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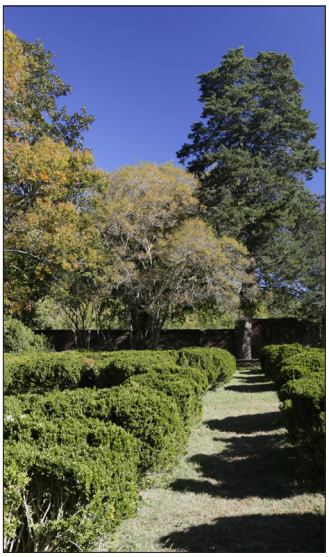


Olmsted Center
for Landscape Preservation

Cultural Landscape Report for the Nelson House Grounds

Colonial National Historical Park

Volume 2: Treatment



Cultural Landscape Report for the Nelson House Grounds

Colonial National Historical Park
Volume 2: Treatment

Yorktown, Virginia

Introduction

Analysis and Evaluation

Existing Conditions

Treatment

Appendices

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Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
National Park Service, Boston, Massachusetts, 2024

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Cover Photo: The nelson house from Main Street, Yorktown, November 2023. (By Danielle D. Desilets, Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc.)

Title Page: West facade of Nelson House from the formal garden, November 2023. (By Danielle D. Desilets, Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc.)

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Acknowledgements

Numerous individuals played a vital role in bringing this study to fruition. Gratitude to the staff at Colonial National Historical Park for their support, expertise, guidance, and review of draft materials. Special thanks to Dwayne Scheid, Division Lead, Resource Stewardship and Science Division; Matt Henderson, Facility Manager; Ajena Rogers, Park Ranger; and Ronald Grayson, Cultural Resources Manager, and Jerri Marr, Superintendent.

Appreciation is also extended to various individuals for their input during our virtual stakeholder interviews held in February 2024, and our workshop held in Yorktown on April 11, 2024: Earl Anderson, Jennifer Carver, Bill Cole, R. Wayne Green, Celeste Gucanac, Teri Hodson, Cornelius Hubbard, Bonnie Karwac, Jacques van Montfarns, Jeanne Sgroi, Liz and Tom Tragle, Elizabeth Wilkins, Darren Williams, Elizabeth Wilkins, and Darren Williams. These individuals are business owners, residents, and historians, planners, and most importantly, dedicated enthusiasts of the Nelson House grounds and the larger historic Yorktown landscape.

Also were those previous employed by the park in various roles: Dorothy Geyer, Dorothy Geyer, retried Landscape Architect for Colonial National Historical Park and John Auwaerter, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry—one of the authors of the 2022 CLR.

From the National Park Service Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, thanks to thank Eliot Foulds, Program Manager, Preservation Planning for his guidance and facilitation, and Kelsey Little, GIS Specialist.

Finally, as this is an update of the 2011 report, the authors of the earlier edition are to be recognized as much of their thinking, their diagrams, and their words are included herein. The 2011 *Cultural Landscape Report for the Nelson House Grounds, Colonial National Historical Park* was written and edited by John Auwaerter, George Curry, and Paul Fritz.

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Introduction

Along Yorktown's quiet Main Street of mostly small colonial buildings, the Nelson House and its two-acre walled grounds occupy a prominent place. Initially acquired in 1706 by Thomas "Scotch Tom" Nelson, the property reflects the village's eighteenth century prosperity and its early twentieth century revival. Scotch Tom built the existing Georgian-style house c. 1730, and during the American War for Independence and its final major battle, the 1781 Siege of Yorktown, it was the home of Governor Thomas Nelson Jr. His descendents remained through the nineteenth century during a period of marked decline in Yorktown. In 1914, the property was purchased by wealthy industrialist George Preston Blow and renovated into a Colonial Revival-style country place known as York Hall. Charles Gillette, one of Virginia's most prominent early landscape architects, designed the grounds. In the 1970s, after acquiring the York Hall estate in 1968, the National Park Service restored the Nelson House to its colonial appearance. Due to a lack of historic documentation and desire to retain some York Hall estate features, the park did not complete a corresponding restoration of the colonial landscape. Instead, the rehabilitation removed features that were overtly twentieth century in character, leaving the major structures, organization, and plantings of the Colonial Revival landscape. Today, the Nelson House grounds reflect three centuries of changing use and design. Over the years, this layered landscape has posed challenges for park interpreters and managers.

This report is an update of the 2011 *Cultural Landscape Report* prepared by the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry for the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation. The 2011 *Cultural Landscape Report* comprehensively documented the site history, which has been summarized below. It did not, however, provide treatment recommendations for the landscape. Therefore, this update documents 2024 existing conditions, summarizes changes from 2011-2024, reanalyzes the landscape's integrity and contributing features, as well as provides treatment recommendations.

PROJECT SCOPE & ORGANIZATION

In the National Park Service, a cultural landscape report is the principal treatment document for historic landscapes and the primary tool for their long-term management. The park service defines a cultural landscape as a geographic area that includes both built and natural resources, and is associated with a historic event, activity, or person.[1] A cultural landscape includes not only landforms, roads, walks, and vegetation, but also buildings, views, and small-scale features, such as fences, signs, and benches.

Chapter 2, Existing Conditions, of this report provides a narrative and graphic overview of the present character of the landscape and its administration and use. Chapter 3, Analysis and Evaluation, assesses the historic significance and integrity of the landscape based on the National Register criteria, and evaluates the landscape's historic character according to National Park Service cultural landscape methods.

The project area for this report focuses on two acres surrounding the Nelson House that are contained within Yorktown village lots 48, 49, 50, and 52 . It also includes lots 53 (the Smith house) and 54 (the Ballard house), but these are not the focus. (Figure 1.1)

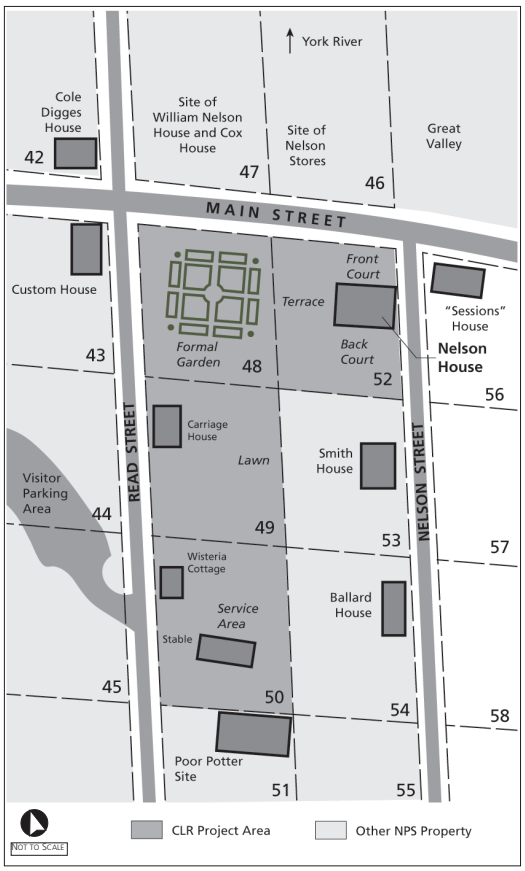


Figure 1.1 Map of the project area for the cultural landscape report showing Yorktown lots, adjoining National Park Service property, and landscape character areas within the Nelson House grounds labeled in italics. (Created by SUNY ESF for the 2011 CLR.)

These lots formed the core of Thomas Nelson Jr.'s home during the colonial period through the Siege of Yorktown in 1781, an era that forms the park's interpretive period. Adjoining properties, including the Smith and Ballard Houses on lots 53 and 54, and lots 46 and 47 across Main Street historically occupied by the William Nelson House and Nelson stores, are addressed to the extent they inform the history, setting, and management of the Nelson House grounds. Additionally, these and other lots were part of the Blow family's York Hall estate during the twentieth century.

Landscape character areas, which are distinct sections of the landscape defined by common characteristics, serve as the basic organizational structure for much of the report, including the analysis and evaluation. The Nelson House grounds consist of six character areas (see Figure 1.1): the front court between the Nelson House and Main Street; the back court between the house and the Smith House lot boundary; the terrace between the house and the formal garden; the formal garden bounded by the terrace and the perimeter wall along Read and Main Streets; the lawn between the formal garden and the service area, including the carriage house and Wisteria Cottage; and the service area to either side of the stable at the south end of the grounds bordering the Poor Potter Site.



Figure 1.2 Map of Yorktown's location in the Virginia Tidewater. The units of Colonial National Historical Park are labeled in italics. (Created by SUNY ESF for the 2011 CLR.)

PROJECT SETTING

The Nelson House is located in Yorktown, a small unincorporated village at the lower Chesapeake Bay estuary between Williamsburg and Hampton in the Virginia Tidewater region. Also known as Historic Yorktown, the village is on the south side of the York River near the eastern end of the Colonial Parkway, a limited-access road connecting Yorktown Battlefield with Colonial Williamsburg and Jamestown. The village is a part of the Yorktown Battlefield unit of Colonial National Historical Park that also includes the units of Jamestown, Cape Henry Memorial, and the Colonial Parkway. The Yorktown Battlefield unit features a visitor center and park headquarters east of the village, across a wooded ravine historically known as Tobacco Road, adjoining the Revolutionary War battlefield.

Unlike nearby Colonial Williamsburg, Historic Yorktown is not a living history museum, but rather a mix of historic and contemporary uses. It includes buildings and open land owned



Figure 1.3 Aerial photograph of Yorktown showing the setting of the Nelson House and relationship to Yorktown Battlefield, Colonial Parkway, and historic buildings and sites within the village. Historic sites owned by the National Park Service and open to the public are underlined. Colonial buildings not owned by the park service are labeled in italics. (Commonwealth of Virginia photograph, 2010, annotated by SUNY ESF for the 2011 CLR.)

by the National Park Service and others, side streets lined by private residences and offices, a recently redeveloped commercial waterfront area, and a long sandy bathing beach. The west side of the village is bordered by US 17 (George Washington Memorial Highway), a four-lane divided highway that spans the Southeastern coastline from Florida to Virginia. The Colonial Parkway skirts the south side of the village and ends at the Yorktown Battlefield visitor center.

Yorktown's Main Street, the spine of the historic village that parallels the York River, contains just over a dozen buildings remaining from a once urban streetscape that was partially restored to its colonial appearance during the early and mid-twentieth century. A large amount of land along the street, mostly former building sites, is undeveloped. The park service-owned buildings and sites along and near Main Street that are open to the public include, from east to west: the Yorktown Victory Monument (Monument to the Alliance and Victory), a tall granite column completed in 1883 to commemorate the centennial of the Siege of Yorktown; the restored Dudley Digges House, Cole Digges House, and Somerwell House; and the reconstructed Medical Shop and Swan Tavern complex. The park-owned archeological site of the William Rogers pottery, known as the Poor Potter Site, is south of the Nelson House grounds along Read Street. The colonial Smith and Ballard Houses on Nelson Street are owned by the park, but are used as private staff residences and are not open to the public.

Privately-owned colonial buildings near the Nelson House include the Custom House at the corner of Read and Main Streets, owned by the Comte de Grasse Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution which is open to the public on a limited schedule. At the corner of Nelson and Main Streets is the so-called Sessions (Sessions- Pope-Shield) House, a private residence, and a block to the northwest is Grace Episcopal Church and cemetery.

The former county courthouse known as York Hall, a Colonial Revival building completed in 1955 two blocks west of the Nelson House, is the largest building along Main Street.

METHODOLOGY

Field surveys were completed in the November 2023. Existing conditions were documented and checked against the 2011 period plan included in the CLR, and GIS-based plans have been created to record these conditions.

The analysis examines the historical significance of the Nelson House grounds and evaluates the integrity of the physical character of the landscape. It is based on criteria developed by the National Register of Historic Places, which lists properties significant to our country's history and prehistory. The analysis reviews the current National Register status, identifies inconsistencies and potential new

areas of significance, and evaluates them in accordance with National Register criteria and related historical contexts. The evaluation examines the physical integrity of the extant landscape characteristics and features, such as vegetation, views, and circulation, with respect to the site's historical appearance and identifies which contribute or do not contribute to the site's historical significance. An awareness of contributing and non-contributing characteristics and features helped to facilitate the development of the treatment plan.

SITE HISTORY SUMMARY

A complete history is written in the 2011 *Cultural Landscape Report* Chapter 1 and is not reiterated herein. A summary of the history of the site from that report, follows.

The five historic periods of the Nelson House grounds include the years prior to settlement by the Nelson family in 1706; the early period of Nelson ownership from 1706 until Thomas Nelson Jr.'s death in 1789; the late period of Nelson ownership to 1914 (including ownership by the Bryan family and R. A. Lancaster); Blow family ownership from 1914 through 1967; and the period of National Park Service ownership from 1968 until the present.[2]

Overall, available documentation provides rich detail on the development of the Nelson House grounds as the York Hall estate during the early twentieth century, but relatively little on the character of the landscape during the colonial period through the Siege of Yorktown in 1781. While photographs and accounts from the nineteenth century and more recent archeological investigations provide documentation on a number of eighteenth-century features, many details of the colonial landscape of the Nelson House grounds remain unknown.

PRE-1706

Prior to the arrival of Europeans in the seventeenth century, the Nelson House grounds and surrounding area were part of the homeland of the Powhatan people, who lived in numerous villages throughout the region. The site was most likely part of a hardwoods forest, although the Powhatan people may have made clearings for agriculture and to attract wildlife.

Following the first permanent European settlement at nearby Jamestown in 1607, the lands of the Virginia Peninsula were granted to settlers who established plantations, primarily for the tobacco trade. In 1631, Nicholas Martiau received a patent for 1,300 acres of land on the south side of the York River, including the future Nelson House site. In 1691, the village of Yorktown was laid out on a part of Martiau's plantation, then owned by his descendents, the Read family, as eighty-

five half-acre lots, with a strip of common land along the York River. The Nelson House grounds corresponded with lots 48, 49, 50, and 52 on the south side of Main Street. By 1706, there were no buildings were on these lots, although several houses existed nearby.

EARLY NELSON PERIOD, 1706-1789

Thomas "Scotch Tom" Nelson, a native of England, purchased lot 52 in 1706, and as stipulated in his deed, built a house there within a year. He also acquired adjoining lots 48, 49, and 50 as a place for his gardens. Scotch Tom also bought a number of other village lots, including those across Main Street, where he built stores for his mercantile business. He amassed enough wealth by the 1720s to construct a prominent brick house on lot 52 (the present Nelson House), which was completed c. 1730. Along with the new house, he maintained six outbuildings that enclosed a service yard on the west side of the house. These included a kitchen and wash house, servant (slave) quarters, poultry house, smokehouse, spinning house, and a dairy. There may have been secondary houses on lots 48, 49, and 50 built to satisfy the same stipulations as contained in the deed for lot 52. A board fence enclosed the property along Main Street and most likely extended along the other street boundaries as well.

Upon his death in 1745, Scotch Tom left his property along Main Street, including the Nelson House, to his oldest son, William, known as President Nelson. Around this time, William built a large, 'H'-shaped brick house on the north side of Main Street (present field northwest of the Nelson House). Scotch Tom's younger son, Thomas, known as Secretary Nelson, built another large house at the east side of the village (on Zwybrucken Road near the Victory Monument). Around 1766, William's son, Thomas Nelson Jr. (the suffix was to distinguish him from his uncle, the Secretary), moved into the old Nelson House built by Scotch Tom. Upon William Nelson's death in 1772, he left his 'H'-shaped brick house to his younger son, Hugh, and the old Nelson House to Thomas Nelson Jr.

Thomas Nelson Jr. was a prominent figure in colonial Virginia and the young United States. He signed the Declaration of Independence and served as governor of Virginia in 1780–1781. It was during his ownership of the Nelson House that American patriots won the final major battle of the Revolution, the Siege of Yorktown, in 1781. This battle resulted in heavy damage to Yorktown, including destruction of the Secretary Nelson House, but relatively minor damage to the Nelson House. Thomas Nelson Jr. repaired the house and continued to live there occasionally until his death in 1789. There is little record that he made significant changes to the landscape, but may have included a boxwood hedge enclosing the front court, presumably a formal garden at the rear of the house, and domestic gardens on the lots bordering Read Street.

LATE NELSON PERIOD, 1789-1914

The Nelson House and its four lots passed to successive generations of the Nelson family after the death of Thomas Nelson Jr. in 1789. In 1814, a widespread fire in Yorktown destroyed the William Nelson House and Nelson stores, but spared the Nelson House and its outbuildings. The Marquis de Lafayette stayed at the Nelson House during his triumphal return visit to the United States in 1824. Nelson family occupancy was briefly interrupted during the Civil War, when Confederate and Union forces occupied Yorktown and used the Nelson House as a field hospital.

Shortly after the Civil War, a brick retaining wall was built around the front court, and a tenant house was erected along Main Street on lot 48. The family subsequently made few other improvements over the course of the next five decades, and continued to use the garden and open lots (lots 48, 49, and 50) for cultivation and pasture, lined by a variety of wood and wire fences. In the yard, the servant quarters and poultry house may have been removed during or soon after the Civil War, while the others came down by 1900, except for the kitchen and wash house. In 1896, ownership of the Nelson House passed to Mary and Elizabeth Bryan, whose stepmother, Martha Bryan, was a Nelson by her first marriage. In 1908, the Bryans sold lot 52 that included the Nelson House to R.A. Lancaster, but retained ownership of the garden lots. For much of the next six years, the house stood vacant. Only the brick foundation and massive chimney of the kitchen–wash house remained from the group of the colonial outbuildings that defined the service yard. By 1914, the house was in poor condition with broken windows, peeling paint, and ivy covering much of the front.

YORK HALL ESTATE PERIOD, 1914-1968

In 1914, wealthy business executive and retired Navy officer George Preston Blow, a resident of LaSalle, Illinois and a native of Norfolk, Virginia, purchased lot 52 with the Nelson House as his family's country place. This became the center of an estate named York Hall that included the Nelson garden lots, the eighteenth century Smith and Ballard Houses, the lots across Main Street where the William Nelson House and Nelson stores had stood, and lots 44 and 45 on Read Street, among other nearby properties.

Greatly interested in history and preservation, Blow undertook a thorough renovation of the house according to the design of architects Griffin and Wynkoop of New York City, in which he retained much of the historic fabric and concealed modern utilities. On the outside, the only major change was the addition of dormers. Blow commissioned the architects to design three Colonial Revival-style outbuildings on the Read Street side of the Nelson garden lots, including a garage (carriage house), gardener's cottage (Wisteria Cottage), and stable. Blow also renovated the Smith House as a guest cottage and moved its

entrance to face the interior of the property, and updated the Ballard House, known as Pearl Cottage, into a staff residence. A high brick wall was built around the perimeter of the old Nelson, Smith, and Ballard lots, replacing a variety of fences that existed in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

George Preston Blow carried his interest in historic preservation to the landscape surrounding the Nelson House. He retained the old overgrown boxwood hedges around the front court and rear property line, an old stone walkway at the front entrance, and a number of aged specimen trees, including a decrepit laurel tree in the front court that stood during the 1824 visit of the Marquis de Lafayette. At the rear of the Smith House, Blow retained an old boxwood allée as well as a line of linden trees along Nelson Street, then known as Pearl Street. With little else remaining, in 1915 he commissioned landscape architect Charles Gillette, of Richmond, Virginia to redesign the landscape in the Colonial Revival style. Gillette united the original Nelson property with the Smith and Ballard lots around a central open lawn framed by trees and shrubs. The lawn was crossed by stepping-stone paths that connected the buildings. He designed an entrance drive loop in the back court, and two terraces stepping down from the west side of the house where the service yard had stood.

With the overall form of the landscape complete, Blow commissioned Gillette to design a number of new features in the landscape beginning in 1921. Some of these features were completed after Blow's death in September 1922 under the oversight of his wife, Adele. The front court was redesigned into a garden with a brick patio and reflecting pool, requiring the removal of the Lafayette tree and old stone entrance walk with its entrance from Main Street, making the front court into a private garden. The Blows did, however, retain the aged boxwood hedge. Three formal flower gardens were added to the landscape, based on the design of eighteenth century gardens at Groombridge Place in Kent, England. The largest was a foursquare garden occupying most of lot 48 west of the house that featured clipped boxwood borders, grass walks, figural sculptures, Chinese-style covered benches, piers with urns, and an antique English column at the center, with a screen of evergreen trees and mixed shrubs along the perimeter brick wall. To provide room for the garden, the slope adjacent to the house was rebuilt as a raised terrace with a brick wall and paired flight of stairs facing the garden. In 1923, after George P. Blow's death, Gillette designed two gardens between the Smith and Ballard Houses, the larger of which was a rose garden that was laid out as half of the foursquare garden and was lined by an arbor along the perimeter wall. Adjacent to the Ballard House, Gillette designed a small flower garden named the Garden of Pleasant Associations. In 1927, Mrs. Blow commissioned architect William Bottomley to redesign the west entrances of the Nelson House facing the formal garden.

Upon Adele Blow's death in September 1929, the family established the York Hall Memorial Trust to maintain the Nelson House as a museum. After five years, the four Blow children dissolved the trust and c. 1936, George W. Blow bought out his siblings' interest in the property. For the next thirty years, he maintained York Hall as his family's permanent year-round residence. He commissioned Charles Gillette to make several minor changes to the landscape, including a tennis court built behind the stable in 1936, a small swimming pool, patio, and fireplace built adjoining the formal garden in ca. 1946, and a pansy garden laid out next to the Smith House around the same time.

