As such, it seems entirely possible that Abraham Fulton’s four lots were contiguous and all a part of his two acre parcel. As such, it appears that by 1820, Fulton had at least one building on his property. This is substantiated by an 1824 survey of Loudoun County that shows three buildings in the vicinity of the Fulton and Marsteller properties.

Deed research appears to indicate this two acre parcel was separated into two, one-acre parcels by 1824. In that year, Abraham Fulton was indebted to Horace Luckett for $350. To secure these payments to Luckett, he deeded his property to Asa Rogers, including “the Brick house in which the said Abraham Fulton now lives.” In 1826, the property was offered at public sale and purchased by Luckett. In 1831, Luckett purchased the dower rights of Ellen Fulton (Abraham’s widow) to “two half acre lots with a brick house on the same,” before selling the property to John Ish on June 10, 1831 for $400. The second one-acre parcel is described in September 22, 1830 deed between Fanny Armistead and John Ish as a “certain log house and two half-acre lots,” for $100, subject to the dower interest of Ellen Fulton. Fulton sold her dower rights to this property to the said Ish on May 14, 1831.
The building at 39491 John Mosby Highway is a stone and brick masonry building, so it could not be the “log house,” but was most-likely the brick house that Luckett purchased from Fulton in 1826. Based on the construction materials, it seems that the oldest part of the house is the stone six eastern bays. The brick western-most bay was most-likely added at a later date, which would explain why the building is not symmetrical, something that would have been typical during that time period. N. McVeigh and James H. McVeigh, merchants, which stipulated that the property could be auctioned by the McVeighs if the Ishs’ were not able to pay their debts to said parties. Two parcels of property were included in this indenture, the first was approximately one acre and was where Ish resided, and the second, an adjacent four-acre lot which contained a blacksmith shop “with all and singular appurtenances improvements buildings shops store house.”

On July 6, 1848, Townsend McVeigh auctioned off a two-acre lot containing “the Tavern house.” This is the first and only known mention of the building within this parcel being called a tavern. The winning bid, $1,443 was placed by Nathaniel Oden. According to Chancery Court records, Nathaniel Oden purchased the property for his son, James S. Oden. According to the chancery documents regarding his deceased father’s estate, James S. Oden treated the property as his own, and:

...with the knowledge of the said Nathaniel S. Oden and without objection on his part your orator [James S. Oden] pulled down buildings and erected others upon said lot, that the improvements by your said orator cost him at least the sum of one thousand dollars, that after the death of said Nathaniel S. Oden...surrendered all claims to said lot and the improvements thereon, except about 1/6 of an acre thereof with the improvements thereon, being improvements erected by your orator, the ground upon which they stand and a small piece of ground at the front and south end of said improvements...

Depositions regarding improvements to the property were given by several people. John Beverly Oden, James’ brother, stated that his brother erected a dwelling house on the property from 1851 to 1854, with the costs estimated at approximately $1200. Asa Jackson, who appraised the property with Joseph Taylor on March 8, 1856, stated, “There was a dwelling house upon the property,” and that they appraised it at $1,750, stating he believed it added that much value to the property.

According to this documentation, it appears that James S. Oden heavily altered, the house and other buildings that had been on the property prior to 1851. This is most likely when the side and rear addition was put on 39491 John Mosby Highway, and when the building’s exterior materials date to, including the stucco, windows, and possibly shutters, though those are most-likely replacement shutters due to their condition. Due to matching materials, the smokehouse was most-likely added at this time as well.

After Nathaniel Oden’s death in 1854, his wife, Huldah Oden, his two sons, James S. and John Beverley, and his deceased daughter’s husband, Daniel B. Sowers, signed an agreement on September 16, 1855 regarding the division of Nathaniel’s assets. A result of this agreement was the purchase of land “with a dwelling house, store house and other improvements” by Huldah from her sons on August 16, 1856.