After George W. Blow's death in 1960 and his wife Katherine's death in 1965, York Hall passed to the couple's children, who maintained the estate for two years despite limited resources. This led them to offer the estate to the National Park Service for incorporation into Colonial National Historical Park, established in 1930. Prior to the sale, the family removed most of the site's garden furnishings.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, 1968-PRESENT

In 1968, the National Park Service purchased York Hall for incorporation into Colonial National Historical Park, and began planning for restoration of the estate to its colonial character. This required dividing York Hall back into its colonial parcels consisting of the Nelson House grounds, the Smith lot, the Ballard lot, and the William Nelson lots. In preparation for opening as a house museum during the national Bicentennial, the park restored the Nelson House to its colonial appearance. Restoration of the Smith and Ballard Houses as staff residences was undertaken shortly thereafter. Due to inadequate historical documentation, costs, and public interest in retaining the estate outbuildings and walls, the park service did not restore the landscape. Instead, it removed features that were overtly from the twentieth century and/or required high maintenance, including the oval drive, select flower beds, foundation shrubs, stepping stone paths, swimming pool, and pool in the front court. Features that evoked a colonial character or served a contemporary park purpose were retained or replaced in-kind, including the perimeter brick wall along Main and Read Streets, boxwood hedges in the formal garden, outbuildings, and trees. The park also replaced the aged boxwood hedge around the front court. Most of this work in the landscape was completed by 1981 in time for the Bicentennial of the Siege of Yorktown. After this time, the park maintained the Nelson House grounds with few changes aside from removal and replacement of vegetation and fences, and removal of the c. 1921 top courses on the front court perimeter wall c. 1983. South of the site, the park built a new shelter building over the Poor Potter site in 2003 with walkways and signage.

ENDNOTES, INTRODUCTION

1 This site history summary is from the 2011 *Cultural Landscape Report*, 5-11.

2 Robert Page, Cathy Gilbert, and Susan Dolan, A *Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource and Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, 1998), 129.

Existing Conditions

Landscape changes since the publication of the 2011 Cultural Landscape Report have been reported in a number of ways: (1) documentation of a completed project in the National Park Service's Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website; (2) statement by Park staff; and/or (3) observation based on existing conditions plan included in the 2011 Cultural Landscape Report and 2024 conditions. Those items documented on the PEPC website have been included herein, but additional information is necessary to understand the exact scope of how these projects implemented in the landscape. Additionally, some of those PEPC projects are listed as 'In process' rather than completed, and therefore it is unclear to what extent, if any, those tasks were implemented. A site visit was undertaken in November 2023 to document the changes in the landscape since the completion of the 2011 Cultural Landscape Report.

From the surrounding streets, the Nelson House grounds are a largely inward-focused landscape defined by tall brick walls and perimeter buildings that are a legacy of the site's changing use and ownership over the course of nearly three centuries. The restored Nelson House – the most prominent feature of the site – conveys the landscape's colonial origins, while the grounds to the west still reflect their early twentieth-century redesign as part of the Blow family's York Hall estate. Adjoining properties, notably the colonial Smith and Ballard Houses and the open land across Main Street, define the immediate setting of the Nelson House grounds.

Below is a narrative and graphic overview of the existing landscape, including its setting and use. The documentation is based on field observation, aerial photographs, tax maps, and construction drawings from the 1970s National Park Service rehabilitation. Existing conditions are graphically documented through photographs, diagrams, and an existing conditions plan (Drawing 1) at the end of this chapter.

LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

The Nelson House is located in the unincorporated village of Yorktown in York County, within the Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News metropolitan area that also includes the cities of Williamsburg and Hampton. As of 2023, the population of Yorktown was 256.[1] Although the area surrounding the village retains a largely rural setting consisting of fields and woods, suburban development occupies a large part of the county. Much of the county's growth has been from the region's

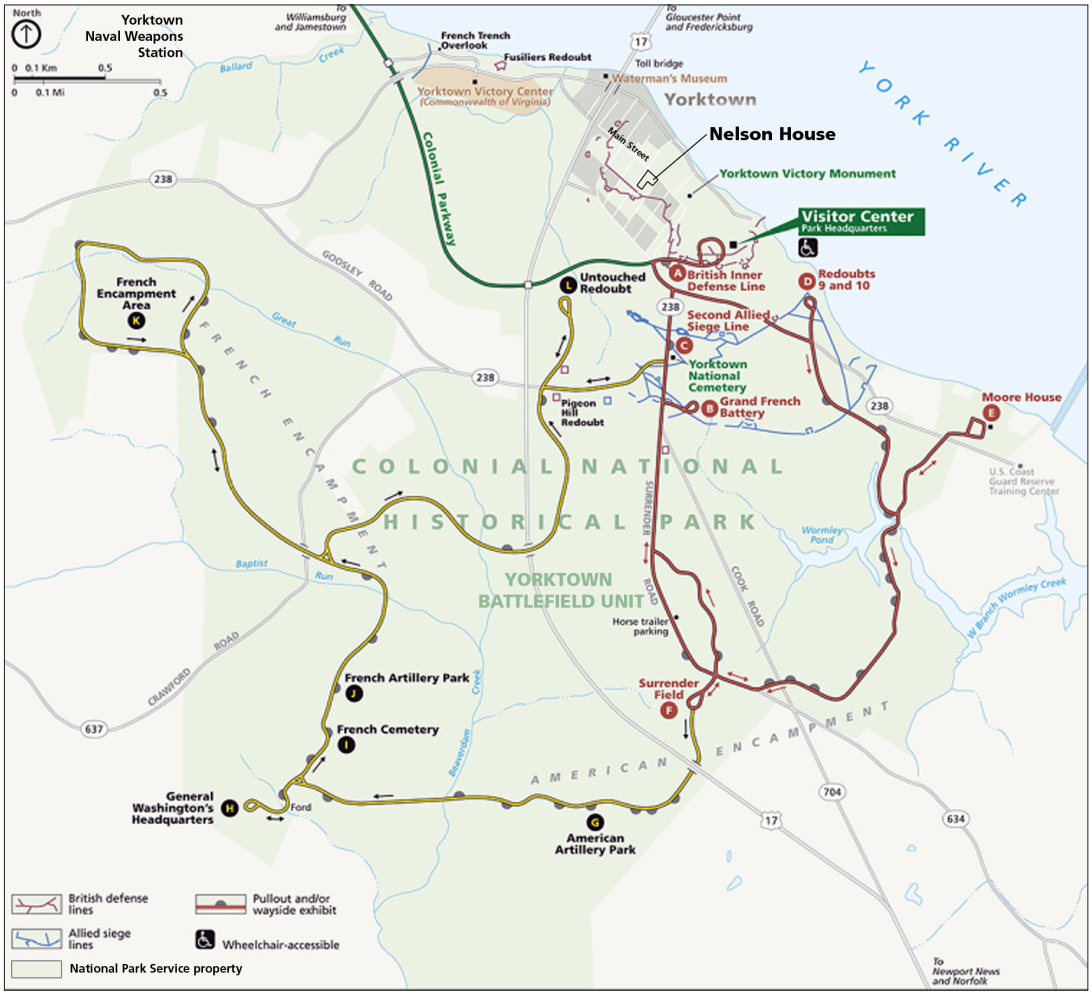


Figure 2.1 Map of the Yorktown Battlefield showing context and relationship of battlefield lands to Yorktown village and the Nelson House grounds. Lands owned by the National Park Service are show in green. The gray areas within Yorktown are property not owned by the park. (Colonial National Historical Park, annotated by SUNY ESF.)

military and tourism economy that includes the so-called Historic Triangle comprised of Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Yorktown, as well as the Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, which stretches almost fourteen miles along the York River to the north and west of Yorktown.[2]

The Nelson House is administered as part of the Yorktown Battlefield unit of Colonial National Historical Park. The unit includes Historic Yorktown (Yorktown village), the battlefield, and Yorktown National Cemetery. The Yorktown Battlefield visitor center and Park headquarters, located near the southeast side of the village, is at the terminus of the Colonial Parkway, the 23-mile long limited-access National Park Service road that connects Yorktown and Jamestown. The battlefield features two automobile tour routes, one accessing American and French defenses and encampments, and the other, the British encampments. Within Yorktown village, the National Park Service owns approximately 130 acres, including much of the property along Main Street.[3] Adjoining the park are two related historic sites: the state-owned Yorktown Victory Center west of the village and the privately-owned Waterman's Museum on the Yorktown waterfront. Colonial Williamsburg is sixteen miles west of Yorktown, along the Colonial Parkway.

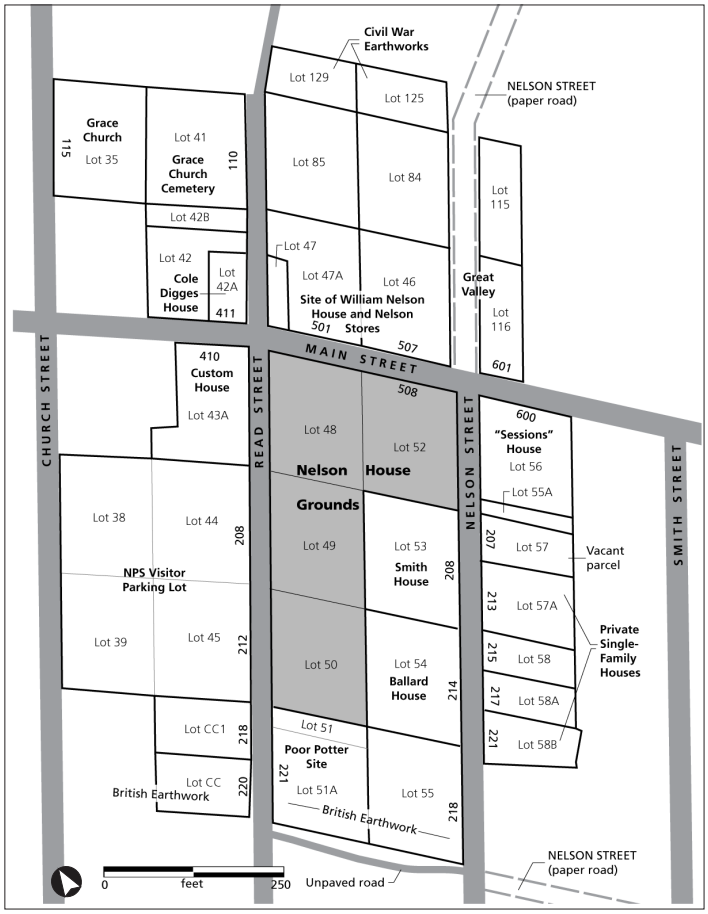


Figure 2.2. Map of properties comprising the immediate setting of the Nelson House grounds. (SUNY ESF based on York County tax maps, 2008)

Yorktown is laid out in a grid of half-acre lots aligned along Main Street, with detached houses, house museums, commercial buildings, and civic buildings. To the south of Main Street are single-family houses dating from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries, where most of Yorktown's residents live. North of Main Street, the side streets descend to Water Street and the York River, where there is a long public beach, retail businesses, piers, and a commercial area, Riverwalk Landing, with shops and restaurants.

The following is an inventory of properties that make up the setting of the Nelson House grounds, discussed by street location. All properties along Main Street and those owned by the park service are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. All properties are also within the local Yorktown Historic District designated in 2003.[4]

MAIN STREET

Main Street, part of the original 1691 plan of Yorktown, is a two-lane asphalt road that forms the spine of Historic Yorktown. The approximately 30-foot wide road is not striped with grass shoulders. There are no street trees, and the utility lines are underground. Existing light standards, based on a park design of the 1930s, are colonial-style lanterns on 9-foot-high

Figure 2.3 (below left). Looking west along Main Street from west end of the Nelson House grounds, November 2023. At right is the Cole Digges House. (Image by KZLA. Hereafter, all images by KZLA unless otherwise noted.)

Figure 2.4 (below right). Looking east on Main Street from the Nelson House with the park's Monument to the Alliance and Victory in the distance, November 2023.





chamfered wood posts with attached street signs. The portion of Main Street west of the Nelson House contains most of the colonial buildings, several of which are open as museums, and others that house shops, offices, and restaurants. The park closes off the block between Read and Church Streets, west of the Nelson House grounds, during peak visitor days during the summer and fall. The section of Main Street east of the Nelson House contains two colonial houses and the park's most conspicuous feature, the Monument to the Alliance and Victory, also known as the Yorktown Victory Monument.[5]





Figure 2.5. The Custom House (left) and Cole Digges House (right), looking southwest with the site of the Cox House and Peninsular Bank and Trust Company in the foreground, January 2010. The trees at left are within the Nelson House grounds.

Figure 2.6. The open lots north of Main Street, view north from the Nelson House with the York River in the distance, January 2010. At the far end of the field are Civil War earthworks. The clipped hedge dates to the York Hall estate.

Custom House (Lot 43A), 410 Main Street

The Custom House, at the corner of Read and Main Streets, is a two-story brick building constructed as a warehouse c. 1720 by Richard Ambler. From this building, Ambler and his son collected custom duties for the port of Yorktown during the colonial period. The building is believed to be the oldest standing custom house in the country. The lot features a walled garden at the rear and a reconstructed summer kitchen that were built during the early twentieth century by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Comte de Grasse Chapter, which has owned the property since 1924. The building is open to the public as a museum and contains DAR chapter offices.

Cole Digges House (Lot 42A), 411 Main Street

The Cole Digges House, also known as the Pate House, is a Park-owned one-and-one-half story brick house at the corner of Read and Main Streets. Built c. 1720 and restored in 1925, the building presently houses the Mobjack Bay Coffee Roasters & Petite Cafe. The house was owned by George W. Blow as part of the York Hall estate between 1946 and 1968. The adjacent lot 42 is an undeveloped Park-owned subdivision of the historic Cole Digges property.

Site of William Nelson House and Nelson Stores (Lots 46, 47, 47A, 84, and 85)

These five lots along the north side of Main Street were part of the York Hall estate and were acquired by the federal government in 1968. The lots comprise the foreground of the view from the Nelson House. At one time the York River would have been visible beyond these lots, but trees near Main Street and woods in the Great Valley and along Read Street obscure all of the view. Much of this land is maintained as lawn, with a low clipped privet hedge along Main Street that was established as part of the York Hall estate in the 1920s. During the colonial period, these lots were the location of the William Nelson house (lot 47A) built c. 1745, the Nelson stores (lot 46) built c. 1710, and the Cox House (lot 47) built c. 1720 on the site of an earlier house. A small temple-front bank building was constructed on the site of the Cox House c. 1923 where a white post and rail fence now exists. On lots 84 and 85, the Blows maintained a tennis court and gazebo. Only the gazebo foundation remains from these structures though it is not visible today.

Civil War Earthworks (Lots 125 and 129)

At the crest of the bluff overlooking the York River north of the William Nelson House site is a park-owned Confederate Civil War earthwork dating to 1861. The earthwork rises approximately five feet above the level to the south and is covered with brush and scattered trees. On top of the earthwork is the foundation of a small gazebo erected by the Blows in the 1920s, no longer visible given the growth of brush along the Civil War earthworks; what is visible is a series of granite risers leading up the incline, presumably towards the gazebo foundation. From here, there would be expansive views across the York River if the brush were to be removed.





Figure 2.7 (top). The York River, looking north from the brush-covered Civil War earthwork on lots 125 and 129, November 2023.

Figure 2.8 (bottom). The Great Valley, looking north from Main Street, November 2023.

Great Valley

The Great Valley is a natural ravine between Main Street and Water Street northeast of the Nelson House that contains a public right-of-way (Nelson Street paper road) and several undeveloped lots owned by the National Park Service, including lots 115 and 116. The area is a mix of woods, bamboo, and mown lawn, with a trail extending from Main Street down to the river and beach. The trailhead, which begins at the right-of-way diagonally across the intersection from the Nelson House, descends northeast into the valley, and is marked by stacked-rail fences and an interpretive wayside. Recent





Figure 2.9 (top). The "Sessions" House, looking south down Main Street, 2023.

Figure 2.10 (bottom). Nelson Street looking south from the Ballard House (at right), 2023.

management of the vegetation provides an opening through the vegetation and a small glimpse of the York River.

Sessions-Pope-Shield House (Lot 56), 600 Main Street

The privately-owned Sessions-Pope-Shield House, located across Nelson Street from the Nelson House, was constructed c. 1760 on the site of an earlier house, built c. 1692. Generally known simply as the "Sessions" House after the builder of the original house on the site, it is a one-and-one-half story brick building with brick walls lining Main and Nelson Streets. At the rear (south) side of the house is a separately owned subdivision, lot 56A, that contains a garage built after 1968 and now used as a residence.

NELSON STREET

Nelson Street is a narrow – approximately 15 feet wide, paved side street that borders the east side of the Nelson House grounds and the Smith and Ballard House lots. The layout of Nelson Street dates to the Yorktown plan of 1691, although its present name dates to the twentieth century. It was known as Pearl Street during the Blow ownership of the Nelson House. The street was lined by American linden trees that date to the nineteenth century, though many have been lost over the years so that only a handful remain today. Utility lines are underground and there are no streetlights. There are two rights-of-way named Nelson Street that are paper roads, one extending north through the Great Valley, and the other a side street parallel to Main Street but south of the Nelson House grounds.

Smith House (Lot 53), 208 Nelson Street

The Smith House is a Park-owned colonial house on a half-acre lot bordered on two sides by the Nelson House grounds, and to the south by the Ballard House. Built c. 1750, the restored house is a one-and-one-half story, four-bay brick building with exterior end chimneys, a wood shingled gable roof with dormers, and nine-over-nine sash windows. At the rear is a frame dairy with a pyramidal roof that was built by the park c. 1976. A shed has been added to the landscape along with a series of brick steps, walkways, patio, and gutters along the façade of the house, as well as perennial and shrub beds. A brick walkway leads from the





Figure 2.11 (top). The Smith House looking northwest from Nelson Street, 2023.

Figure 2.12 (middle). The rear of the Smith House looking south, 2023. The small yellow structure is the Smith dairy.

rear patio north to the lot boundary fence at the rear of the Nelson House, though no gate provides access between the lots. Along the boundary of the lot on the east and west sides are thirty-eight-inch high wood picket fences with sixty-two-inch tall fences on the north and south lot boundaries; all rebuilt in 2008. A low picket fence separates the gravel parking area from the rear yard with a double-hung gate for vehicular access.

The landscape, which is visible from the Nelson House, is an open lawn with two mature shade trees – a southern magnolia and a thornless honeylocust. The honeylocust has a burning bush planted next to its trunk with a movable, modern wooden bench. Shrub and perennials have been planted around the house and along some of the brick walks.

The Smith House served as a guest cottage for the York Hall estate and was acquired by the federal government in 1968 as part of Colonial National Historical Park. The house is a park staff residence and is closed to the public. An interpretive wayside along Nelson Street provides an historical overview of the property.

Ballard House (Lot 54), 214 Nelson Street

The Ballard House is a Park-owned colonial house on a half-acre lot bordered on one side by the Nelson House grounds. Initially built c. 1706, the restored house is a narrow one-and-one-half story, asymmetrical five-bay frame building with two chimneys, a wood shingled gable roof with dormers, clapboard siding, and nine-over-nine sash windows with louvers on the first floor. Brick gutters

Figure 2.13 (bottom). The Ballard House from Nelson Street, 2023.

Figure 2.14. (bottom right). The rear of the Ballard House looking northwest from Nelson Street, 2023. The smoke house is at the center of the image.





have been added in the landscape added along the front façade, along with a brick walk extending from the wood front steps to Nelson Street. The rear steps are comprised of brick, and brick gutters line the rear façade as well. A light post is mounted adjacent to the stairs.

Along the boundary of the lot, on the north side (separating the Smith and Ballard Houses) is a sixty-two inch tall wood paling fence, on the east, west, and south sides are lower wood picket fences (thirty-eight inches tall); all rebuilt in 2008 and again in 2019. The alignment of the fence line on the west side does not reflect the boundary line of the original lot. Instead, it has been shifted to meet the ends of the stable's service yard. Additionally, the rear (southwest) corner of the rectilinear lot has been clipped to provide pedestrian access between the lot and the Poor Potter building which meets the property boundary of the Ballard House. A small fence enclosure along Nelson Street to the south of the Ballard House was shown on the 2011 existing conditions plan that was not reflected in the other period plans included in the 2011 Cultural Landscape Report. Portions of that fence have since been removed, including a segment along the road's edge.

The grounds, which are visible from the Nelson House grounds, contain open lawn with scattered trees, including a cornelian cherry and three clusters of crepe myrtle. Many of the Carolina cherry-myrtle which were shown on the 2011 plan at the southwest corner have been lost.

At the rear is a smoke house with a pyramidal roof that was reconstructed by the park c. 1976 and is now used for storage. A brick patio is at the back of the house, connected to the street and to a gate in the side yard fence with the Smith House by brick walks, all of which are in poor condition with grass growing through the joints. The Ballard House served as a staff cottage for the York Hall estate and was acquired by the federal government in 1968 as part of Colonial National Historical Park. The house is a park staff residence (empty of residents in 2024) and is closed to the public. An interpretive wayside along Nelson Street provides an historical overview of the property. A paved walkway connect Nelson Street to the Poor Potter site just between the lot boundary and the fenceline.

218 Nelson Street (Lot 55)

Lot 55, adjacent to the Ballard House, is a partly wooded Park-owned parcel that contains British earthwork remnants from the Siege of 1781. The lot was part of the York Hall estate and was purchased by the federal government in 1968 as part of Colonial National Historical Park. The earthworks, which also extend onto adjoining Lot 51A (Poor Potter Site), as well as east of Nelson Street. They had been partially cleared prior to the 2011 Cultural Landscape Report and were visible from the walk to the Poor Potter Site, but now have mostly grown over with little visibility to the landforms. A clipped privet hedge, established by the Blow







Figure 2.15. (top) Remnant British earthworks south of the Poor Potter site.

Figure 2.16 (middle). Read Street looking south, 2023. The Church Street parking lot to the left and at right, the perimeter wall of the Nelson House grounds and garage/Ranger Station.

Figure 2.17 (bottom). Read Street looking north, 2023.

family, extends along the street-front perimeter of the lot.

Five Private Residences (Lots 57, 57A, 58, 58A, and 58B), 207–221 Nelson Street

Along the east side of Nelson Street across from the Park-owned Smith and Ballard Houses are four early-to-mid-twentieth century houses and one modern privately-owned single-family house. All are on approximately one-quarter-acre lots, save for 207 Nelson Street on lot 57 and 213 Nelson Street on lot 57A. The original half-acre lot 57 that was the site of the Nelson stables was subdivided. The location of the stable building within the lot is not known. 213 Nelson Street has a one-and-one-half-story frame house built in 1949 and 207 Nelson Street has a one-and-one-half-story frame house built between 2011 and 2013. 215 Nelson Street is a two-story frame house built c. 1920, 217 Nelson Street is a one-story frame and brick bungalow built c. 1925, and 221 Nelson Street is a two-story brick house built c. 1920. All five residences are located on the west side of Nelson Street and are visible from the Nelson House grounds. British earthworks border the south side of this property

READ STREET

Read Street is a narrow – approximately 15 feet wide – paved, one-way side street that borders the east side of the Nelson House grounds. Read Street was one of the original streets in the 1691 plan of Yorktown, although it was not named until later. It is one of the few side streets that connects Main Street with the York River waterfront (mostly obscured from view by vegetation). A brick sidewalk lines the west side of the street between Main Street and the National Park Service parking lot. Utility lines are underground and there are no street trees, although neighboring trees shade parts of the road, including willow oaks and dogwoods. On the Nelson House side (east) there is no sidewalk, but signs that state “No parking any time”.





Figure 2.18. The Poor Potter Site looking southeast from Read Street, 2023. At left is the southwestern corner of the perimeter wall on the Nelson House grounds.

Figure 2.19. The National Park Service parking lot south of Main Street looking west from Read Street, 2023.

Poor Potter Site (Lots 51 and 51A), 221 Read Street

Lots 51 and 51A contain the Poor Potter Site, an NPS-owned and interpreted archeological site containing the partially excavated remains of the eighteenth-century William Rogers pottery works. The excavated portions of the site are contained within a frame building constructed in 2006 to replace an earlier Quonset-style enclosure. Lots 51 and 51A were part of the York Hall estate and were sold to the federal government in 1968 as part of Colonial National Historical Park.

Paved, narrow walkways lead from the stable to the Poor Potter building, and to both Nelson and Read Streets. Interpretive waysides have been added for visitor comprehension. The gradient of the sloped walkway from Read Street into the site is greater than the maximum allowed by accessibility standards.

218–220 Read Street (Lots CC and CC1)

These two mostly wooded, NPS-owned lots on the west side of Read Street across from the Poor Potter Site contain remnants of British earthworks. The lots are part of the Gwyn Read subdivision that expanded the original 1691 limits of Yorktown, c. 1738.

National Park Service Visitor Parking Lot (Lots 38, 39, 44, and 45)

These four lots, which span the block between Read and Church Streets, contain the National Park Service visitor parking lot for Historic Yorktown. The property was used by the Blow family beginning in 1923 for the estate gardens and nursery and was acquired by the federal government in 1968 as part of Colonial National Historical Park. The parking lot was built in 1980.

The brick sidewalk which connects north to Main Street provides access to the parking lot and has some wayfinding signage for access to the Poor Potter site. Where the brick walkway connects east to Read Street, looking towards the Nelson House grounds, it does not connect to another sidewalk and leads visitors towards an enclosed stretch of wall bordering the grounds.







Figure 2.20. (top) The Nelson House looking southwest from Main Street showing the perimeter wall and boxwood hedge, 2023. The historic function of the circular feature at the corner of the wall is not known.

Figure 2.21 (middle) Main Street perimeter of the Nelson House grounds around the formal garden looking west from Read Street, 2023.

Figure 2.22 (bottom). Read Street looking north, 2023.

Grace Church Cemetery (Lots 41 and 42B), 110 Read Street

The Grace Church Cemetery, established in the late seventeenth century, borders Read Street across from the William Nelson House site and north of the Cole Digges House. The cemetery is the burial place of the Nelson family, including "Scotch" Tom Nelson (1677–1745), William Nelson (1711–1772), and Thomas Nelson Jr. (1738–1789). A fence and wall separate the cemetery from Read Street. The cemetery is not visible from the Nelson House grounds. Grace Church, originally built in 1697, faces Church Street on lot 35 west of the cemetery.

NELSON HOUSE GROUNDS

The two-acre landscape of the Nelson House grounds – on lots 48, 49, 50, and 52 – forms the largest and most prominent domestic property in Yorktown. From Main Street, the landscape is dominated by the Nelson House, located at the northeast corner of the grounds, and brick walls that extend along Main and Read streets. These walls, generally six to eight feet tall, consist of a retaining wall along the front court dating to c. 1870, and a mixed retaining- and free-standing wall with brick piers along the rest of the property that was built as part of the York Hall estate between c. 1916 and 1920. Incorporated into the perimeter wall along Read Street are two Colonial Revival-style York Hall estate outbuildings: the carriage house (garage) and Wisteria Cottage (gardener's cottage). (Remnants of a low galvanized pipe and wire-mesh fence on top of the wall along Read Street categorized in the 2011 Cultural Landscape Report have been removed from the formal garden wall.)

The Nelson House is a two-story, five-bay, Georgian-style brick building with a gable roof, two prominent chimneys, a denticulated cornice, pedimented center entrance, and segmental-arched windows with keystones and nine-over-nine sash. A side entrance faces west to the formal garden and another entrance (a brick porch) is at the rear (south side).

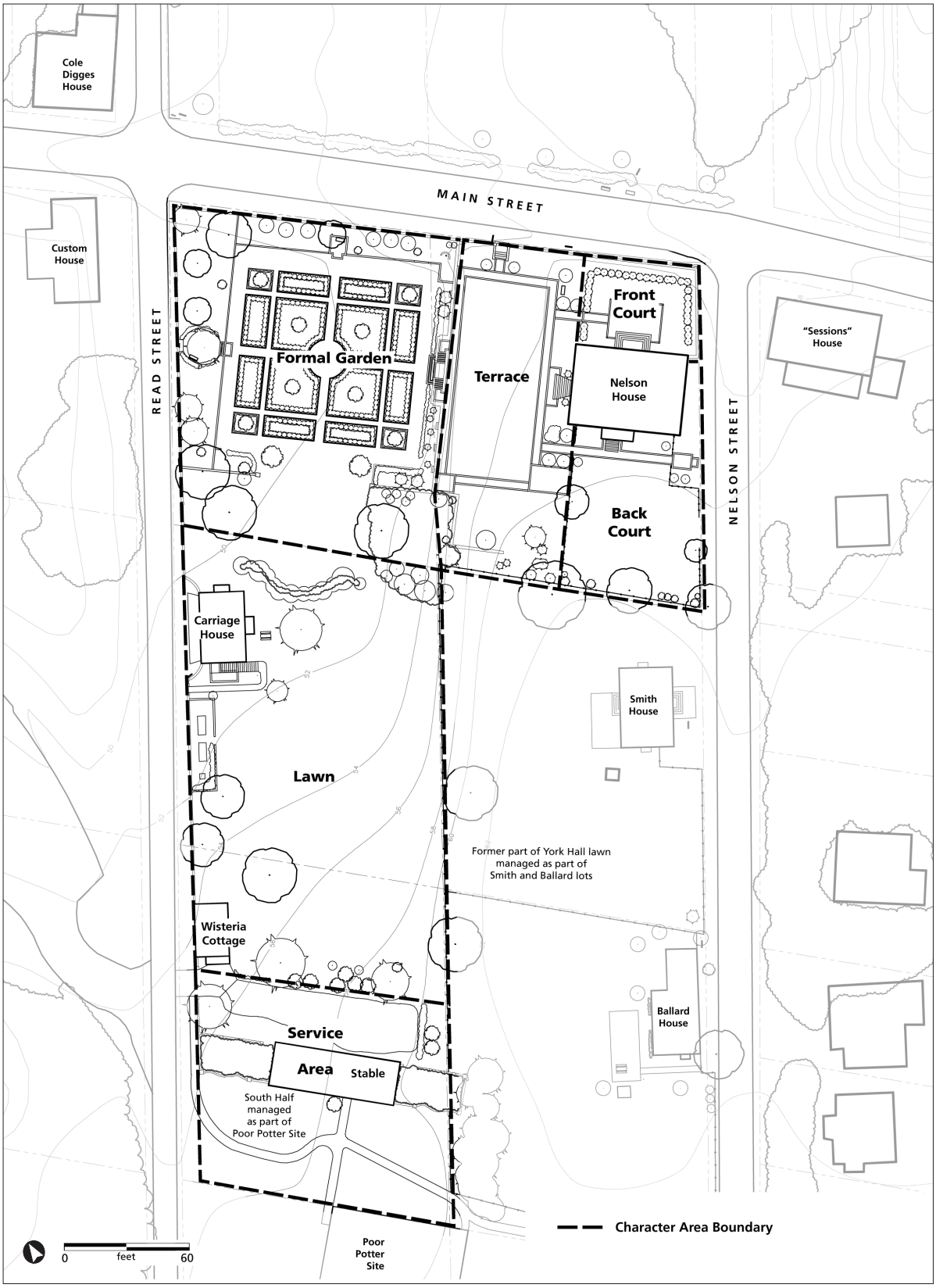


Figure 2.23. Map of the Nelson House grounds illustrating boundaries of six character areas used to inventory existing conditions of the cultural landscape: front court, back court, terrace, formal garden, lawn, and service area. (SUNY ESF.)

Although the house has been restored to its colonial (c. 1781) appearance, the landscape reflects the character of its redesign by Charles Gillette as a country place during the early twentieth century and its rehabilitation as a historic site in the 1970s. There are no known landscape features existing from the colonial period aside from the house.

The following description of the landscape is organized by six landscape character areas: the front court, back court, terrace, formal garden, lawn, and service area.

FRONT COURT

The front court is the small colonial-period rectangular yard at the front (north) side of the Nelson House defined by the c. 1870 brick retaining wall along Main and Nelson Streets. The strip of land between the brick wall and the asphalt of Main and Nelson Streets is maintained as lawn, as is the small strip between the hedge and the brick wall. Within the front court is a large rectangular brick patio at the base of the front entrance steps that dates to the Park's rehabilitation of the grounds in the 1970s. A brick walk connects the patio to the terrace with a series of steps but there is no walk from the front door to Main Street as would have been historically, in fact the original entry in the brick wall has been closed during the York Hall era, c. 1921.

A low and irregularly clipped boxwood hedge—an NPS replacement of boxwoods which may have dated to the eighteenth century—frames the perimeter of the front court. One modern floodlight, designed to light the front façade of the house, is in the center of the lawn. (One of the older, presumably inoperable spotlights exists to the east side of the steps.) The hedge has gaps particularly the northwest corner where a bench has been placed, as well as failing plants in the northeast corner. Granite and concrete curbs have been added to the southeast



Figure 2.24. The front court looking southeast showing the brick terrace, granite steps, and lawn,



Figure 2.25. View from the front door of the Nelson House across the front court towards the northwest and the obscured view of the York River, 2023.

corner of the house presumably intended to deter visitor access to where a desire line leads to Nelson Street. There are no trees within the front court. The historic view from the front entrance toward the York River, which looks out across undeveloped land north of Main Street, is obscured by trees.

BACK COURT

The back court is a small, colonial-period space that consists of the grounds between the Nelson House and Smith House lot characterized by lawn with wood paling (picket) fences and trees growing along the periphery. The space, formerly the location of the York Hall estate oval entrance drive, provides access to the site from Nelson Street for Park vehicles only. There is no gate or pavement for vehicles. One brick walk connects the terrace walkways to the rear entrance to the house, the basement door, and out towards Nelson Street (the walk ends before reaching the street). There is no pedestrian connection to the adjoining Smith House save for along Nelson Street.





Figure 2.26 (top). The back court looking northwest from near Nelson Street, 2023.

Figure 2.27 (bottom). The back court looking southwest from Nelson Street with the NPS-era wood paling fences, 2023.

The 2011 *Cultural Landscape Report* stated that in the York Hall era the landscape was raised so that a long window well was included in the rear court.[6] This may be reflected in the height of the granite block foundation of the building.

The perimeter fences contain openings along an NPS-era brick walk parallel to the Nelson House, and at a larger unpaved access for Park vehicles from Nelson Street. Portions of the paling fence have been removed in the since 2011 so that the opening to the south end of the terrace is more contiguous with the back court.

Vegetation includes a mature Kentucky coffeetree that may date to the York Hall estate, an eastern redbud, and a goldenrain tree, several small trees along the outer perimeter, and dogwood trees near the house that date to park ownership. The goldenrain tree has produced several volunteer saplings that line the fences.

At the corner of the back court and terrace is a small space defined by the brick retaining wall and plantings. The small lawn is framed by an ash tree, a tuliptree, a magnolia, tree-of-heaven, crêpe myrtle, boxwood, and underplanted with ivy.





Figure 2.28 (top). The terrace looking south with the Nelson House at left and steps to the formal garden at right, 2024.

Figure 2.29 (bottom). The entrance to the terrace from Main Street, looking south, 2023.

TERRACE

The terrace is a rectangular lawn along the west side of the Nelson House that was built as part of the York Hall estate. During the colonial period, this was the site of the six Nelson outbuildings and service yard. The terrace is on the same elevation as the front court, approximately six feet above the formal garden, and is bordered by brick walls. A paired flight of steps leads down to the formal garden, and a single flight of steps up from Main Street serves as the main visitor entrance to the Nelson House grounds. Gate latches and hinges can still be seen in the brick entry at the steps.

Park service-built brick walks with soldier-course edging frame a large rectangular lawn centered on the side entrance to the house. (The edge creates a reveal between the walking surface and edge which could create a tripping hazard, but the elevation change is typically slightly less than one-half-of-one-inch and therefore allowable by accessibility standards. Heaving of the brocks may increase the difference in elevation causing the edging to be non-compliant.) These walkways surround the terrace and connect to brick walks leading to the front and back courts, as well as the west entry stairs. Additionally, there are two small brick patios at the intersection of the walks on the south side. The larger space close to the back court is heaving from the roots of the tuliptree.

Plantings, most of which date to NPS ownership, are located along the periphery of the terrace and include rose of Sharon, dogwood, boxwood, and crêpe myrtle, along with a tuliptree at the northeast corner that replaced an earlier tuliptree in the same location. The west entry is flanked by a boxwood on either side which have grown very tall.







Figure 2.30. Looking southwest across the formal garden from the edge of the terrace, 2023.

Figure 2.31 (top). The formal garden looking east showing axis with the terrace steps and entrance to the Nelson House, 2023.

Figure 2.32 (middle). One of the main formal garden beds looking southwest showing missing center plantings and state of boxwood border, 2023.

FORMAL GARDEN

The formal garden, occupying lot 48 at the corner of Main and Read Streets, is a Colonial Revival-style garden designed by Charles Gillette in 1922. The center of the foursquare garden is a quincunx plan consisting of a central circle and four surrounding rectangular panels, with an outer row of rectangles and individual common boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) shrubs at the corners. (Dwarf English boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens 'Suffruticosa'*) was originally planted but had been replaced by the larger straight species common boxwood during the NPS management period.) The garden walks are mown turf with a mix of brick, wood, and/or no edging. The east–west central walk is on axis with the steps up to the terrace and the west entrance of the Nelson House. Most of the garden shrubs were replaced by the park service in the 1970s and 1980s. These include informally clipped boxwood hedges defining the beds, boxwood shrubs in the outer corner beds. Rose of Sharon shrubs were once located in the middle of the large center beds by the NPS, but these have been removed. The beds also once contained scattered perennials and flowering spring bulbs, including peonies, iris, and narcissus dating from the York Hall estate, and more recently planted canna and Yorktown onion (allium) during the beginning of the NPS era. Almost all of this has been lost, with just daffodils and iris visible in spring and the remainder of the beds have just grass filling their borders. There is a series of movable wood benches placed throughout the garden. In one select location, a bench is placed within the boxwood hedge which seems to invite visitors in, resulting in damage to the boxwood plants and loss of the structure of the hedge.

The perimeter of the formal garden is enclosed on the east, north, and west sides by mature plantings and brick walls, and opens toward the south and the lawn. These perimeter beds are all edged with a low, brick retaining wall. Some of the existing trees and shrubs date to the York Hall estate. The perimeter bed along the terrace wall is planted with boxwood, wax myrtle, and a laurustinus (viburnum) in the northeast corner









Figure 2.33 (top left). The circular brick patio at the west end of the east-west central garden walk, 2023. Just visible on the perimeter wall is the Cornwallis plaque.

Figure 2.34 (top right) The northeast corner of the formal garden showing low brick retaining wall and mulched bed with trees, 2023.

Figure 2.35 (bottom left). View looking south from the formal garden towards the lawn and garage, 2023. The area in the foreground was the site of the c. 1946 swimming pool.

Figure 2.36 (bottom right). The Cornwallis plaque on the perimeter wall in the formal garden, 2023.

underplanted with perennials. The north bed, parallel to Main Street, is bordered by a low brick wall and contains a red cedar tree, tall quince, and crêpe myrtle shrubs, as well as recently plated Japanese aucuba/spotted laurel. Much of this bed is bare or mulched ground. In the northwest corner stands a stately American beech, a red cedar, and a southern magnolia. The west perimeter along Read Street, also bordered by a low brick wall, contains a border of mature trees, including additional southern magnolia, red cedar, and a crêpe myrtle, set in mostly bare or mulched beds. A high canopy allows views both in and out of the perimeter wall.

On axis with the central north–south garden walk is a rectangular brick pad (set in a herringbone pattern) that contains a modern wood bench, where a Chinese style covered bench stood until around 1945. Near the wall is a cedar tree that has heaved the brick pad. At the west end of the east–west walk within the perimeter bed is a circular herringbone brick patio added c. 1946 that surrounds an earlier red cedar tree and is enclosed by a boxwood hedge. The patio area is set three steps below the formal garden. An iron plate remains from a c. 1946 fireplace

along the perimeter wall, below a bronze bas-relief plaque commemorating Earl Cornwallis, Commander of the British Forces during the 1781 Siege of Yorktown. This plaque was designed by sculptor F. William Sievers and originally installed in 1931 on the east side of the Nelson House but was relocated as part of the Park rehabilitation.

The south side of the formal garden consists of a shrub and tree border on either side of a 40-foot-wide opening in the lawn that was the site of the York Hall swimming pool built c. 1946. This opening is flanked by two Buford holly shrubs, each with a row of boxwood. To the south of the formal garden limits was a row of Japanese maple and a specimen linden on either side. Today, there is only one littleleaf linden remaining to the east, one Japanese maple to the west, with three Japanese maples to the east side. These specimens dated to the initial development of the York Hall landscape prior to 1930. The former view across the lawn to the south is blocked by a hedge of crêpe myrtle underplanted with a groundcover added c. 1946. Mounted on the retaining wall on the east side of this opening is a hose bib.

LAWN

The lawn is the large open space on lots 49 and 50 south of the formal garden. It was designed by Charles Gillette c. 1920 and was the site of the Nelson gardens during the colonial era. On the west, the lawn is framed by mature trees, the garage, Wisteria Cottage, and the perimeter wall, and on the south by trees and shrubs along the service yard. Trees and shrubs surrounding the lawn include Southern magnolia, willow oak, red cedar, and crêpe myrtle. The eastern part of the lawn space is within the lots belonging to the Smith and Ballard Houses, which historically defined the eastern edge of the York Hall lawn. A wood paling fence without plantings delineates the colonial boundary of these two lots (53 and 54) through the eastern third of the lawn.

The lawn itself has a gentle grade dropping approximately thirteen feet from the high point at the Ballard House to the low at the fenceline between the Carriage house and the formal garden. This topography is distinct along the fence lining Read Street. At the northeast corner of the lawn there is a planting of crêpe myrtle, which obscures the southeast corner of the brick retaining wall that supports the terrace. A gate near this corner provides access into the rear of the Smith House landscape, likely for maintenance purposes.

The York Hall garage, now known as the carriage house, was built c. 1916 and was designed by Griffin and Wynkoop. Today, it houses a Park ranger station and communications center. It is a three-bay, one-and-one-half story Colonial Revival-style brick building that faces inward toward the lawn. This façade has a residential character with a center entrance, classically-detailed entry porch,









and flanking six-over-six sash windows. Three dormer windows line the wood-shingle gabled roof.

The Read Street façade contains three garage bays with segmental arch openings with infill that replaced the original doors c. 1975. The central garage door has been fitted with a pedestrian door and is accessed via a concrete ramp from the south. The perimeter wall curves inward around the apron to engage either end of the building with the arched ends planted with perennials. An exterior steel staircase on the south side of the building leads to the second floor, and there is an antenna mounted on the chimney.

The Park's central cooling units, and propane tank are screened by a lattice-bond brick wall added c. 1975, to the south of the building along the perimeter wall. The propane tank is painted red and visible over the brick boundary wall. Just to the south of the garage and north of the lattice screen, there is a break in the brick wall which allows access to the Nelson House lawn and a bituminous walkway leads to the rear entrance of the building.

Figure 2.37 (top). The lawn looking north from near the service yard screen with the stable just visible to the left, 2023.

Figure 2.38 (middle). The lawn looking east, 2023. The picket fence divides the eastern part of the lawn along the boundary of the Smith and Ballard lots.

Figure 2.39 (bottom left). The front of the carriage house (garage) looking northwest from the lawn, 2023. At left is the lattice brick wall added by the park to screen utilities. In the background is the National Park Service parking lot.

Figure 2.40 (bottom right). The Read Street side of the carriage house (garage) with curved sections of the adjoining perimeter wall, 2023.





Figure 2.41 (top). The front of Wisteria Cottage looking southwest from the lawn, 2023.

Figure 2.42 (middle). The Read Street side of Wisteria Cottage looking southeast.

Figure 2.43. (bottom). The entrance to the service area looking east from Read Street with the stable at right and Wisteria Cottage at left, 2023.



Wisteria Cottage (215 Read Street), built c. 1916 as designed by Griffin and Wynkoop as the gardener's cottage, is a three-bay one-and-one-half story Colonial Revival-style brick building that faces inward toward the lawn. This façade, shaded by a large willow oak, has a center door with a trellised entry porch and separate sidelight, and asymmetrical flanking casement and double-hung multi-paned windows with shutters. A wood-framed shed-roof enclosed porch dating to the York Hall estate period shelters the service entrance on the south side.

The Read Street façade, which is integral with the perimeter brick wall, contains three windows and no doors. The wood-shingled gable roof has hipped-roof dormers and a large corbelled offset ridge chimney. There are presently no wisteria vines growing on the building. A stepping stone walkway leads from the back door towards the service yard through the break in the hedge.