According to Nathaniel Oden’s obituary, at the time of his death in 1854, he was a resident of Roseville in Loudoun County, Virginia, a large farm located two miles east of Aldie (recently demolished). As mentioned above, Nathaniel never lived at the property, rather, he purchased the property for his son, James S. Oden in 1848. The 1855 agreement reveals Nathaniel Oden had over $72,000 in property at the time of his death, including three large parcels of land, the Aldie property and lot, household goods, farm equipment, livestock, and thirty-seven slaves. In exchange for some of Huldah’s property rights, her two sons and son-in-law agreed to give her an allowance of $900 per annum. In the 1860 U.S. Census Slave Schedule, Huldah Oden was recorded as owning five slaves, three mulatto women aged thirty-eight, twenty-three, and one, and two mulatto men aged eighteen and twelve.
Sometime after her husband’s death, Huldah moved into the house at 39491 John Mosby Highway. At the time of the 1860 U.S. Census, Huldah was living in the area served by the Arcola Post Office in Loudoun County, but by the 1870 U.S. Census Huldah Oden was residing at the Aldie property. She was seventy two years of age, with an occupation of “keeping house,” owning real estate worth $1,450 and a personal estate worth $200. At the time, three of her granddaughters Mary C., Harriet B., and Frances A. Sowers, and Lucy Johnson, an African American housekeeper aged twenty, and Virginia Jones, an African American child aged eight, also resided at the property. In 1880, ten people lived in the house including four granddaughters, a great-granddaughter, one African American servant, and a family of three listed as boarders, which most-likely resulted in heavy interior alterations and the addition of multiple interior partition walls.

Sometime in the mid to late twentieth century, a wood and CMU block garage was constructed directly adjacent to the mid nineteenth century smokehouse.

2. Deed of Sale from Charles Fenton Mercer to William Noland, August 1, 1815. Loudoun County, Virginia, Deed Book 2T, 126.
3. Deed of Sale from Charles Fenton Mercer to Aaron Marsteller, October 11, 1813. Loudoun County, Virginia, Deed Book 2Q, 383.
5. Locating the original deed between Charles Fenton Mercer and Abraham Fulton may also give further insight regarding existing improvements on the parcel.
6. Per Wynne Saffer, conversation with Kimberly De Muro on March 24, 2017, the 1820 Tax Records for Loudoun County showed that Fulton owned four lots with the total land and building values mentioned above.
9. Indenture from Fulton to Luckett, May 1, 1824. Loudoun County, Virginia, Deed Book 3H, 143.
12. Deed of Sale from Fanny Armistead to John Ish, September 22, 1830. Loudoun County, Virginia, Deed Book 4C, 442. John Ish also purchased other properties in Aldie prior to 1853, including two lots on Mercer Street. Further research would need to be undertaken to try and conclude if the Armistead property is definitively the property considered herein.
15. Deed of Sale from T. McVeigh to N. Oden, July 6, 1848, Loudoun County, Virginia. Deed Book 5B, 75.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Deed of Sale from James S. and John B. Oden to Huldah Oden, August 16, 1856. Loudoun County, Virginia, Deed Book 5N, 250.
5. Property Ownership  (Check as many categories as apply):
Private: _____  Public\Local ___X___  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: _____ Loudoun County Board of Supervisors _(Chair Phyllis Randall)______________________
organization: _______________________________________________________
street & number: _PO Box 7000 MSC 01______________________________________
city or town: __Leesburg_______________________  state:  __Virginia___  zip code:  _20177_
e-mail: ___phyllis.randall@loudoun.gov__________  telephone:  __703 777-0204_________

Legal Owner’s Signature: ______________________________________________  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:  __________________________________________________________
organization: _Aldie Heritage Association_____________________________________
street & number: _____________________________________________________
city or town: _Aldie________________________  state:  _Virginia_____  zip code:  _20105__________
e-mail:  ______________________________  telephone:  ________________________

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, City Manager, and/or Town Manager
name/title:  ________________________________
locality:  ___________________________________________________________
street & number:  ___________________________________________________
city or town:  _____________________________ state:  ___________  zip code:  ___________
telephone:  _____________________________