SERVICE AREA

The service area, developed as part of the York Hall estate beginning in 1916 and part of the Nelson House garden lots during the colonial era, occupies the south half of lot 50 and is screened from the lawn by shrubs and trees. The entrance to the service area is by a drive from Read Street flanked by brick pillars in the perimeter wall. The drive has an asphalt apron at the street, a concrete pavement (sawcut to look like blocks) at the cottage porch up to the start of the stable, and a gravel surface in front of the stable. A row of shrubs and trees, including a clipped privet hedge, crêpe myrtle, deutzia, rose, Southern magnolia, and red cedar, frames the north and east sides of the yard and screens it from the lawn. A desire line cuts through the hedge and connects to the rear entry of Wisteria Cottage, and another runs to the northeast around the hedge to the lawn.

Built c. 1916 – and also designed by Griffin and Wynkoop, the stable is a one-story brick building that faces north toward the service drive and lawn. It features a wood-shingled roof with clipped gables, hay mow, and a center ventilating cupola with a pyramidal roof. The front







Figure 2.44 (top). The service drive and stable looking west, 2023.

Figure 2.45 (middle). The stable looking north from the Poor Potter Site, 2023.

Figure 2.46 (bottom). The interior of the brick wall-enclosed yard on the east side of the stable, view looking east, 2023. At right is the serpentine wall built c. 1916; the other walls date to c. 1945.

has stable doors in the east bay, and a recessed three-bay porch that contains a passage to the rear of the building. The rear wall is lit by four, six-light windows and contains movable doors on tracks that close off the center bays. Access into the stable from the service year requires access either via steps at the eastern two bays, or a steep ramp at the western bay.

To either side of the stables are small yards enclosed by approximately 6-foot-high brick walls that were once planted with Virginia creeper vines and vinca, now just have grasses and weeds. The north wall enclosing the east yard is failing structurally and propped up for support. Both yards are enclosed on the south side by serpentine walls and have openings in the north wall adjacent to the building. The east yard extends onto lot 54 (Ballard House lot).

The mown ground south of the stable within lot 50 is managed as part of the Poor Potter Site on adjoining lots 51/51A. This area was the site of the estate service yard that was replaced by a tennis court in 1936.

OPERATIONS OVERVIEW

The National Park Service maintains the Nelson House as a museum that interprets the colonial period in general, and the life of Thomas Nelson Jr. and the 1781 Siege of Yorktown in particular. The first floor of the house is open for self-guided or docent-led only as staffing permits. Orientation is provided at the Yorktown Battlefield visitor center, where a 15-minute film and exhibits tell the story of the 1781 Siege of Yorktown and colonial life.[7] The grounds are open during Park visitation hours, from 9 am to 5 pm.

The Nelson House is a popular attraction in the park, but generally receives less than ten percent of visitors to Yorktown Battlefield during its open months. In 2008, approximately 55,000 visitors passed through the Yorktown visitor center.

The public generally visits the front and back courts, terrace, and formal garden, although visitors are welcome throughout the grounds. Park staff, when present, provides verbal interpretation of the grounds, but there are no interpretive devices or brochures to inform self-guided tours, aside from interpretive waysides along Main and Nelson streets in front of the Nelson, Smith, and Ballard Houses. The interpretive wayside for the Nelson House was not present during the fall 2023.

Visitors enter the Nelson House grounds by one of two entrance walks: one along Main Street leading to the terrace and front entrance of the house, and one along Nelson Street leading to the back court and rear entrance. Due to steps, these walks, along with the house, are not universally accessible. Several of the walkways providing access into and within the grounds contain steep grades over what accessible standards recommend, have lawn or degraded walkways which do not meet the 'firm and stable' characteristic recommended, or steps which can impede certain visitors.

In addition to the site's primary function as a public museum, the Nelson House grounds also serve Park operations. The carriage house (garage) on Read Street serves as a Park ranger station and communications center for Yorktown Battlefield. Park vehicles are often parked along the adjoining street. Wisteria Cottage is presently vacant, and the stable is used for maintenance storage. The Smith and Ballard Houses along the east side of the Nelson House grounds are private residences for park staff, though the Ballard House was not inhabited in fall 2023. The patios at the backs of these houses contain contemporary outdoor furniture, grills, and ornamental plants which are visible from the lawn of the Nelson House grounds.

Landscape maintenance is carried out by Park staff, volunteers, and through contractual services. Park staff manage the operation of the Nelson House and overall maintenance of the grounds. Park maintenance operations are housed southeast of Yorktown along Route 17, with some equipment and supplies stored in the stable.

SUMMARY OF LANDSCAPE CHANGES

Vegetation is easily the landscape category that has changed most significantly, with losses in boxwood hedges, losses of mature trees, and understory plantings. Additionally, new vegetation has been introduced, including by spread of plant species like the goldenrain tree in the back court of the Nelson House.

Aside from vegetation, the residential landscapes of the Smith and Ballard Houses where Park staff is housed have also changed to better suit a comfortable life by the addition of sheds, walkways, ornamental plantings, parking, etc.

Wood fences have been removed in select locations and brick paving has heaved with the growth of vegetation. Apart from these impacts the Nelson House grounds have not been dramatically altered since the publication of the 2011 Cultural Landscape Report.

The PEPC website reports the following work in the landscape since the 2011 CLR. Those tasks which were listed and identified as completed have also been noted. These proposed tasks and their presumed/understood status include:

- *Managed diseased and hazardous trees, parkwide*, 2019-2024, completed 2019
- *Replace rose of Sharon shrubs in Nelson House Gardens, and seed two front beds with Yorktown onion seedlings*, completed 2019
- *Repair fence at Ballard, Smith, and Nelson House yards*, completed 2015
- *Managed diseased and hazardous trees*, closed/incomplete 2013

CODE ISSUES

In the existing landscape, there are several code issues that should be addressed with the rehabilitation of the landscape. Most of these issues are focused on universal accessibility, which was a significant reason for the undertaking of this update to the Cultural Landscape Report. The Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §§ 4151--57) requires access to facilities that are designed, built, altered, or leased with Federal funds. The Access Board is the federal agency responsible for enforcing the ABA. The rehabilitation of the Nelson House grounds was undertaken by the NPS around 1976 which is prior to the first publication of the minimum guidelines under the ABA, published in 1982. In 2004, the Access Board published the updated ADA-ABA Accessibility Guidelines as a final rule. These Guidelines, along with the 2013 supplement to the ABA Accessibility Guidelines on outdoor developed areas, are the regulations to which the landscape should adhere. That said, it is worth noting that because the Nelson House grounds is historically significant and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, if necessary, there is the possibility of a waiver to meeting these

Guidelines; F202.5 Alterations to Qualified Historic Buildings and Facilities states:

Exception: Where the State Historic Preservation Officer or Advisory Council on Historic Preservation determines that compliance with the requirements for accessible routes, entrances, or toilet facilities would threaten or destroy the historic significance of the building or facility, the exceptions for alterations to qualified historic buildings or facilities for that element shall be permitted to apply.

Every effort should be made to make the facilities of the Nelson House grounds universally accessible according to the Guidelines.

Areas of concern/non-compliance include:

- Brick walks at the terrace and front and rear courts have raised borders creating a potential tripping hazard
- Walkways that terminate with no accessible connection to another accessible walkway
- Grass walkways in the formal garden
- Poor Potter site walkways have gradient above 1:20 and more narrow than allowable
- Walkway to street with no crosswalk or entry into site
- Heaving of brick pavement creating potential tripping hazard
- Stairs with non-compliant handrails, nosings, slopes, and/or cross-slopes

At least one building code issue should also be addressed during rehabilitation of the landscape:

- Terrace walkways abut the brick walls with a change in grade greater than 30 inches. Rehabilitation plans should consider either a guardrail at terrace or a minimum two-foot separation of walkway and wall.

Parking Area
Custom House
D.A.R. Chapter House
Digges House
Brick Path
READ STREET
Service Drive
Wisteria Cottage
Carriage House Driveway (ca.1916)
Formal Garden Perimeter Plantings (ca.1922)
Cornwallis Plaque
Boxwood Hedges
MAIN STREET
Fence - Virginia Worm
Serpentine Walls (ca.1916)
Original Service Yard (ca.1916)
HVAC Equipment
Brick lattice screening wall
Carriage House
Carriage House Side Walk and Stairs (ca.1973)
Volunteer shrub
Formal Garden Brick Edging (ca.1922)
Mulched Beds
Nelson House Stables (Maintenance Storage)
Lawn
Boxwood Hedges
Formal Garden
Poor Potter Interpretive Building
Poor Potter Walks (2006)
Stable Courtyard Screen (ca.1916)
Stable Courtyard (ca.1916)
Formal Garden South Entrance Hedge (ca.1946)
Serpentine Stable Walls
Gate
Wood Picket Fence
Smith House Fence
Empty Tree Well
Formal Garden Walls and Stairs (1922)
Terrace Walks (ca.1976)
Terrace
Cherry Laurel Stump
Thornless Honeylocust (poor condition)
Groundcover
Formal Garden View (1922)
Main Street Entrance (ca.1922)
Perimeter Walls (ca.1916)
Front Court Tulip Tree (pre-1914, ca.1995)
Front Court Landing and Walk (ca.1976)
Stump
Garden Shed
Patio
Planting bed
Nelson House Fences
Back Court
Nelson House
Front Court
York River View (ca.1730)
Nelson House Floodlights (ca.1976)
Ballard Smoke House
Smith House Dairy
Back Court Walk (ca.1976)
Front Court Boxwood Hedge (ca.1730, ca.1976)
Ballard House Fence
Smith House
Gravel parking
Curbs
Nelson House Garden Wall
Confederate Earthworks In Yorktown
Ballard House
Chaste Tree
Ballard House Fence
NELSON STREET
Private Residences
Main Street

Code	Botanical Name	Common Name
Aa	*Ailanthus altissima*	Tree-of-Heaven
Aj	*Aucuba japonica*	Japanese Aucuba
Ap	*Acer palmatum*	Japanese Maple
Bs	*Buxus sp.*	Boxwood
Cc	*Cercis canadensis*	Eastern Redbud
Co	*Cornus sp.*	Dogwood
Cs	*Cydonia sp.*	Quince
Ds	*Deutzia sp.*	Deutzia
Fg	*Fagus grandifolia*	American Beech
Fs	*Fraxinus sp.*	Ash

Code	Botanical Name	Common Name
Gd	*Gymnocladus dioicus*	Kentucky Coffee Tree
Hs	*Hedera sp.*	Ivy
Ic	*Ilex cornuta*	Burford Holly
Jv	*Juniperus virginiana*	Eastern Red Cedar
Kp	*Koelreuteria paniculata*	Golden Rain Tree
Li	*Ligustrum sp.*	Privet
Ls	*Lagerstroemia sp.*	Crepe Myrtle
Lt	*Liriodendron tulipifera*	Tuliptree
Mc	*Myrica cerifera*	Wax Myrtle
Mg	*Magnolia grandiflora*	Southern Magnolia

Code	Botanical Name	Common Name
Os	*Osmanthus sp.*	Osmanthus
Pl	*Prunus laurocerasus*	Cherry Laurel
Po	*Philadelphus coronarius*	Sweet Mock-Orange
Qp	*Quercus phellos*	Willow Oak
Tb	*Taxus baccata*	Yew
Tc	*Tilia cordata*	Littleleaf Linden
Ts	*Tilia sp.*	Linden
Vr	*Viburnum rhytidophyllum*	Leatherleaf Viburnum
Vt	*Viburnum tinus*	Laurustinus

Cultural Landscape Report

Colonial National Historical Park
Yorktown, Virginia

Nelson House
2024 Existing Conditions

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. United States Geological Survey, Digital Elevation Model, 2019
2. Virginia Geographic Information Network, Orthoimagery, 2019
3. Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Cultural Landscape Report, 2010
4. NPS Landsnet Boundaries and Tracts
5. Field Review, November, 2023

DRAWN BY

Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc., ArcGIS Pro 3.2.0, 2024

LEGEND

- CLR Study Area Boundary
- Legislative Boundary
- Lawn
- Woods
- Road
- Building
- Deciduous Tree
- Evergreen Tree
- Wayside Interpretive Panel
- Fence
- Groundcover
- Path
- Movable Bench
- Lightpost
- Deciduous Shrub
- Evergreen Shrub
- Yorktown Street Sign

NOTES

1. Projection: NAD 1983 (2011) UTM Zone 18N
2. Contour Interval = 1'
3. All features shown in approximate scale and location

0 13 25 50 Feet

Figure 2.47

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ENDNOTES, EXISTING CONDITIONS

1 World Population Review, "Yorktown, Virginia Population 2023," https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/yorktown-va-population/ (accessed December 2023).

2 Global Security.org, "Naval Weapons Station, Yorktown, Virginia," http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/yorktown.htm (accessed September 2010).

3 National Park Service and Heritage Landscapes, Inc, "Cultural Landscape Inventory, Yorktown, Colonial National Historical Park" (National Park Service database and unpublished report, 1999, revised 2006), 2.

4 "Yorktown Historic District and Design Guidelines" (Report prepared for the York County Board of Supervisors, Adopted December 2, 2003). Ownership and lot designations are based on York County Tax Assessment Records, updated to 2007.

5 National Park Service, List of Classified Structures (National Park Service database), Structure 36Y095S3, updated to 2006.

6 "A below-grade brick wall along the west and rear sides of the house created a long well for basement windows." National Park Service. *Cultural Landscape Report for the Nelson House Grounds, Colonial National Historical Park*. Boston: Olmsted Center for Landscape Presentation, 2011. 57.

7 National Park Service, Yorktown Battlefield website, Operating Hours & Seasons, http://www.nps.gov/york/planyourvisit/hours.htm; Information at Yorktown Battlefield visitor center. December 2023.

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Analysis and Evaluation

ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANCE & INTEGRITY

This chapter provides an analysis of the historical significance of the Nelson House grounds located with Colonial National Historical Park in Yorktown, Virginia, and an evaluation of the integrity of the physical character of the landscape.[1] The analysis is based on criteria developed by the National Register of Historic Places, which lists properties significant to our country's history and prehistory. The analysis reviews the current National Register status and evaluates the landscape in accordance with National Register criteria and related historical contexts. The evaluation portion of the chapter examines the physical integrity of the extant landscape characteristics and features – such as vegetation, views, and circulation—with respect to the site's historical appearance and identifies which contribute or do not contribute to the site's historical significance. An awareness of contributing and non-contributing characteristics and features facilitates the development of the final section of this CLR, the landscape treatment recommendations.

Landscape characteristics identified for the Nelson House include spatial organization, topography, vegetation, circulation, buildings and structures, views and vistas, small-scale features, and archeological sites. Many of these characteristics have associated with them features that contribute to the site's overall historic setting significance and identity, as well as features that do not contribute. The features that do contribute were either present during the period of significance or are in-kind replacements of such historic elements. Overall, the existing character of the Nelson House grounds reflects layers of historic development and non-historic National Park Service rehabilitation. The character from the historic period of the colonial and Revolutionary War period (c.1730–1781) is evident in the spatial organization created by the house and its front and back courts, the architecture of the Nelson House, and the setting defined by the open space of lots 48–50; the boundary with Main, Nelson, and Read Streets; the view of the York River; and the setting of adjoining colonial buildings including the Smith, Ballard, Sessions, and Cole Digges Houses, and the Custom House. Circulation, vegetation, and small-scale feature characteristics from the Revolutionary War era have largely been lost. The character of the landscape remained largely unchanged through the Civil War (1861–1865), although the surrounding setting changed due to the loss of buildings, notably the William Nelson House and Nelson stores across Main Street.

From the historic period of the York Hall estate (1914-1930), the cultural landscape retains its overall spatial organization created by the house and its front and back courts, terrace, formal garden, lawn, and service area; buildings and structures including the Nelson House, three outbuildings, and the perimeter brick wall; and layout of the formal garden. Some of the circulation and vegetation characteristics of the landscape remain, especially in the formal garden. The front and back courts, and the terrace received the bulk of the National Park Service rehabilitation and thereby lost much of their historic character from the York Hall estate period.

Overall, the historic character of the landscape from the Revolutionary War period is dominant in the front and back courts. This is the result of National Park Service rehabilitation in the 1970s that removed most of the York Hall estate features from these areas. The historic character from the York Hall estate is dominant in the terrace, formal garden, lawn, and service area, except for the south half of the service area, which is now managed as part of the Poor Potter Site.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

Fundamental resources and values (FRVs) are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to warrant primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance. Fundamental resources and values are closely related to a park's legislative purpose and are more specific than significance statements.

Village of Yorktown. The village of Yorktown was first established on the south bank of the York River through the Port Act of 1691 and served as one of several ports along the Virginia coast for the regulation of commerce and collection of customs duties. At its peak, Yorktown was the most important commercial port in Virginia, and in the present day, the village of Yorktown is a small, active community that maintains much of its historical integrity. A majority of the structures in the village were destroyed during the Siege of Yorktown in 1781. Many of those structures that survived are included within the park boundary, including the Nelson House, Dudley Digges House, Cole Digges House, Somerwell House, Sessions House, Edmund Smith House, and Ballard House, all of which were built prior to 1760. The Nelson house is particularly notable as the home of Thomas Nelson Jr., a signatory of the Declaration of Independence, governor of Virginia, and commander of the Virginia Militia during the Siege of Yorktown. It is considered one of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in the state of Virginia. The village of Yorktown also contains the archeological remnants of the Poor Potter site, the largest industrial pottery of the colonial era in

North America, and the reconstructed Swan Tavern. The village of Yorktown was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1966.

NATIONAL REGISTER AND NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK STATUS

Colonial National Monument was authorized on July 3, 1930, established on December 30, 1930, and redesignated Colonial National Historical Park on June 5, 1936. With the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966, all property within Colonial National Historical Park was administratively listed in the National Register of Historic Places. When it was acquired by the National Park Service in 1968, the Nelson House property (lots 48-50, 52) was also administratively listed in the National Register. The listing in the NRIS database identifies significance for the Park as a whole in the areas of military and maritime history, architecture, engineering, and archeology, but no comprehensive park-wide documentation has been completed to date.

In 1973, the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission prepared a draft National Register nomination for the Yorktown Historic District that encompassed both private and National Park Service properties within Yorktown, including the Nelson House. The areas of significance were identified as architecture, commerce, military, and other (history) for the eighteenth century (no specific dates given). The nomination was forwarded to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (SHPO) and was listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register on April 17, 1973. However, the district was not listed on the National Register. Since that time, three private properties within the district—the 'Sessions House' (Sessions-Pope-Shield House), the Old Customs House, and the Grace Episcopal Church—have been individually listed in the National Register. In 2004, the York County zoning ordinance was amended to include the larger Yorktown Historic District to protect the historic and architectural character of the entire village.

On September 7, 2006, the Virginia SHPO concurred with the National Park Service on the eligibility of individual park resources for listing in the National Register, through the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for the 129-acre Yorktown Village. (The CLI was updated in 2012.) For the Nelson House property, resources included the Nelson House, carriage house, stables, Wisteria Cottage, garden wall, formal garden walls, fences, and the Lord Cornwallis plaque. Additional resources included the formal garden; lawns, trees, and shrubs surrounding the Nelson House; and views down Main, Nelson, and Read streets. The Virginia SHPO also concurred with the period of significance for Yorktown Village—1691 to 1960—and areas of national significance under Criterion A (association with the Revolutionary War, Civil War, commerce, and historic preservation efforts during the 1930s and 1950s); Criterion B (association with General George Washington, General Lord Cornwallis, and John D. Rockefeller); Criterion C (early example of town planning in Virginia and the collection of

18th and 19th century buildings); and Criterion D (information potential). In their concurrence letter, the SHPO recommended adding Thomas Nelson to the list of important persons associated with the village.

In a letter dated August 7, 2012, the SHPO provided review comments on the 2011 *Cultural Landscape Report for the Nelson House Grounds, Colonial National Historical Park* and concurred with the NPS's recommended areas and periods of significance and the contributing and non-contributing evaluation of cultural landscape features listed in the report (Table 3.2 of the 2011 CLR; updated and included at the end of this section of the report). The letter summarized the findings of the CLR, stating that the Nelson House grounds were historically significant under National Register Criteria A, B, and C at the national, state, and local levels. The overall period of significance was c. 1730 to 1930, encompassing three individual periods: c.1730-1781 (the colonial and Revolutionary War period); 1861-1865 (the Civil War period); and 1914-1930 (the York Hall estate period). Significant dates included the Siege of Yorktown in 1781 and the Battle of Yorktown in 1862. The letter also noted that the site was listed in the National Register as part of Colonial National Historic Park and was a contributing resource of the Yorktown Village Historic District.

According to research conducted for 2012 CLI, the areas and periods of significance for the Nelson House have been adequately documented in previous consultations with the Virginia SHPO. The existing documentation adequately describes the site's numerous historic resources that contribute to its significance. Therefore, for purposes of the CLI, the Nelson House is considered "SHPO-Documented."

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Nelson House property lies within Yorktown Village, which includes historic resources that the National Park Service determined as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on September 7, 2006. The 129.5-acre historic district possesses historic significance under Criterion A for its association with the Revolutionary War and Civil War, the early historic preservation movement, commerce, and the early efforts of the National Park Service's Mission 66 program to further preserve and restore the historic site. The district is significant under Criterion B for its association with Revolutionary War General George Washington who led the American forces, General Lord Cornwallis who led the British troops during the Siege of 1781, and John D. Rockefeller whose financial support and vision led to the creation of the Colonial National Historical Park in the 1930s. The Virginia SHPO also identified the district's significant association with Governor Thomas Nelson, Jr., a signer of the Declaration of Independence who organized a Revolutionary militia. The district is significant under Criterion C as an early example of town planning in Virginia, for its collection of eighteenth

and nineteenth century buildings, and for its association with architect/landscape architect Charles E. Peterson, a leader in the field of historic preservation. Finally, under Criterion D, the district is significant for its archeological sites and its potential to yield additional information about the village. The district's period of significance begins in 1691 when the town of York was officially laid out and extends to 1960 when various preservation and reconstruction projects were completed as part of the Mission 66 program.

Areas of Significance

For the Nelson House, the landscape is significant under Criterion A for its association with the Revolutionary War and Civil War, under Criterion B for association with Governor Thomas Nelson, Jr., and under Criterion C for Georgian and Colonial Revival styles of architecture and the distinctive characteristics of Colonial Revival-style landscape architecture during the Country Place Era and specifically the Virginia garden style as practiced by Charles Gillette.

The following text is excerpted from the 2011 "Cultural Landscape Report for the Nelson House Grounds," pages 121-125. It is intended to inform National Register documentation for the entire Colonial National Historical Park.

Criterion A

American Revolution and the Siege of 1781 (1776–1781):

The Nelson House grounds are primarily significant at the national level under National Register Criterion A for association with the American Revolution and the Siege of Yorktown (September–October 1781), the last major battle of the war prior to British surrender of Yorktown Battlefield. The two-acre, four-lot landscape was a prominent part of the village during the Revolution and was depicted in war-period paintings and maps. The Nelson House was shelled during the war.

The Nelson House grounds reflect their significance associated with the American Revolution and Siege of 1781 through the Nelson House and the four lots that were historically associated with it. Except for the loss of a cluster of outbuildings on the west side of the house and the addition of a brick perimeter wall, the grounds maintain a setting similar to what existed during the Revolution. The grounds retain much of their open space on lots 48, 49, and 50, as well as their historic orientation to Main Street and perimeter along two cross streets known today as Read and Nelson Streets.

Civil War (1861–1865)

The Nelson House grounds are nationally significant under National Register Criterion A for their association with the Civil War, when Yorktown was occupied by both Confederate and Union armies and was the scene of the Battle of Yorktown, April 5 to May 4, 1862. The Nelson House was utilized by both armies as a hospital. The landscape retains the Nelson House and four-lot site that existed during the Civil War but has lost the outbuildings that stood west of the house. The boxwood hedge in the front court that existed during the Civil War remains, but the individual plants have been replaced.

Criterion B

Governor Thomas Nelson, Jr. (1767–1781):

The Nelson House grounds are nationally significant under National Register Criterion B for association with Governor Thomas Nelson, Jr. He was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, organized a Revolutionary militia, was a member of the Continental Congress, and served as the third governor of Virginia, succeeding Thomas Jefferson in 1781. The property was the primary family home of Governor Nelson, the grandson of the builder, Thomas "Scotch Tom" Nelson, from 1767 until before the British occupation of the town during the Siege of 1781, when the family relocated to one of their plantations in Hanover County named Offley Hoo. After the siege, Governor Nelson likely lived only intermittently in Yorktown.

Criterion C

Architecture (c.1730, c.1916)

The Nelson House grounds are significant at the state and local levels under National Register Criterion C in the area of architecture for the Nelson House (built c. 1730) as a distinguished example of Georgian-style colonial architecture, and for the three York Hall estate outbuildings (the carriage house, Wisteria Cottage, and the stable built c. 1916) as representative examples of early twentieth-century Colonial Revival-style architecture.

Landscape Architecture (1916–1930)

The Nelson House grounds, redeveloped as a country estate known as York Hall in the early twentieth century, are significant at the state and local levels under National Register Criterion C for embodying the distinctive characteristics of Colonial Revival landscape design during the Country Place Era. This was the period between 1880 and 1930 when the design of large country estates dominated the American landscape architecture profession. Spurred by the national centennial in 1876, the Colonial Revival was a movement that looked

for inspiration to the colonial and early federal periods in American design. In landscape architecture, the Colonial Revival is a broad term that reflects several influences, including neoclassical styles popularized during the 1892 Chicago World's Fair; old-fashioned cottage gardens interpreted by Arts & Crafts designers such as Gertrude Jekyll in Britain and Ellen Shipman in the United States; and academic approaches to landscape restoration undertaken at Mount Vernon in the 1910s and at Colonial Williamsburg beginning in the 1920s.

The Nelson House grounds are the work of Charles Gillette (1886–1969), a Fellow of the Society of American Landscape Architects (elected in 1933) and among the foremost landscape architects in Virginia between the 1910s and 1960s. He was a student of Warren Manning (1860-1938), one of America's pioneering landscape architects who began his career under Frederick Law Olmsted and is best known for designing country estates, college campuses, and park systems in many American cities. In his own work, Charles Gillette became widely known as the interpreter of Southern gardens and developer of the so-called Virginia Garden style, as well as a garden restoration expert. He worked on the restoration of the colonial gardens at Kenmore in Fredericksburg beginning in the late 1920s and the Victorian gardens at the birthplace of Woodrow Wilson in Staunton, Virginia, in the 1930s.

Between acquisition of the Nelson House grounds by the National Park Service in 1968 and completion of rehabilitation work in c. 1980, several major elements of the York Hall landscape were removed, including walkways, the front court garden, and the oval entrance drive in the back court. However, the buildings, perimeter walls, terrace, formal garden, service area, and overall organization of landscape were retained. The park built a fence along the colonial boundary at the Smith and Ballard lots, but the overall space of the lawn remained intact. The formal garden lost all of its furnishings and all of its herbaceous plantings, but retained the perimeter shrubs and trees, layout of the beds, and walkways. While overall the Nelson House grounds do not have the character of an early twentieth century country place, the formal garden, terrace, lawn, service yard, and perimeter wall and outbuildings retain integrity to convey their significance as an example of Colonial Revival landscape design during the Country Place Era.

Future Area of Significance

Memorialization and Preservation (1931)

The Nelson House grounds contain a single object related to the context of Memorialization and Preservation, as documented in the Yorktown Cultural Landscape Inventory: the Cornwallis plaque installed in 1931 by the Virginia Yorktown Sesquicentennial Commission and now located in the formal garden. The plaque was moved from its original location on the east side of the Nelson

House in c. 1976. Further research is needed to evaluate the plaque's significance in the context of preservation and memorialization in Yorktown, including the effect of relocation on its integrity.

The Nelson House grounds do not otherwise appear significant within the context of Memorialization and Preservation as documented in the "Cultural Landscape Inventory for Yorktown" for either the Gillette-designed alterations (c. 1916–1930) or for the park service rehabilitation (c. 1974–1980). The Gillette design was not an attempt to restore or recreate the colonial landscape of the Nelson House, although George P. Blow did preserve several aged features in the landscape. The NPS rehabilitation occurred after the documented period of significance for this context. The park simplified the York Hall landscape through removal of gardens, walkways, pools, and furnishings, and added new brick walkway and fences. As part of a largely subtractive rehabilitation of an existing landscape, these features do not appear to be significant under other contexts pertaining to park planning, historic preservation, or landscape design.

PERIOD(S) OF SIGNIFICANCE

The period of significance for the Nelson House landscape, as represented by existing resources, falls into three individual periods:

- Colonial and Revolutionary War period, c. 1730 (construction of Nelson House) to 1781 (Siege of Yorktown)
- Civil War period, 1861–1865
- York Hall estate period, 1914 (acquisition of Nelson House by George P. Blow) to 1930 (height of development of the York Hall landscape).

Significant dates include 1781, the Siege of Yorktown, and 1862, the Battle of Yorktown. Except for the front court perimeter wall (c. 1870), there are no extant landscape features that date to the intervening years. Therefore, the overall period of significance for the Nelson House landscape is c. 1730-1930.

INTEGRITY OF THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

According to the National Register, integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance through physical resources. The National Register program identifies seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Retention of these qualities is necessary for a property to convey significance; however, not all seven must be present for a property to retain integrity. A basic test of integrity is whether a participant in the historic period—in this case, a colonial resident of Yorktown or George P. Blow—would recognize the Nelson House grounds as they exist today.

The following section evaluates each of the seven aspects of integrity as applied to cultural landscapes, comparing the Nelson House grounds for comparative purposes at the end of the historic periods: in 1781 at the Siege of Yorktown, in 1865 at the end of the Civil War, and in 1930 at the height of development of the York Hall estate. Overall, the landscape retains integrity of location, design, setting, and association, but has lost integrity of materials, workmanship, and feeling.

Location

Location refers to the place where the cultural landscape was constructed or where the historic event occurred. The landscape retains integrity of location for the three historic periods.

- 1781: The existing four Nelson lots (48, 49, 50, 52) formed the Nelson House grounds during the Siege of 1781, although Thomas Nelson Jr. owned interest in several adjoining lots. The Smith and Ballard lots were separately owned in 1781.
- 1865: Lots 48, 49, 50, and 52 formed the core of the Nelson House property during the Civil War.
- 1930: Lots 48, 49, 50, and 52 formed the core of the York Hall estate in 1930, although the estate also included the adjoining Smith and Ballard Houses (lots 53, 54) and site of the William Nelson House and Nelson stores (lots 47, 46) now managed as separate park properties.

Design

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a cultural landscape. The landscape retains integrity of design for the three historic periods.

- 1781: Details of design lost or altered from this time include removal of the front entrance walkway from Main Street, back court landscape (possibly including a formal garden), and service yard west of the house, and addition of perimeter walls, formal garden, and service buildings. Despite this, the overall design of the Nelson House grounds during the Siege of 1781, with the house and front court on lot 52 and open space (former Nelson House garden and open lots) on lots 48–50, remains largely intact.
- 1865: Details of design lost or altered from this time include removal of the front entrance walkway from Main Street and service yard west of the house, and addition of perimeter walls, formal garden, and service buildings. Despite this, the overall design of the Nelson House grounds during the Civil War, with the house and boxwood-hedge enclosed front court on lot 52, remains largely intact.

- 1930: Details of design from this time that have been lost or altered include removal of the front court garden; the oval entrance drive, plantings, perimeter wall, and entrance gates in the back court; brick walkways on the terrace; herbaceous plants, shrubs, dwarf boxwood hedges, and furnishings from the formal garden; stepping-stone paths in the lawn; and service yard south of the stable. A fence has been added across the lawn, and new walkways have been installed in the front court and terrace. While the design of the front and back courts has been significantly altered, the design of the majority of site comprised of the formal garden, lawn, terrace, and service area remain largely intact.

Setting

Setting refers to the physical environment within and adjoining the cultural landscape. The landscape retains integrity of setting for the three historic periods.

- 1781: The setting of the Nelson House grounds has changed since 1781 through removal of the Nelson stores, William Nelson House, and Cox House across Main Street, and the addition of the formal garden, service buildings, and perimeter wall from the York Hall estate. Growth of successional woods in the Great Valley has obscured view of the York River from the Nelson House. Formerly open fields along Nelson and Read Streets have been developed with houses and a parking lot or grown into woods. The Nelson stable on Nelson Street has been lost, as have several unidentified buildings along Read Street. Despite these changes, the Nelson House grounds retain their relationship to Main, Read, and Nelson Streets, and are still flanked by three colonial-period buildings (Custom House, "Sessions" House, and Cole Digges House).
- 1865: Since 1865, the setting of the Nelson House grounds has changed through the growth of successional woods in the Great Valley that have obscured view of the York River, loss of the outbuildings west of the house, and the addition of York Hall perimeter walls, formal garden, and service buildings. Former open fields along Nelson Street and Read Street have been developed with houses and parking lots or have grown into woods. Despite this, the overall setting in 1865, with the Nelson House and boxwood-hedge-enclosed front court, remains intact. The Nelson stores and William Nelson House were lost in 1814 well before the Civil War, leaving the open field that exists today, where military tents were pitched during the war.
- 1930: Since 1930, the setting of the Nelson House grounds has changed through the loss of the Colonial Revival-style bank building at the corner of Read Street (built c. 1923), the addition of a parking lot on the former York Hall nursery and fields along Read Street, and construction of houses along

Nelson Street and the Poor Potter Site shelter on lot 51. The setting has also changed through subdivision of the Smith and Ballard Houses into separate lots delineated by fences. Despite these changes, the setting of the Nelson House grounds within Yorktown has remained substantially intact since 1930.

Materials

Materials are the physical elements, both natural and constructed, that existed historically within the cultural landscape. The landscape retains integrity of materials only for the 1914-1930 period.

- 1781: Materials within the Nelson House grounds remain similar to those that existed in 1781, but all have been replaced, except in the house. There may have been marl walkways, a material that does not presently exist. Wood as a building material, found in the outbuildings, is no longer present. There is no record of tree and shrub varieties, although there were most likely boxwood hedges and native trees that exist today, such as tuliptree and eastern red cedar.
- 1865: The materials of the landscape in 1865 were largely the same as those in 1781. A boxwood hedge that existed around the front court during the war was replanted by the park in the 1970s. All other materials in the landscape outside of the house either post-date the Civil War or have been replaced. The existing brick retaining wall at the front court was built after the war.
- 1930: Since 1930, materials within the Nelson House grounds have changed through removal of stone statuary and paths, concrete and stone in the pools, marl in the entrance drive and garden walkways, and flowering plants in the gardens. No perennials remain in the formal garden beds. The existing unpainted wood of the paling fences erected by the NPS were not characteristic of the York Hall estate. The boxwood hedges in the formal garden are replacements of dwarf boxwoods, and the edging of the boxwoods, which was originally brick, has been replaced by wood, which is also mostly now missing. Despite these changes, the landscape retains materials dating to the York Hall estate, including brick in the walls and walkways; and lawn, trees, and shrubs, including eastern red cedar, tuliptree, linden, and crêpe myrtle.

Workmanship

Workmanship refers to the physical evidence of the crafts in the construction of and use of the landscape. The landscape retains does not retain integrity of workmanship for any historic period.

- 1781: Colonial-period workmanship is still evident in the Nelson House but has been lost from the landscape. There are no above-ground built features existing from this time except for the house.
- 1865: The workmanship of the landscape in 1865, which was largely the same as that in 1781, has largely been lost outside of the house. The brick wall along the front court retains its historic workmanship, but it was built shortly after the war.
- 1930: Workmanship of the York Hall landscape has changed with removal of brick walkways and garden furnishings, and the decline in maintenance that once characterized the well-tended landscape. The existing brick walkways, fences, and signs were installed by the park after 1975. Some workmanship is still evident in the brick walls and service buildings, but overall, workmanship of the York Hall landscape has been lost.

Feeling

Feeling is an expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time in a cultural landscape. The landscape retains integrity of feeling only for the c. 1730-1781 period.

- 1781: The dominance of the restored Nelson House in the landscape imparts a strong feeling of colonial character, despite the loss of the adjoining outbuildings, marl drives, and gardens. The addition of later brick walls, service buildings, and the formal garden is compatible with the overall feeling of a colonial landscape.
- 1865: Although the Nelson House today appears much as it did in 1865, overall, the landscape does not impart the feeling of the Civil War period due to changes in the outbuildings and Yorktown village setting.
- 1930: The feeling of the landscape as a designed early twentieth century country place, derived from its highly-maintained character with extensive ornamental plantings and garden furnishings, has been lost.

Association

Association refers to the direct link between the important historic event or person and the cultural landscape. The landscape retains integrity of association for the three historic periods.

- 1781: The Nelson House grounds retain the house and property that embody its association with the Revolution and the Siege of 1781.
- 1865: The Nelson House grounds retain the house and property that embody its association with the Civil War.
- 1930: The Nelson House grounds retain the major designed features—the house, terrace, lawn, formal garden, service buildings, perimeter walls, and many trees and shrubs that reflect its association with the York Hall estate.

Table 3.1
Summary of landscape integrity for Nelson House grounds

Aspect of Integrity	1781	1865	1930
Location	Yes	Yes	Yes
Design	Yes	Yes	Yes
Setting	Yes	Yes	Yes
Materials	No, more contemporary materials	No, more contemporary materials	Yes
Workmanship	No, more contemporary workmanship	No, more contemporary workmanship	No, more contemporary workmanship
Feeling	Yes	No	No
Association	Yes	Yes	Yes

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY

This next section presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and their associated features and corresponding List of Classified Structures names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property's National Register eligibility for the historic period (c. 1730-1930), if it contributes to the property's historic character, or if it is non-contributing, undetermined, or managed as a cultural resource. This information is derived from the 'Landscape Characteristic Evaluation' in the 2011 *Cultural Landscape Report for the Nelson House Grounds*, as well as the 2012 Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary' from the 2012 *Cultural Landscape Inventory*.

This information has been defined further in Table 3.2 below. The table lists specific features, provides identification numbers, and a photograph representing existing conditions. Features are categorized under one of seven typical landscape characteristics: spatial organization, land use, circulation, vegetation, buildings and structures, views and vistas, and small-scale features. Each individual landscape feature appearing in the table is also evaluated for its contribution to the historic character of the site's landscape.

Additionally, each feature is identified as contributing or non-contributing, and missing if no longer extant. Contributing features are those that were present in the historic landscape that survive or are those which are replacements of historic features. Because the site retains integrity to the four areas of significance defined above, many of the extant landscape features contribute to historical significance. Through the NPS List of Classified Structures (LCSID) inventory, many features, particularly structures, have been identified as contributing resources as indicated in the tables in this section. Also noted in the tables are features that have been reconfigured, missing, or added. Finally, a brief evaluation with location clarification and origin and/or modification dates have been included.

Table 3.2
Landscape Feature Inventory

Nelson House Grounds, Colonial National Historical Park

Feature Name	Feature ID Number	Evaluation Status	Evaluation	Existing Conditions Graphic Reference
Spatial organization				
SO-1. Front Court Space (c. 1730, c. 1976)	-	Contributing	The front court, bordered by the front of the Nelson House and perimeter wall along Main and Nelson Streets, is a defining spatial feature of the Revolutionary War and Civil War landscape. Created with the construction of the Nelson House, c. 1730, the front court during the Revolutionary War was most likely open to Main and Nelson Streets, with the kitchen–wash house partially framing the west side. The space may have been enclosed by a low plank fence and boxwood hedge. By the time of the Civil War, a large tree, probably a tuliptree, framed the west side, and growth of the boxwood hedge enclosed more of the space. C. 1870, a change in the surrounding grade led to the addition of a retaining wall that elevated the front court above Main Street. Throughout the York Hall estate period, the front court was a sheltered garden space enclosed by the perimeter wall and the boxwood hedge that had grown upwards of 15 feet tall. In 1976, the NPS completed rehabilitation of the front court that removed the high boxwood hedge and replanted a low boxwood hedge, thus reopening the space to the surrounding streets. Due to removal of the front court garden and high boxwood hedge, the space does not reflect the character of the York Hall estate period. The interior of the space, surrounded by the house and low boxwood hedge, is similar in character to the spatial character of the Revolutionary War and Civil War periods but dates to the NPS management period.	
SO-2. Back Court Space (c. 1730, c. 1976)	-	Contributing	The back court space, the area defined by the Nelson House, terrace, Nelson Street, and Smith House lot, is a spatial feature of the Revolutionary War landscape. Due to lack of documentation, the details of the space—except for the wall of the house—are unknown. A mature boxwood hedge enclosed the south boundary along the Smith House lot during the 19th century and possibly dated to the 18th century. No documentation has been found on the Revolutionary War period definition on the west side, where the court transitioned to the garden and open lots and service area, or to Nelson Street on the east. The use of the back court space is also unknown, although it would have been a typical place for a colonial formal garden given its proximity to the house and separation from the service area. During the York Hall estate period, the back court space was transformed into a formal entrance area according to plans by Charles Gillette. His design included an oval drive with a turf island bordered by dwarf boxwood hedges, perimeter shrubs, a brick wall and gates along Nelson Street, and an entrance from the terrace marked by goddess statues on pedestals. The space also opened along a walkway to the formerly separate Smith House lot to the south. During the NPS rehabilitation of the grounds c. 1976, all of the York Hall estate features were removed except for several trees, and the space was simplified into an open lawn enclosed by wood fences and plantings on the west, south, and east sides. Although lacking its historic details, the back court presently reflects the overall rectangular spatial character of the Revolutionary War period through its restored enclosure at the Smith House lot but dates to the NPS management period.	

SO-3. Terrace Space (1922)	-	Contributing	The terrace space is a defining feature of the York Hall landscape. It is also the presumed site of the first Nelson House built c. 1706, as well as the Revolutionary War-period service yard that was built with construction of the existing Nelson House c. 1730. The earth or marl-surfaced yard, accessed by a drive from Main Street, was defined by 6 closely spaced service buildings, three on the north side and three on the south side. These buildings were removed after the Civil War, with the kitchen–wash house the last standing until it was destroyed c. 1910, leaving all but the massive center chimney and foundation. As part of the initial development of the York Hall estate c. 1916, Charles Gillette designed a sloping terrace over the remains of the old service yard, with the grade along Main Street supported by the perimeter brick wall. Gillette designed marl paths and a mass of shrubs along the lower slope. As part of the construction of the formal garden in 1922, Gillette redesigned the terrace by raising it to a level grade supported by a brick wall along the east side of the garden and additional walls to the north along the lot 53 boundary. The new terrace consisted of an open lawn that overlooked the formal garden and was bordered by shrubs and trees along the north, east, and south sides. The space was further defined by brick and stone walkways along the perimeter. As part of the rehabilitation of the Nelson House grounds, the NPS retained the terrace space, but altered its details through lowering of the grade by approximately two feet, removal of perimeter shrubs, and redesign of the walkways. Despite these changes, the terrace space remains largely intact from the York Hall estate period. There is no above-ground evidence of the Revolutionary and Civil War-period yard. Geothermal wells were installed below the surface of the terrace, so the area has been explored archaeologically.	
SO-4. Formal Garden Space (1922)		Contributing	The formal garden space is a character-defining feature of the York Hall landscape. During the Revolutionary War and Civil War, lot 48 was a field within the Nelson House garden and open lots, and a well house along Main Street. The earlier house on lot 48 was removed by the time of the Revolution, and a second tenant house built in c. 1870 was removed by c. 1900. Fences historically lined Main and Read Streets, and the east side of the lot was bordered by the service buildings, located on an embankment. In the initial development of the York Hall estate beginning, c. 1916, the formal garden space was an open lawn enclosed by the perimeter wall along Main and Read streets, and dense tree and shrub plantings around the perimeter, with an opening to the lawn to the south. Redesign of the space as a formal, quincunx plan garden retained much of the pre-existing spatial character, except along the east side where a wall along the redesigned upper terrace created a distinct edge. After 1930, the space was modified by expansion of the shrub border along the south side around a swimming pool, now partially removed. After its acquisition of the property in 1968, the NPS retained the overall spatial character of the formal garden, although the perimeter plantings have been removed. The existing enclosed character contrasts with the open field that most likely existed during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars.	
SO-5. Lawn Space (c. 1922)		Contributing	The lawn is a character-defining spatial feature of the York Hall landscape. During the Revolutionary and Civil War periods, the space was comprised of three separate properties, including the rear yards of the Smith and Ballard lots and the Nelson House garden and open lots. The landscape was most likely an open field with a fence or hedge along the property boundaries. In the initial plans for the York Hall estate c. 1916, Charles Gillette planned an orchard for the site. In his redesign c. 1922 that included the formal garden, Gillette made this area into an open lawn that served as the central unifying space for the landscape, onto which the surrounding buildings faced. Reminiscent of the style of English landscape gardens, the lawn featured a broad swath of open turf framed by trees and shrubs bordering the perimeter buildings with stepping stone paths (see C-12) as connecting key features. Stepping stone pathways connected structures and spaces on the edges of the lawn, including Wisteria Cottage, the garage, Ballard House, and the formal garden. Following its acquisition of the York Hall estate in 1968, the NPS erected 4-foot-high wood fences to reestablish the colonial limits of the Nelson, Smith, and Ballard lots. While this fence disrupts some of the open spatial character of the lawn, overall, the space remains discernible.	

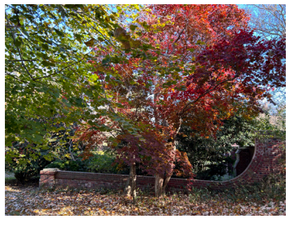
SO-6. Stable Courtyard (c. 1916)		Contributing	The stable courtyard, the space north of the stable building, is a character-defining spatial feature of the York Hall landscape. During the Revolutionary and Civil War periods, this area was part of the Nelson gardens and open lots, adjoining the lot 50 house along Reed Street. The stable courtyard dates to the initial development of the York Hall estate. Charles Gillette's c. 1915 plan of the landscape showed it as a rectangular area in front (north) of the stable, enclosed by trees and shrubs that screened the service area from the lawn, and set apart from the service yard south of the stable by serpentine brick walls. Circa 1945, the areas in front of these walls were separated from the courtyard by the addition of brick walls that defined two small service yards (see SO-8). Since 1968, the NPS has maintained the stable courtyard with few changes, except for removal and replacement of the screening vegetation (see V-12).	
SO-7. Original Service Yard (c. 1916)		Non-contributing; missing	The original service yard, the open space south of the stable building presently managed as part of the Poor Potter Site, does not contribute to the historic character of the York Hall landscape due to extensive changes since the historic period. During the Revolutionary and Civil War periods, this area was the southern end of the Nelson gardens and open lots. The service yard was part of the original c. 1916 design of the estate landscape by Gillette. It was an open area enclosed by a fence on the south, east, and west, and by the stable building and serpentine brick walls on the north. Two drives opened into the stable courtyard. In 1936, the Blow family replaced the original service yard with a fenced tennis court designed by Gillette and created smaller service yards to the sides of the stable (see SO-8). After 1968, the NPS removed the tennis court and greenhouses that were installed against the back wall of the stable and maintained the former service yard as mown grass that continued onto the adjoining Poor Potter site on lot 51.	
SO-8. Stable Yards (c. 1945)		Non-contributing	The two walled yards to the east and west of the stable do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape because they were built after the end of the York Hall estate historic period. During the Revolutionary and Civil War periods, this area was within the Nelson gardens and open lots. In the initial design of the original service yard (c. 1916) the areas to either side of the stable were part of the stable courtyard. In 1936, Gillette redesigned the original service yard into a tennis court. This work involved extending the serpentine walls to close off the openings for the two side service drives. The area east of the stable was designated as the new service yard. C. 1945, two new brick walls were erected in line with the north side (front) of the stable, creating small, enclosed service yards on both sides of the building. The east yard was used as a chicken yard and the west yard as a dog run. After 1968, the NPS made few changes to the yards aside from removal of a tree. Although additions made after the period of significance, these yards are compatible with the historic character of the York Hall landscape. Today the vegetation in the work yards is overgrown and some of the walls need to be supported structurally.	
Circulation				
C-1. Front Court Landing & Walkway (c. 1976)	155159	Non-contributing	The front court landing and walkway is a non-historic feature built by the NPS as part of the rehabilitation of the Nelson House grounds undertaken before opening to the public. During the Revolutionary War period, there was an axial walkway connecting the front door with Main Street. This walkway, including the steps to Main Street and an opening in the brick wall, was removed c. 1921 as part of a Gillette-designed garden that included a reflecting pool and brick patio. This garden was removed and replaced by the NPS c. 1976 by the existing large, landing at the front entrance steps. A brick walkway connects the landing to the terrace walkways with steps, but there is no walkway or connection to Main Street. The design of the landing and walkway is incompatible with the historic character of the landscape during the Revolutionary War and Civil War because it does not provide the axial connection between the front door and Main Street.	

C-2. Back Court Walkway (c. 1976)	155161	Non-contributing	The brick walkway that extends perpendicular to Nelson Street from the steps at the house to the terrace is a non-historic feature. The 5-and-a-half foot wide walkway, built of variegated red brick in running bond with soldier-course edges, was designed by Eugene George, AIA and constructed between 1974 and 1976 as part of the rehabilitation of the Nelson House by the NPS. The walkway provides access to the stairs at the back entrance of the house. At the eastern end of the walkway on Nelson Street, the walkway widens into a 9-foot by 12-foot brick pad that is a step lower than the walkway. (The walk does not connect to Nelson Street). No documentation exists on circulation in the back court during the Revolutionary War period. Although a contemporary feature, the back court walkway is compatible with the historic character of the landscape due to its materials and inconspicuous appearance. Some of these pads and walkways are in poor shape, heaving and creating tripping hazards.	
C-3. Terrace Walkways (c. 1976)	155163	Non-contributing	The terrace walkways are a non-historic feature built c. 1976 as part of the rehabilitation of the Nelson House grounds by the NPS. During the Revolutionary War period, circulation at the site of the terrace consisted of an earth or marl-surfaced drive and yard. In the initial development of the York Hall estate, c. 1916, Gillette designed marl walkways edged with brick along the perimeter of the terrace to connect the house and entrance drive with the formal garden and lawn. In the redesign of the terrace in 1922, Gillette surfaced the walkways in brick, and, c. 1930, a stone walkway was added along the south and west sides of the terrace. C. 1976, as part of the rehabilitation of the Nelson House grounds, the NPS removed all walkways on the terrace and built new brick walkways that were similar in character. The new walkways, consisting of running bond with raised soldier-course edging, created a rectangular perimeter around the terrace lawn and connected with walkways to the front and back courts. A large brick pad was added near the back court, and a new landing was built at the Nelson House entrance as part of a new flight of steps. Although not historic, the terrace walkways are compatible with the historic character of the landscape because they are similar in design and materials to those that existed at the York Hall estate. Today, portions of the walkways are uneven and heaving, and have broken bricks and weeds.	
C-4. Main Street Entrance (c. 1922)	155165	Contributing	The entrance to the Nelson House grounds from Main Street is a characteristic circulation feature of the York Hall landscape. It is an opening in the perimeter brick walkway with flagstone at the base and brick steps that lead to the upper terrace. An opening with a wood gate was built in this location as part of the York Hall perimeter wall in c. 1916 (only the hinges remain). In c. 1922, Gillette redesigned this opening as the main entrance to the grounds with the removal of the old front entrance walkway at the front court. The redesigned entrance included two flights of brick steps to meet the raised grade of the terrace. In its rehabilitation of the Nelson House grounds during the 1970s, the NPS did not restore the earlier entrance and retained the York Hall entrance but removed the second flight of steps and accompanying wing walls to accommodate the lowered grade of the terrace. It is compatible with the historic character of the landscape.	
C-5. Formal Garden Walkways (Grass) (1922)	155167	Contributing	The grass walkways in the formal garden are a defining circulation feature of the York Hall landscape. Designed by Gillette and constructed in 1922, the walkways consist of two primary axial walkways, approximately 6 feet wide, which originally met at a center circular area paved in brick and stone around a central sundial column. (The central brick area and sundial are no longer extant.) To either side of these walkways were parallel narrower walkways approximately 4 feet wide. Each of the walkways were edged by brick and dwarf boxwood borders and had benches or garden ornament at the western and northern termini along the perimeter of the garden. Since 1968, the NPS has maintained the garden walkways, but the turf has deteriorated along sections of the secondary walkways where the adjoining boxwoods have become overgrown. The edges of the walkways have also become less distinct with loss of the brick edging, which had been replaced in sections with wood boards, but some of these are also now missing. Despite this, the walkways overall retain their historic character from the York Hall estate period.	

C-6. Formal Garden Brick Pads (1922)	155169	Contributing	The two herringbone-pattern brick pads in the formal garden, at the west and north termini of the primary axial walkways, are characteristic circulation features from the York Hall landscape. These pads were originally designed as bases for Chinese-style covered benches installed along the edge of the garden c. 1922. These benches were removed after 1930 and replaced with masonry benches in the same spot. Circa 1946, after the end of the period of significance, the north pad was extended toward the perimeter wall, and the west pad connected to a larger circular patio (see C-7). Although remnant, the two brick pads nonetheless reflect the original Gillette design of the formal garden. Today, the brick pad at north–south central walkway of the formal garden is heaved and both pads have grass and weeds growing in their joints.	
C-7. Formal Garden Circular Patio (c. 1946)	155171	Non-contributing	The circular brick patio in the west perimeter of the formal garden, built c. 1946, does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape because it was added after the end of the York Hall historic period and reflects a distinct shift toward informal outdoor living after World War II. The roughly 18-foot diameter patio, designed by Gillette, was built adjacent to an existing brick pad (see C-6) and around an existing red-cedar tree. The patio was enclosed by a boxwood hedge and featured a fireplace along the perimeter brick wall (see A-1). Although not historic, the patio does not detract from the historic character of the formal garden due to its inconspicuous appearance. However, the loss of the Chinese-style covered bench in this location, part of the original landscape design, does detract from the formal garden's historic character. C. 1975 the NPS relocated the Cornwallis plaque to the perimeter wall at this patio (see SSF-3). The patio is significantly heaved today around trunk and roots of the red cedar tree.	
C-8. Carriage House Driveway (c. 1916)	155173	Contributing	The short brick driveway or apron to the carriage house (garage) from Read Street is a characteristic circulation feature of the York Hall landscape. Constructed as part of the carriage house c. 1916, the drive was altered by the NPS in 1973 when the building was converted to a ranger station. At this time, a concrete apron was added to the drive along the building, and a ramp with rail was subsequently built on the apron. While these changes detract from the historic character of the carriage house, the driveway retains its overall historic limits and relationship to the building.	
C-9. Carriage House Sidewalk & Stairs (c. 1973)	155175	Non-contributing	The paved walkway along the south side of the carriage house is a non-historic feature. (This walkway was a desireway that evolved after the NPS converted the building into a ranger station c. 1973 and was later paved in concrete sometime after 2011.) The walkway provides access to an exterior steel staircase to the second floor of the building. It partly follows the alignment of a stepping-stone path built c. 1916 that was removed by the NPS. The existing walkway utilizes the same opening in the perimeter brick wall. The walkway and exterior stairs detracts from the historically well-maintained character of the York Hall landscape.	
C-10. Service Drive (c. 1916)	155177	Contributing	The service drive—the road extending from Read Street east to the stable—is a characteristic circulation feature of the York Hall landscape. The road, built c. 1916 along with the stable, consists of a narrow, approximately 10-foot-wide section south of Wisteria Cottage that widened north of the stable. Two narrow extensions of the drive to either side of the stable originally connected to the service yard south of the building. The drive had an earth or marl surface; at an undetermined date, the apron from Read Street was paved with concrete. Circa 1936, after the end of the historic estate period, the drive was altered through removal of the two extensions to the original service yard, which was replaced with a tennis court. The NPS retained the rest of the service drive, but deferred maintenance has led to cracking, erosion, and weed cover on the once well-maintained surface and edges. A section of asphalt was added at an undetermined date near Read Street. The condition of the drive detracts from the historic character of the landscape.	

C-11. Poor Potter Walkways (2006)	155179	Non-contributing	The Poor Potter walkways are non-historic features built in 2006 by the NPS to provide access to the new Poor Potter Site enclosure building from Read Street, Nelson Street, and the Nelson House grounds. The walkways were surfaced in Klingstone, a pavement that has the appearance of a traditional gravel surface, prior to 2011. Today, none of the gravel surface exists and the walkway has the appearance of asphalt. Because they are in a space that has lost historic integrity (the original service yard), the walkways do not detract from the historic character of the landscape. The walkways are steep and narrow and do not meet accessibility standards.	
C-12 Stepping stone paths (c. 1916, c. 1917, c. 1919)	-	Missing (mostly)	During the York Hall Estate era there was a series of stepping stone paths which connected the outer structures around the open lawn. These paths connected Wisteria Cottage to the service yard, the Ballard house, and the Smith House, as well as the garage. The paths around the garage connected to Read Street and to its back door. Additionally, there were paths (c. 1916-1922) which connected the rear of the garage to the landscape around the swimming pool and to a set of steps that reached the rear court. Save for a small portion of the path connecting Wisteria Cottage to the service year these paths were removed by the NPS after taking ownership of the property.	
Vegetation				
V-1. Front Court Boxwood Hedge (c. 1730, c. 1976)	155133	Contributing	The front court boxwood hedge, an in-kind replanting made c. 1976, is a defining vegetation feature of the landscape from the Civil War, and possibly the Revolutionary War. Several references to the hedge at the site during the 18th and early 19th century suggest the hedge existed during the colonial period. The earliest graphic depiction of the hedge is in a drawing by Benson Lossing made in 1848, showing the hedge at approximately 4 feet tall and behind a plank fence. During the Civil War, the hedge was 4 to 6 feet tall and clipped in an irregular form. George Preston Blow retained the old boxwood hedge in his redesign of the grounds that began c. 1915, at which time the hedge was upwards of 15 feet tall. C. 1921, the opening in the hedge was closed with removal of the entrance walkway. The NPS removed the old boxwoods in the early 1970s and replanted the hedge c. 1976 in the same approximate location without the center opening. The hedge is presently maintained with an irregular form at approximately 3 to 4 feet high. Today, there is a desireway that visitors cut through the hedge from Nelson Street at the corner of the house. The lack of a center opening, along with the loss of several plants within the hedge, detracts from its historic character. Due to its small scale, the hedge does not reflect the character of the York Hall landscape but may be more reflective of the Nelson era.	
V-2. Front Court Tuliptree (pre-1914, c. 1995)	155135	Contributing	The tuliptree off the west side of the front court, an in-kind replacement made c. 2000, is a characteristic vegetation feature of the York Hall landscape. An aged tree, possibly a tuliptree dating from the colonial period, was located on or near this spot during the Civil War. This tree was retained during the York Hall estate period and was lost at some point after 1968. Although not the historic plant, the existing tree maintains the tree feature that existed here during the York Hall estate period and possibly back to the Revolutionary War period.	

V-3. Back Court Trees and Shrubs (pre-1968, c. 1976)	155137	Non-contributing	Most of the existing trees and shrubs in the back court were added by the NPS as part of the rehabilitation of the Nelson House c. 1976. While one large Kentucky coffeetree at the boundary of the Smith lot may date to the Blow ownership, overall, the plantings do not reflect the character of the York Hall landscape. Non-historic trees include a group of two flowering dogwoods at the Nelson Street entrance of the back court walkway, an eastern redbud along Nelson Street, and a goldenrain tree and a tree-of-heaven adjacent to the former entrance drive. (The goldenrain tree has created several small volunteers in this area.) Periwinkle and English ivy groundcover, some of which may have existed during the York Hall estate period, extend along the fence line on the east, south, and west sides of the back court. The non-historic plantings are compatible with the historic landscape because they were species used during the colonial period, except for the goldenrain tree, an Asian native that was not introduced into the United States until 1809 and the tree-of-heaven, a Virginia listed invasive species and was introduced to the U.S. around the late 18th century. While no documentation exists on the vegetation of the back court at the time of the Revolution, an aged boxwood hedge that existed at the time of the Blow purchase in 1914 may have dated to the Revolutionary War period. Parts of this hedge survived into the mid-20th century and were removed during the NPS's rehabilitation of the landscape in the 1970s.	
V-4. Terrace Trees & Shrubs (c. 1976)	155139	Non-contributing	The existing trees and shrubs are non-historic vegetation installed by the NPS (c. 1976) as part of the rehabilitation of the Nelson House grounds. During the York Hall estate period, the terrace had the same central lawn, but was flanked by dense shrub plantings along the north, east, and south sides. The existing trees and shrubs are sparser and consist of traditional Southern species including two groups of dogwoods at the walkways to the back and front courts, two pyramidal boxwoods flanking the western steps to the Nelson House, several crêpe myrtle, and assorted shrubs and a groundcover of periwinkle at the south end of the terrace. There are no plantings along the garden wall (west side). Although of contemporary origin, the existing trees and shrubs are compatible with the historic York Hall character of the landscape in species and overall placement.	
V-5. Formal Garden Boxwood Hedges (c. 1976)	155141	Non-contributing	The existing boxwood hedges that enclose the beds of the formal garden and line portions of the perimeter, planted c. 1976, do not contribute to the historic character of the landscape because they differ from the historic Gillette design. As laid out in 1922 and maintained through 1930, the formal garden beds were edged by dwarf boxwood hedges. By the 1960s after the end of the historic period, the hedges were no longer maintained and had disappeared in part from the garden. Circa 1976 larger hedges of common boxwood were planted along the perimeter of the garden beds. Although these irregularly clipped hedges maintain the overall shape of the beds, they detract from the historic character of the landscape because they contrast in scale with the historic hedges and are in poor condition. Today, the boxwood borders are overgrown, damaged from snow load, missing individual plants, and suffering from die-back. The gaps in the hedges allow visitors to walkway into the beds where historically, there would have been flowers. The boxwoods have also grown into the walkways and beds historically maintained with herbaceous flowering plants.	
V-6. Formal Garden Specimen Boxwoods & Yews (c. 1985)	155143	Non-contributing, missing (yews)	The formal garden historically contained clipped tree boxwood in the same location of the boxwoods in the corner beds. Groups of four upright mounded yews were in the center of the beds until they were replaced with boxwood c. 1976 and rose of Sharon c. 1985. The English box in each of the outer four square corner beds, and the rose of Sharon (removed sometime after 2012) in the middle of the center beds, do not contribute to the historic character of the formal garden because they differ from the historic Gillette design. These shrubs detract from the historic character of the landscape because they are incompatible in form and appearance to the historic shrubs.	

V-7. Formal Garden Herbaceous Plants (1922)	155145	Non-contributing, missing	Historically, these beds were designed by Gillette and established in 1922. While planting plans for the formal garden have not been found, the beds originally consisted of a variety of plant materials that reflected the Blow family's seasonal use of the estate and an old-fashioned style. Many were cuttings or transplants from historic gardens. Plants included roses, ajuga, columbine, sweet William, foxglove, coral bells, German iris, and salvia. The beds were also planted with flowering spring bulbs and were bordered by dwarf boxwood hedges (see V-5). The center beds had groups of four yews (see V-6) and the four corner beds had single tree boxwoods (see V-6). The eight outer beds had one or two deciduous shrubs in the center, including Chinese photinia and fortunes osmanthus. After acquiring the property in 1968, the NPS ceased maintaining the formal garden to the same high standards as the Blow family. In the early 2000s, the beds still were maintained primarily with mown cover around remnant peonies, iris, and spring bulbs that most likely remain from the York Hall estate, along with other plants added by park staff and volunteers, including canna and Yorktown onion (as recently as 2019). While the beds remain, the lawn within them detracts from the historic character of the landscape which does not reflect the character of the historically lush plantings.	
V-8. Formal Garden Perimeter Plantings (c. 1922)	155147	Contributing	The trees and shrubs in the perimeter beds of the formal garden are a characteristic vegetation feature of the York Hall landscape, originally planted along the perimeter wall c. 1916 based on the design by Gillette. The layered planting design featured trees in the back and shrubs and groundcover in front, forming a backdrop for the view from the west terrace (see VV-2). Species included eastern red cedar, American beech, southern magnolia, aucuba, Chinese photinia, quince, sweet mockorange, and crêpe myrtle. A boxwood hedge lined the bed above low brick retaining walls. During the NPS management, the perimeter plantings were thinned and many of the small shrubs and groundcover were removed, leaving exposed mulch and soil. While most of the trees and the larger shrubs remain, the loss of the small shrubs and groundcover detracts from the historic character of the landscape.	
V-9. Formal Garden South Entrance Plantings (c. 1922)	155147	Contributing	The plantings framing the south entrance to the formal garden are a characteristic vegetation feature of the York Hall landscape. As designed by Gillette in 1922, the south entrance plantings form a transition between the rectilinear lines of the formal garden and the informal character of the lawn. The two areas were divided by a low brick wall with urns flanking the opening. The plantings consisted of specimen trees and shrubs, including paired Burford hollies within the garden and littleleaf lindens south of the dividing wall, lined by a border of Japanese red maples. The outer plantings beneath the lindens featured mixed shrubs united by a groundcover of common periwinkle with an irregular, undulating bed edge that extended southwest to the carriage house and southeast toward the back court. Circa 1946, after the period of significance, these plantings were modified as part of the addition of a swimming pool and patio in the lawn of the south opening to the formal garden. The plantings were expanded to enclose the area south of the pool, leaving just a narrow path. The NPS removed the pool and most of the expanded plantings after 1968, except for a screen of crêpe myrtle (see V-10). Today, the plantings retain the one of the two lindens, the paired hollies, and a selection of the Japanese maples, as well as the groundcover and mixed shrubs in the east half. The loss of the groundcover and shrubs in the west half of the plantings detracts from the historic character of the formal garden.	
V-10. Formal Garden South Entrance Hedge (c. 1922)	155149	Non-contributing	The hedge of crêpe myrtle south of the formal garden and near the carriage house (garage) is a non-historic feature. This hedge was planted c. 1946 after the historic period as a screen for the swimming pool at the south entrance to the formal garden. It was part of an expansion of the plantings at the south entrance to the formal garden. Following removal of the swimming pool, the NPS retained the hedge to screen views from the formal garden south to the lawn, which was intended as a service area. Today, the crêpe myrtle are underplanted by a groundcover, possibly liriope. The hedge detracts from the historic character of the York Hall landscape by blocking the historic view from the formal garden to the lawn.	

V-11. Lawn Specimen Trees (c. 1916, 1922)	155153	Contributing	The specimen trees in the lawn are a characteristic vegetation feature of the York Hall landscape. During the Revolutionary War period, the site of the lawn was most likely an open field. Some trees were planted during the initial development of the landscape by Gillette beginning around 1916. Gillette redesigned the area c. 1922 into an informal lawn in the style of an English landscape garden with scattered specimens and groves of trees along the periphery, including southern magnolia, eastern red cedar, and willow oak. Four of the specimen trees remain within the Nelson House grounds (two magnolias, red cedar, and the willow oak) and two are within the Smith and Ballard lot sections of the lawn (honeylocust and magnolia). Although several trees have been lost and at least one has been added (a red cedar near the carriage house), overall, the specimen trees reflect the informal design of the lawn in the York Hall landscape. The loss of the perimeter of understory shrubs bordering Read Street detracts from the historic character of the landscape.	
V-12. Stable Courtyard Screen (c. 1916)	155155	Contributing	The line of trees and shrubs along the north and east sides of the stable courtyard is a characteristic vegetation feature of the York Hall landscape. This screen, designed by Gillette, was planted between 1916 and 1922 to screen the service area from the lawn. The original plants included eastern red cedar, southern magnolia, crêpe myrtle, roses, and possibly deutzia. A clipped privet hedge lined the edges of the drive. A second planted area was in the area bordering the perimeter wall; this was partly removed with construction of the walled stable yards c. 1945. The NPS retained this screen including the clipped privet hedge, but some plants thinned or were removed, allowing views from the lawn. The plantings and hedge along the perimeter wall at Read Street have disappeared except for a red cedar tree. Despite these changes, the feature overall retains its historic character as a planted screen.	
V-13. Stable Yards Vines & Groundcover (post-1945)	155157	Non-contributing	After the end of the York Hall estate historic period, vines and groundcover (primarily vinca and Virginia creeper) were added in the stable yards. While these may be remnants of plantings in the original stable courtyard, the existing extent most likely dates to after the yards ceased use upon NPS acquisition in 1968 and therefore were a non-historic feature. Since the stable walled yards are non-historic, the groundcover does not detract from the landscape's historic character. Today, some vinca remains, but the yards are mainly weeds kept short. The western yard had a volunteer tree-of-heaven growing within it.	
V-14. Terrace lawn (c. 1916, 1922)		Contributing	The terrace lawn is a defining feature of the York Hall landscape. It is also the presumed site of the first Nelson House built c. 1706, as well as the Revolutionary War-period service yard that was built with construction of the existing Nelson House c. 1730. The yard was defined by six closely-spaced service buildings which were removed after the Civil War. As part of the initial development of the York Hall estate c. 1916, Gillette designed a sloping terrace over the remains of the old service yard, with the grade along Main Street supported by the perimeter brick wall. As part of the construction of the formal garden in 1922, Gillette redesigned the terrace by raising it to a level grade supported by a brick wall along the east side of the garden and additional walls to the north along the lot 53 boundary. The new terrace consisted of an open lawn that overlooked the formal garden and was bordered by shrubs and trees along the north, east, and south sides. The space was further defined by brick and stone walkways along the perimeter. As part of the rehabilitation of the Nelson House grounds, the NPS retained the terrace space, but altered its details through lowering of the grade by approximately two feet, removal of perimeter shrubs, and completed a redesign of the walkways. Despite these changes, the terrace space remains largely intact from the York Hall estate period. There is no aboveground evidence of the Revolutionary and Civil War-period yard. Today, the grass on the terrace is worn or thin along sections of the walkways and beneath trees. See also SO-5.	

V-15. Lafayette tree (c. 1824-c. 1922)	-	Missing	The Lafayette tree was a laurel which was reported to have stood in the front court (east of the walkway) during the visit and stay of the Marquis de Lafayette at the Nelson House in 1824. Reportedly, spectators to Lafayette's visit used branches from the tree to make a crown for him. Blow felt it was significant enough to retain the tree during the early days of the York Hall Estate, however during the redesign of the front court, begun in 1921, the tree was removed to make way for the new private garden with fountain designed by Gillette. The Lafayette tree is a defining feature of the Civil War period and the York Hall landscape, potentially as for the Revolutionary War period.	
Buildings & Structures				
BS-1. Nelson House (c. 1730)	155181, LCSID #00023, Structure # 41Y226A1	Contributing	The Nelson House, built by Thomas "Scotch Tom" Nelson c. 1730 and was later the residence of Thomas Nelson Jr., is the defining building of the Revolutionary War, Civil War, and York Hall landscapes. It is a two-story Georgian-style brick house that was restored to its colonial appearance by the NPS in 1976. Restoration work included the removal of dormers and doorways added during the York Hall estate period. Positioned 30 feet south of Main Street and approximately 10 feet from Nelson Street, the house defines the front and rear courts and is a focal point of the formal garden. Although restored to the Revolutionary War period, the house maintains the character of the Civil War period and the overall design and massing of the York Hall estate period.	
BS-2. Carriage House (Garage) (c. 1916)	155183, LCSID #006883, Structure #41Y226C3	Contributing	The carriage house, known historically as the garage, is a character-defining building of the York Hall landscape. The one-and-one-half story gable-roof Colonial Revival-style brick building, located along the perimeter wall on Read Street, was designed by Griffin and Wynkoop and built c. 1916 as an automobile garage. The east side facing the lawn was designed with a residential character, while the west side featured three arched garage bays. In 1973, the NPS renovated the building into a ranger station. On the exterior, this work included replacement of the original side-hinged garage doors with overhead doors and addition of a steel staircase on the south side, above an original basement entry well. These changes detract from the historic character of the landscape.	
BS-3. Wisteria Cottage (c. 1916)	155185, LCSID #006881, Structure #41Y226Z3	Contributing	Wisteria Cottage, also known historically as the gardener's cottage, is a character-defining building of the York Hall landscape. The one and one-half story gable-roof Colonial Revival-style brick building was designed by Griffin and Wynkoop and built c. 1916 as a house for the estate gardener. The building, which faces the lawn, is integral with the perimeter brick wall and adjoins the service area. The park service has made no substantial changes to the building, which has been vacant since 1968.	
BS-4 Stable (c. 1916)	155187, LCSID # 006882, Structure #41Y226N3 (Nelson House-Stables)	Contributing	The stable is a character-defining building of the York Hall landscape. Designed by Griffin and Wynkoop and built c. 1916, the one-story brick Colonial Revival style building, measures approximately 70 feet long by 20 feet deep, and originally contained stables, a tack room, and space for carriages. Lean-to greenhouses were built on the south (back) side of the building c. 1950 and removed by the NPS after 1968. In 2004, the building was repaired, and a new wood roof was installed. The building retains its exterior historic character.	

BS-5. Front Court Retaining Wall (c. 1870)	155189, LCSID # 006879, Structure #34Y226H6 (Nelson House – Garden Wall [part])	Contributing	The brick retaining wall surrounding the Nelson and Main Street sides of the front court, built c. 1870, is a character-defining structure of the York Hall landscape. The front court may have been bordered by low retaining walls on the east and west sides that were built during the initial construction of the house c. 1730. These walls were either removed or enlarged c. 1870 into a higher brick retaining wall that extended along three sides of the front court (Civil War photographs and illustrations do not show the present wall). This wall may have been built to address a grade change made during or shortly after the Civil War. The new wall, approximately 2 feet high along Nelson Street to 6 feet high along Main Street, was built of red brick in running bond and featured an opening and set of steps at the entrance walkway on axis with the front door of the Nelson House. Circa 1915, the wall was raised approximately 2 feet during construction of a new wall to the west (see BS-6). Circa 1921, the entrance walkway opening, and steps were removed as part of the redesign of the front court into an enclosed garden. The c. 1915 top courses were removed by the NPS c. 1983 to restore the original height. Although built outside the periods of significance, the wall was an important part of the landscape during the York Hall estate period.	
BS-6. York Hall Perimeter Walls (c. 1916)	155191, LCSID #006879, Structure #34Y226H6 (Nelson House – Garden Wall [part])	Contributing	The perimeter brick walls along Main and Read Streets are character-defining structures of the York Hall landscape. These walls consist of brick retaining and freestanding walls constructed between roughly 1915 and 1922. (The connected brick retaining wall around the front court built c. 1870 is evaluated under the Front Court section, BS-5). The perimeter walls, measuring approximately 1,000 feet in length, are built of red brick in a mix of bonds and with a corbelled brick cap. The approximately 6-foot-tall section along Main Street steps down toward Read Street in three sections of header bond and contains an opening at the entrance walkway that leads to the terrace. The wall along Read Street is laid in a mix of common, stacked, and Flemish bond, and contains brick piers with corbelled caps between the sections. The wall curves inward at the carriage house (garage) and terminates at the walls in the north stable service yard. The walls along Nelson Street, which originally extended to the Ballard House, were removed by the park service c. 1975, and the wall along Main Street was lowered c. 1983 at the time the wall around the front court (BS-5) was lowered. Aside from these changes, the perimeter wall remains intact from the York Hall estate period (1914–1930).	
BS-7. Formal Garden Walls & Stairs (1922)	155193, LCSIS #006880, Structure #33Y226H3 (Formal Garden Walls)	Contributing	The brick walls along the east and south sides of the formal garden, including the stairs from the terrace, are a character-defining structure of the York Hall landscape. The east part of the wall, completed as part of the Gillette-designed formal garden in 1922, retains the raised grade of the terrace and serves as the formal entrance to the garden. It is a 6-and-a-half-foot high brick wall laid in Flemish bond with a corbelled brick cap and brick buttresses. The stairs consist of a double flight with a center herringbone-brick landing and a single flight to the level of the garden. The two sections of the south wall flank either side of the opening to the lawn and contain piers on the ends that were historically ornamented with urns. Much of the wall was covered in English ivy during Blow ownership. Alterations since the historic period include changes in mortar, lowering of the height of the east wall in response to lowering of the terrace grade c. 1976, and removal of the urns on the south wall. The existing concrete parging on the cap of the east wall dates to this period. The tall brick walls that frame the west and north sides of the formal garden (north and west sides) are part of the perimeter wall (see BS-6).	
BS-8. Formal Garden Perimeter Bed Walls (1922)	155195	Contributing	The perimeter bed walls in the formal garden are a character-defining structure of the York Hall landscape. Completed in 1922 according to the design of Gillette, these low brick walls retain the perimeter bed of shrubs and trees and extend around nearly the entire perimeter of the garden, except for the opening to the lawn on the south side. They vary from approximately 15 inches tall along the west and north sides to 3 feet at the northeast corner of the garden, and are laid in Flemish bond with a brick cap. There have been no changes to these walls since the historic period.	

BS-9. Formal Garden Tree Well (c. 1922)	155197	Contributing	A circular brick tree well in the perimeter bed at the northeast corner of the formal garden is a character-defining structure of the York Hall landscape. The well was built as part of the formal garden c. 1922 to protect an aged tree (species unknown). The well reflects Blow's interest in preserving the old trees on the property. Aside from the notable loss of the tree at some point after 1930, there have been no documented changes to the well since the historic period.	
BS-10. Serpentine Walls (c. 1916)	155199	Contributing	The serpentine walls to either side of the stable are distinctive structures of the York Hall landscape. Built c. 1916 along with the stable, the walls were designed to screen the original service yard (south of the stable) from the stable courtyard to the north. The walls are in a serpentine shape similar to those designed by Thomas Jefferson at the University of Virginia. Around 1936, after the end of the estate historic period, the service drive openings between the serpentine walls and the stable were closed off, and c. 1945, additional walls (see BS-11) were added to enclose small service yards. Although these later walls have altered the historic setting, the serpentine walls retain their historic character.	
BS-11. Stable Yard Walls (c. 1945)	155201	Non-contributing	The straight brick walls surrounding the stable service yards are non-historic features built after the end of the York Hall estate historic period. These walls were built c. 1945 to enclose small service yards after the original service yard south of the stable building was replaced by a tennis court c. 1936. Wood gates in the openings to the service yards no longer exist. The wood fence (see SSF-4) added by the NPS in the early 1970s to enclose the Ballard House breaks to meet the stable yard wall on the east side. Although these walls alter the historic spatial character of the stable courtyard, they are compatible with the historic character of the landscape in design and materials.	
BS-12. Utility Screen Wall (1976)	155203	Non-contributing	The lattice-bond brick wall between the carriage house and Wisteria Cottage is a non-historic feature. It was built in 1976 to screen the site's central cooling plant. During the York Hall estate period, the site was part of a shrub mass along the west perimeter of the lawn. These shrubs were removed by the NPS. Because the screen wall is inconspicuous, it is compatible with the historic character of the landscape.	
Views & Vistas				
VV-1. York River View (pre-dates 1730)	155205	Contributing	The view of the York River looking north from the front court of the Nelson House is a character-defining feature of the Revolutionary War and Civil War landscape. The view most likely influenced "Scotch Tom" Nelson's location for his new house c. 1730. From here, the Nelsons could watch their ships and trading partners approach the Yorktown waterfront. The view looked across lot 46, with the Nelson stores possibly located out of the viewshed on the western side of the lot on a lower elevation. This view remained intact through the Civil War, by which time it would have become more expansive with the loss of Nelson stores and William Nelson House. Although not visible from the front court during the York Hall estate period due to the high boxwood hedge, the river view was visible from upper floors of the house. The park service rehabilitation of the front court in 1976 reopened the river view through removal of the high boxwood hedge, although the viewshed to the north and northeast has become obscured by growth of woods in the Great Valley and trees on lots 46 and 47. These obstructions detract from the historic character of the landscape.	
VV-2. Formal Garden View from Terrace (1922)	155207	Contributing	The view of the formal garden from the terrace is a defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Part of Gillette's design for the terrace and formal garden that were built in 1922, the view provides an elevated prospect across the formal garden that is framed by the trees along the south, west, and north perimeter. Although the composition of the garden has changed, the view remains intact from the York Hall estate period.	

VV-3. View of Nelson House from Main & Nelson Streets (c. 1730)	-	Contributing	Views of the Nelson House from Main Street and Nelson Street are a defining feature of the Revolutionary and Civil War periods. Throughout the York Hall estate period, the front court was a sheltered garden space with a boxwood hedge that had grown upwards of 15 feet tall obscuring views of the building from Main Street. The views were reintroduced by the NPS during the rehabilitation of the Nelson House grounds by removing and replacing the boxwoods and lowering the Main Street Wall height and removing a portion of the wall along Nelson Street.	
VV-4. Views between Open Lawn & Formal Garden (c. 1922)	-	Contributing	Views between the open lawn and formal garden are a defining feature of the York Hall landscape. The south entrance plantings (see V-9) were designed by Gillette c. 1922 to frame the garden from the open lawn area. Circa 1946, after the historic period, the plantings were expanded to enclose the new swimming pool and patio in the lawn of the south opening to the formal garden. The NPS removed the pool and most of the expanded plantings after 1968, except for a screen of crêpe myrtle which still exists and obscures the views between the two defining features of the York Hall landscape.	
Small-scale Features				
SSF-1. Formal Garden Brick Edging (c. 1922)	155209	Contributing, missing (partially)	The remaining brick edging around the beds of the formal garden are characteristic small-scale features of the York Hall landscape. As designed by Gillette in 1922, each of the 16 beds in the garden was edged by a single course of red brick. After the end of the historic period, much of the brick edging was removed or has become buried. The NPS had installed wood planks where bricks were missing, but today, much of that has been lost also. Although a fragment of its original extents, the limited existing brick edging reflects the original Gillette design of the garden. The wood planks detract from the historic character of the landscape.	
SSF-2. Formal Garden Irrigation Fixtures (c. 1922)	155211	Non-contributing	A below-ground irrigation system was installed c. 1922 by Charles Alpin, the Blows' head gardener, as part of the construction of the formal garden. This system included galvanized pipe with pressurized sprinkler heads and several zone shut-off valves. Further research is needed to determine if the remaining components date to the York Hall estate period. Although never a conspicuous part of the landscape, the system illustrates the high level of maintenance then characteristic of the landscape.	No image available
SSF-3. Cornwallis Plaque (1931)	155213, IDLCS #81949, Structure #77Y090N3	Undetermined	The commemorative plaque dedicated to Lord Cornwallis was originally installed on the east wall of the Nelson House in 1931 as part of the Siege of Yorktown Sesquicentennial, during the time the house was open to the public as a museum. The plaque was not part of the designed York Hall landscape. It is a bronze tablet with a bas-relief sculpture of Lord Cornwallis sculpted by F. William Sievers of Richmond, Virginia. Sievers (1872-1966) designed the bronze sculptures on the Virginia Memorial at Gettysburg (dedicated 1917) as his first major work. The Cornwallis plaque was moved to the west perimeter wall of the formal garden (see C-7) by the National Park Service c. 1975 as part of the restoration of the Nelson House. The plaque does not detract from the historic character of the formal garden due to its inconspicuous location. Further research is needed to determine whether the plaque meets the National Register criteria in the context of historic preservation and commemoration in Yorktown during the early twentieth century given its relocation.	
SSF-4. Wood Fences (c. 1976, 2009)	155215	Non-contributing	The wood fences around the back court of the Nelson House and along the Smith and Ballard lots are contemporary features added by the NPS between 1972 and 1974 to define the historic limits of the Nelson, Smith, and Ballard lots. The unpainted wood paling fences have been replaced several times, most recently in 2015. The fences are generally compatible with the Revolutionary War-period character of the village as a whole due to their inconspicuous appearance. Their rough character, however, is not consistent with the refined design of the York Hall landscape or the Georgian-style Nelson House.	

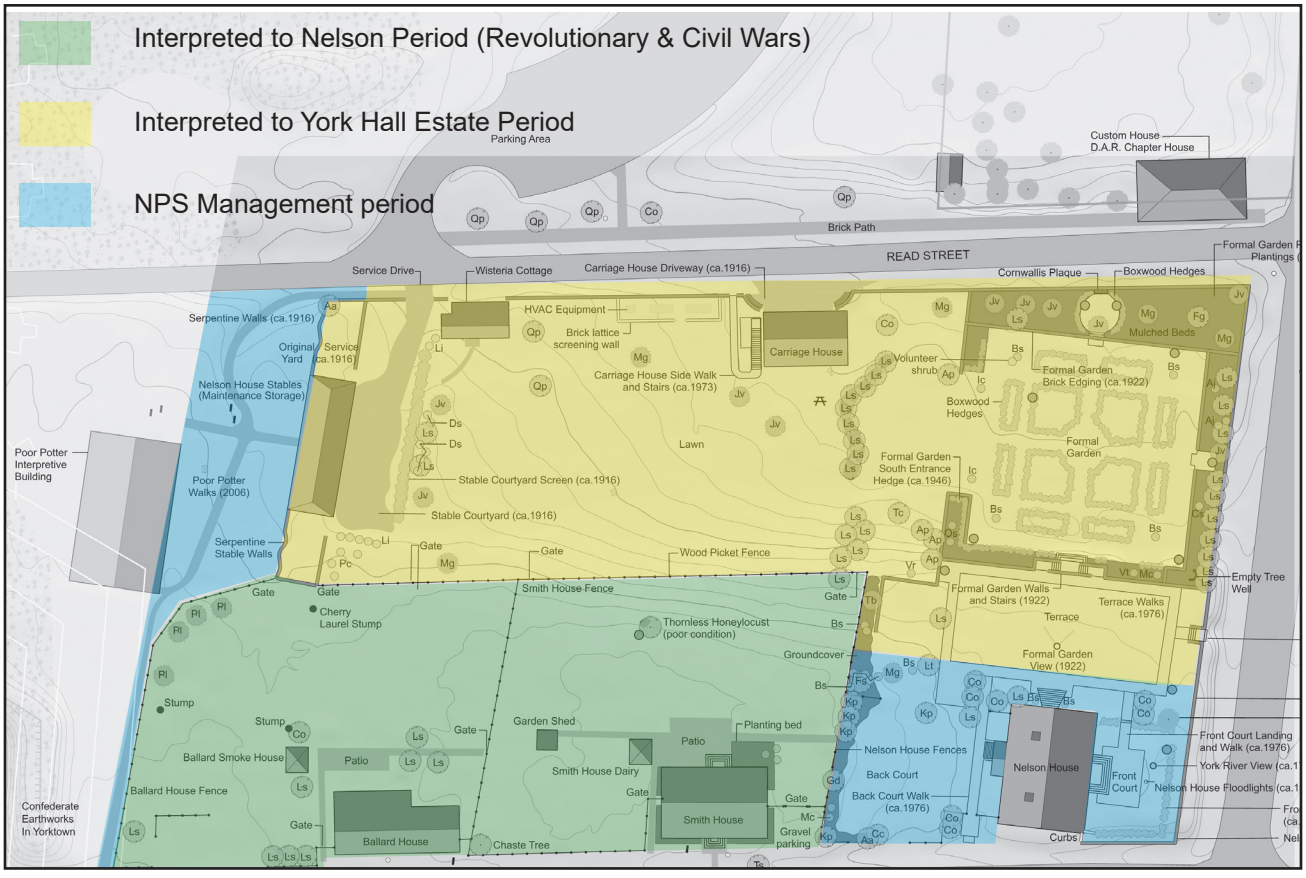
SSF-5. NPS Furnishings: Benches, Signs, Picnic Tables (c.1980–2010)	155217	Non-contributing	The benches, signs, and picnic tables around the Nelson House grounds are non-historic features added since 1976 by the NPS. The benches include movable wooden types on the northeastern end of the terrace, in the formal garden, and the front court. One bench was included within the planting bed which seems to invite visitors between into the boxwood border. Signs include an interpretive wayside located near the entrance on Main Street. (Other signs once installed by the NPS, including mast-arm wood post-mounted signs at the Main Street entrance hung on a that is removed when the house is closed and in the back court have since been removed from the landscape.) A picnic table is located near the carriage house (garage) for park staff use. Except for this picnic table, these furnishings are compatible with the historic character of the landscape due to their inconspicuous appearance.	
SS-6. Nelson House Floodlights (c. 1976)	155219	Non-contributing, missing	Three sets of floodlights in the front court were added c. 1976 to light the restored Nelson House lawn are not historic features. Today, only one light exists (a replacement) at the front of the house. The fixture detracts from the historic character of the landscape due to their visibility within the court.	
SSF-7. AC Units (1976, c. 2000)	155221	Non-contributing	The cooling plant south of the carriage house and the small single air-conditioning unit to the north are non-historic features. The central cooling plant was installed in 1976 as part of the rehabilitation of the Nelson House grounds. The plant originally included two air-conditioning condenser units and a transformer screened by a lattice brick wall (see BS-12). A large propane tank later replaced the condenser units. The single air-conditioning unit north of the carriage house was installed more recently and is not screened. The units are incompatible with the historic character of the landscape in materials and design, although the lattice brick wall provides a moderately effective screen when viewed from the lawn.	No image available
Archaeological Features				
A-1. Formal Garden Fireplace Base (c. 1946)	155223	Non-contributing	Circa 1946, after the end of the historic period for the York Hall landscape, the Blows installed a circular brick patio in the formal garden with a fireplace against the perimeter wall. This fireplace featured an iron plate for a base. The fireplace superstructure was removed by the NPS after 1968, leaving the iron base that remains today. As a remnant of a non-historic feature, the base does not contribute to the historic character of the landscape.	No image available

TREATMENT METHODOLOGY

No approved landscape treatment for the Nelson House grounds is prescribed by previous park planning documents. The 1993 General Management Plan for Colonial National Historical Park indicates that historic structures and archeological sites of the colonial and revolutionary periods will be researched, preserved, and restored. The 2012 CLI states that the site "Must be Preserved and Maintained" and was confirmed by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

Today, multiple layers of history are interpreted through the Nelson House gardens. Adapted from Figure 3.1 in the 2011 CLR, the figure below clarifies the dominant period of significance which is interpreted though the landscape today. This is not to say that every landscape feature within these spaces represents, or is of, that period, but that in 2024, the character of the space represents the period of significance identified. It is worth nothing that the 2011 version of this diagram identified the front and back courts as being "Dominant Revolutionary War period Character" but that implies that the landscapes are from the Revolutionary War period; rather, these landscapes, along with the Poor Potter site are rehabilitated landscapes completed by the NPS c. 1976. In the 2011 CLR these spaces were evaluated as contributing, but the majority of the features within them, as non-contributing, or contributing but not reflective of the intended period.

Figure 3.1 Plan of Nelson House grounds showing dominant historic character in each of the character areas. For the purpose of the cultural landscape evolution, the Civil War period is the same as the Revolution War period.



The table below (Table 3.3) summarizes the treatment methodologies for each of the landscape characteristics and their associated features identified and discussed above in the Analysis and Evaluation section of this report and based on the evaluation narrative for each. This table is intended to provide guidance for any potential recommendations considered for the landscape.

Table 3.3
Landscape Feature Treatment Methodology

Feature Name	Evaluation Status	Treatment Methodology	Associated Impacts
Spatial organization			
SO-1. Front Court Space (c. 1730, c. 1976)	Contributing	Defining feature of Revolutionary & Civil War periods but does not reflect Revolutionary & Civil War periods. Current landscape dates to the NPS management period. Potential for reinterpretation/ rehabilitation.	C-1, V-1, V-2, V-15, BS-1, BS-5, VV-1, VV3
SO-2. Back Court Space (c. 1730, c. 1976)	Contributing	Defining feature of Revolutionary War period but does not reflect the Revolutionary War period. Historic details unknown. Current landscape dates to the NPS management period. Potential for reinterpretation/rehabilitation.	C-2, V-3, BS-1
SO-3. Terrace Space (1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of York Hall landscape. Originally bordered by shrubs & trees. NPS altered grade of terrace, removed shrubs, and redesigned walkways. Potential to interpret for Nelson House service yard.	C-3, C-4, V-4, V-14, BS-1, BS-6, VV-2, VV-4
SO-4. Formal Garden Space (1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of York Hall landscape. Potential for rehabilitation.	C-5, C-6, C-7, V-5, V-6, V-7, V-8, V-9, V-10, BS-6, VV-2, VV7, SSF-1, SSF-2
SO-5. Lawn Space (c. 1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	C-9, C-12, V-9, V-10, V-11, V-14, BS-2, BS-3, BS-4, BS-6, VV-4, SSF-4
SO-6. Stable Courtyard (c. 1916)	Contributing	Defining feature of York Hall landscape. Plant & shrub plantings enclosed the yard & screened it from the open lawn. Maintain existing.	SO-8, C-10, C-11, C-12, V-12, V-13, BS-4, BS10, BS-11
SO-7. Original Service Yard (c. 1916)	Non-contributing; missing	Currently managed as the Poor Potter site. Maintain existing.	C-11, BS-4, BS-10
SO-8. Stable Yards (c. 1945)	Non-contributing	Installed after Period of Significance. Potential for reinterpretation/rehabilitation.	SO-6, C-10, C-12, V-12, V13, BS-4, BS-10, BS-11

Circulation			
C-1. Front Court Landing and Walkway (c. 1976)	Non-contributing	Current stairs, landing & walkway date to NPS management period. Potential for reinterpretation/ rehabilitation. Accessibility issues.	SO-1, V-1, V-2, V-15, BS-1, BS-5, SSF-4, VV-1, VV-3
C-2. Back Court Walkway (c. 1976)	Non-contributing	Current stairs, landing & walkway date to NPS management period. Potential for reinterpretation/ rehabilitation. Accessibility issues.	SO-2, V-3, BS-1
C-3. Terrace Walkways (c. 1976)	Non-contributing	Not a historic feature; dates to NPS management period. Potential for rehabilitation. Accessibility issues.	SO-3, C-4, V-4, V-14 BS-1, BS-6, VV-2
C-4. Main Street Entrance (c. 1922)	Contributing	Feature of York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-3, C-3, V-4, V-14, BS-6, VV-3
C-5. Formal Garden Walkways (Grass) (1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of York Hall landscape. Maintain existing but consider turf condition & edging. Accessibility issues.	So-4, C-6, C-7, V-5, V-6, V-7, V-9, V-10, SSF-1
C-6. Formal Garden Brick Pads (1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of York Hall landscape. Maintain existing, consider resetting brickwork & reintroducing benches.	SO-4, C-5, C-7, V-5, V-6, V-8, SSF-1
C-7. Formal Garden Circular Patio (c. 1946)	Non-contributing	Installed after Period of Significance. Consider reintroducing bench & resetting brickwork.	SO-4, C-5, C-7, V-5, V-6, V-7, V-8, SSF-3, A-1
C-8. Carriage House Driveway (c. 1916)	Contributing	Defining feature of York Hall landscape. Concrete apron, ramp & handrail dates to NPS management period. Maintain existing.	C-9, BS-2, BS-6
C-9. Carriage House Sidewalk & Stairs (c. 1973)	Non-contributing	Not a historic feature; dates to NPS management period. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-5, C-8, BS-2, BS-6
C-10. Service Drive (c. 1916)	Contributing	Defining feature of York Hall landscape. Current pavement dates to NPS management period. Potential for rehabilitation. Accessibility issues if considered pedestrian circulation.	SO-6, SO-8, C-12, V-12, V-13, BS-4, BS-6, BS-11
C-11. Poor Potter Walkways (2006)	Non-contributing	Not historic feature; dates to NPS management period. Accessibility issues.	SO-7, BS-4, BS-10, SSF-6
C-12 Stepping stone paths (c. 1916, c. 1917, c. 1919)	Missing (mostly)	Defining feature of York Hall landscape. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-5, SO-6, C-10, V-8, V-9, V-10, V-11, BS-2, BS-3, BS-4, VV-4
Vegetation			
V-1. Front Court Boxwood Hedge (c. 1730, c. 1976)	Contributing	Defining feature of York Hall landscape; does not reflect York Hall landscape. Current hedge dates to NPS management period. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-1, C-1, V-2, V-15, BS-1, BS-5, VV-1, VV-3
V-2. Front Court Tuliptree (pre-1914, c. 1995)	Contributing	May reflects feature of the Revolutionary War period. Current tree replaced NPS management period. Maintain existing.	SO-1, C-1, V-1, V-15, BS-1, BS-5, VV-3

V-3. Back Court Trees and Shrubs	Non-contributing	Historic details unknown. Current landscape dates to the NPS management period. Potential for reinterpretation/ rehabilitation but maintain historic Kentucky coffeetree which may date to York Hall estate period.	SO-2, C-2, C-3, BS-1, VV-3, SSF-4
V-4. Terrace Trees and Shrubs (c. 1976)	Non-contributing	Non-historic vegetation dating to NPS management period. Potential for reinterpretation/rehabilitation.	SO-3, C-3, C-4, V-14, BS-1, BS-6, VV-1, VV-2
V-5. Formal Garden Boxwood Hedges (c. 1976)	Non-contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape, but species and height of hedges do not reflect the York Hall landscape. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-4, C-5, C-6, C-7, V-6, V-7, BS-6, VV-2, SSF-1, SSF-2
V-6. Formal Garden Specimen Boxwoods & Yews (c. 1985)	Non-contributing, missing (yews)	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape, but form & appearance of plantings do not reflect the York Hall landscape. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-4, C-5, V-5, V-7, VV-2, SSF-1, SSF-2
V-7. Formal Garden Herbaceous Plants (1922)	Non-contributing, missing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape, but lack of herbaceous plants detracts from the historic landscape. Potential for reinterpretation/ rehabilitation.	SO-4, C-5, V-5, V-6, VV-2, SSF-1, SSF-2
V-8. Formal Garden Perimeter Plantings (c. 1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Current density of plantings date to the NPS management period. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-4, C-5, C-6, C-7, CV-9, V-10, BS-6, VV-2, VV-3, SSF-1, SSF-2
V-9. Formal Garden South Entrance Plantings (c. 1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Current density of plantings date to the NPS management period. Shrubs on south side from after Period of Significance. Potential for reinterpretation/rehabilitation.	SO-4, SO-5, C-5, C-12, V-8, V-10, VV-4
V-10. Formal Garden South Entrance Hedge (crêpe myrtle) (c. 1922)	Non-contributing	Installed after Period of Significance. Potential for reinterpretation/rehabilitation. Hedge detracts from view of open lawn.	SO-4, SO-5, C-5, C-12, V-8, V-9, VV-4
V-11. Lawn Specimen Trees (c. 1916, 1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-5, C-9, C-10, C-12, V-12, V-14, VV-4
V-12. Stable Courtyard Screen (c. 1916)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-6, SO-7, SO-8, C-12, V-11, V-13, BS-4, BS-11
V-13. Stable Yards Vines and Groundcover (post-1945)	Non-contributing	Installed after Period of Significance. Not a historic feature. Potential for reinterpretation/rehabilitation.	SO-6, SO-8, C-10, V-12, BS-4, BS-10, BS-11
V-14. Terrace lawn (c. 1916, 1922)	Undetermined	Defining feature of York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-3, C-3, C-12, V-4, V-11, BS-1, BS-6

V-15. Lafayette tree (c. 1824-c. 1922)	Missing	Defining feature of the Civil War period and the York Hall landscape, potentially for the Revolutionary War period. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-1, C-1, V-1, V-2, BS-1, BS-5, VV-3
Buildings & Structures			
BS-1. Nelson House (c. 1730)	Contributing	Defining feature of Revolutionary & Civil War periods, as well as York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-1, SO-2, SO-3, C-1, C-2, V-15, VV-1, SSF-3
BS-2. Carriage House (Garage) (c. 1916)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-5, C-8, C-9, C-12, BS-12, SSF-7
BS-3. Wisteria Cottage (c. 1916)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-5, SO-6, SO-8, C-10, C-12, V-12
BS-4 Stable (c. 1916)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-6, SO-7, SO-8, C-10, C-11, V-12, V-13
BS-5. Front Court Retaining Wall (c. 1870)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Current height of wall dates to NPS management period. No front court access (wall opening & stairs) to Main Street. Potential for reinterpretation/ rehabilitation.	SO-1, C-1, V-1
BS-6. York Hall Perimeter Walls (c. 1916)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-3, SO-4, SO-5, C-3, C-4, C-5, C-8, C-9, C-12, V-4, BS-5, BS-7, BS-12, SSF-4, A-1
BS-7. Formal Garden Walls and Stairs (1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-4, C-3, C-4, C-5, V-4, V-5, BS-6, VV-2
BS-8. Formal Garden Perimeter Bed Walls (1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-4, C-5, C-6, C-7, V-8, BS-6, BS-9
BS-9. Formal Garden Tree Well (c. 1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Tree missing. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-4, V-8, BS-6, BS-8
BS-10. Serpentine Walls (c. 1916)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-6, SO-7, SO-8, C-10, C-11, V-13, BS-11, SSF-4
BS-11. Stable Yard Walls (c. 1945)	Non-contributing	Not historic feature; dates to NPS management period. Structural issues. Potential for reinterpretation/rehabilitation.	SO-6, SO-7, SO-8, C-10, V-13, SSF-4
BS-12. Utility Screen Wall (1976)	Non-contributing	Not historic feature; dates to NPS management period. Maintain existing.	SO-5, C-9, C-12, BS-2, BS-6, SSF-7

Views & Vistas			
VV-1. York River View (pre-dates 1730)	Contributing	Defining feature of Revolutionary & Civil War periods. River view visible from upper floors during York Hall period. Potential for reinterpretation/ rehabilitation.	SO-1, C-1, V-1, BS-1
VV-2. Formal Garden View from Terrace (1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Maintain existing.	SO-3, SO-4, C-3, C-5, V-4, V-5, V-14
VV-3. View of Nelson House from Main & Nelson Streets (c. 1730)	Contributing	Defining feature of Revolutionary & Civil War periods, but obscured by high hedge in the York Hall period. Current views reintroduced in NPS management period. Maintain existing.	SO-1, V-1, V-15, BS-1
VV-4. View between Open Lawn & Formal Garden (c. 1922)	Contributing	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Current hedges obscuring view installed after Period of Significance. Potential for reinterpretation/rehabilitation.	SO-4, SO-5, C-5, C-9, C-12, V-9, V-10, V-11
Small-scale Features			
SSF-1. Formal Garden Brick Edging (c. 1922)	Contributing, missing (partially)	Defining feature of the York Hall landscape. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-4, C-5, V-5, V-6, V-7
SSF-2. Formal Garden Irrigation Fixtures (c. 1922)	Non-contributing	Inconspicuous feature of the York Hall landscape. Further research necessary to date existing system. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-4, V-5
SSF-3. Cornwallis Plaque (1931)	Undetermined	Installed after the PoS; relocated during NPS management period. Further research recommended to determine status. Maintain existing.	SO-4, C-5, V-8, BS-1, BS-6
SSF-4. Wood Fences (c. 1976, 2009)	Non-contributing	Non-historic features dating to NPS management period. Generally compatible with the Revolutionary War period character. Potential for reinterpretation/rehabilitation.	SO-2, SO-5, C-2, V-3, BS-10, BS-11
SSF-5. NPS Furnishings: Benches, Signs, Picnic Tables (c.1980–2010)	Non-contributing	Non-historic features dating to NPS management period. Except for this picnic table, these furnishings are compatible with the historic character of the landscape due to their inconspicuous appearance. Maintain existing.	SO-1, SO-2, SO-3, SO-4, SO-5, SO-8, C-1, C-2, C-5, C-9, C-11, C-12, V-4, V-15
SS-6. Nelson House Floodlights (c. 1976)	Non-contributing, missing	Non-historic features dating to NPS management period. Detracts from the historic character of the landscape due to their visibility. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-1, C-1, V-15, BS-1
SSF-7. AC Units (1976, c. 2000)	Non-contributing	Non-historic features dating to NPS management period. Brick wall provides a moderately effective screen when viewed from the lawn. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-5, C-9, BS-2, BS-12
Archaeological Features			
A-1. Formal Garden Fireplace Base (c. 1946)	Non-contributing	Installed after the PoS. Does not contribute to the historic character. Potential for rehabilitation.	SO-4, C-7, BS-6, SSF-5

ENDNOTES, ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

1 Portions of this chapter are adapted from the *Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for the Nelson House Grounds, Colonial National Historical Park*, prepared in 2011, and the *Nelson House, Colonial National Historical Park Cultural Landscape Inventory* (CLI) prepared in 2012. Tables were developed using information from the CLI, the CLR, and the *Foundation Document* prepared in 2018.

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TREATMENT

In 2011, a Cultural Landscape Report for the Nelson House Grounds was completed and published, covering the Site History, Existing Conditions, and Analysis and Evaluation. In 2012, a Cultural Landscapes Inventory for the Nelson House, Colonial National Historical Park was completed. Neither document was scoped to provide landscape treatment recommendations. The current project is intended to address this deficiency.

This report provides treatment guidance necessary to develop universal accessibility to the landscape, including access to the first floor of the historic Nelson House building. The project also develops recommendations for treatment of the site's various plantings and built landscape features as well as makes recommendations for options to interpret the multi-layered landscape history of the site to park visitors.

PREVIOUS PARK PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The 2018 Foundation Document for Colonial National Historical Park, Virginia established the Park's purpose statement:

> *Colonial National Historical Park preserves and interprets sites and stories central to the origin and establishment of the United States of America and the evolution of American institutions and identity, including the first permanent English settlement in North America at Jamestown Island and the American victory in the last major battle of the American Revolution at Yorktown, which are linked by the historic Colonial Parkway.* [1]

The same document describes the significance of the Nelson House grounds within the context of colonial America, the War for Independence, and the significant associations thereof:

> *The village of Yorktown was first established on the south bank of the York River through the Port Act of 1691, and served as one of several ports along the Virginia coast for the regulation of commerce and collection of customs duties. At its peak, Yorktown was the most important commercial port in Virginia, and in the present day, the village of Yorktown is a small, active community that maintains much of its historical integrity. A majority of the structures in the village were destroyed during the siege of Yorktown in 1781. Many of those structures*

> *that survived are included within the park boundary, including the Nelson House, Dudley Digges House, Cole Digges House, Somerwell House, Sessions House, Edmund Smith House, and Ballard House, all of which were built prior to 1760. The Nelson house is particularly notable as the home of Thomas Nelson Jr., a signatory of the Declaration of Independence, governor of Virginia, and commander of the Virginia Militia during the Siege of Yorktown. It is considered one of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in the state of Virginia. The village of Yorktown also contains the archeological remnants of the Poor Potter site, the largest industrial pottery of the colonial era in North America, and the reconstructed Swan Tavern. The village of Yorktown was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1966.*[2]

The 1993 *General Management Plan for all Colonial National Historical Park, Virginia* set forth the following goals for the village of Yorktown:

- Historic Yorktown's buildings and landscape will be managed as the central preservation and interpretation district. The aim will be to **preserve the historic fabric and impart of sense of 18th century Yorktown**. [(emphasis added) . . .] To avoid too open and parklike an appearance on vacant lots, the Park Service will consider increased use of fence, foundation markings, and landscaping with hedges and flowers, as well as interpretive media on historical research. [3]

- [A] route for an extensive walking tour of the town will be defined and methods and media specified for interpretation of historic buildings, earthworks, Cornwallis Cave, and other historic and natural features. The idea of using the overlook behind the William Nelson property as a prime interpretive site will be evaluated.[4]

- Archaeological and archival documentation will precede any rebuilding in adaptive reuse districts. Archaeological resources could be compromised in areas of rebuilding.[5]

The 2012 *Cultural Landscapes Inventory for Nelson House, Colonial National Historical Park* states the following:

> *The character from the historic period of the colonial and Revolutionary War period (c. 1730–1781) is evident in the spatial organization created by the house and its front and back courts, the architecture of the Nelson House, and the setting defined by the open-space of lots 48–50; boundary with Main, Nelson, and Read Streets; view of the York River; and setting of adjoining colonial buildings including the Smith, Ballard, Sessions, and Cole Digges Houses, and the Custom House. Circulation, vegetation, and small-scale feature characteristics from the Revolutionary War*

era have largely been lost. The character of the landscape remained largely unchanged through the Civil War (1861–1865), although the surrounding setting changed due to the loss of buildings, notably the William Nelson House and Nelson stores across Main Street.

From the historic period of the York Hall estate (1914-1930), the cultural landscape retains its overall spatial organization created by the house and its front and back courts, terrace, formal garden, lawn, and service area; buildings and structures including the Nelson House, three outbuildings, and the perimeter brick wall; and layout of the formal garden. Some of the circulation and vegetation characteristics of the landscape remain, especially in the formal garden. The front and back courts, and the terrace received the bulk of the National Park Service rehabilitation and thereby lost much of their historic character from the York Hall estate period.[6]

TREATMENT PHILOSOPHY

The Nelson House grounds are part of the Colonial National Historical Park and the Yorktown Historic District, a popular destination for visitors. The Nelson House landscape is significant for its association with the Siege of Yorktown the final battle of the American War for Independence (1781), with the Civil War (1861-1865), for its association with Governor Thomas Nelson, Jr. (1738-1789) and Charles Gillette (1886-1969), and for Georgian and Colonial Revival styles of architecture, as well as Colonial Revival style of landscape architecture.

This designed landscape evolved over its 200-year period of significance (c. 1730-1930) from the grand, colonial home of a signer of the Declaration of Independence and the Commonwealth's fourth governor which featured an outdoor forecourt linking the residence directly to Main Street, Yorktown – a position of power and prestige. It then served as the Country Place era estate of George P. Blow (1914-1968) with more than two acres of formal and domestic gardens until it was incorporated into the Yorktown unit of the Colonial National Historical Park and opened to the public in 1976 for the national bicentennial.

Today, the two-acre Nelson House grounds sit in the middle of the Colonial National Historical Park on Yorktown's Main Street occupying a substantial landscape where most village parcels are half-acre lots. The property is owned by the federal government and managed by the National Park Service. Access is managed by admittance to the park. There are no restrictions to the grounds imposed on non-ticketed visitors. Throughout the year, the grounds are used to host private events in addition to park programming.

Today's Nelson House grounds preserves characteristics and features attributed to multiple periods of significance. The adjacent Smith and Ballard houses (lots 53 and 53) reflect the Revolutionary War era most clearly, while the formal garden, terrace, lawn, and service yard (lots 48, 49, northern half of lot 50, and the western half of lot 52) reflect the more recent York Hall estate era, and the front and rear courts were rehabilitated during the National Park Service management to reflect an colonial/Civil War landscape era. (The Poor Potter site on the southwest of the property is an archaeological site with partially excavated eighteenth century pottery works housed in a structure.) Because of this, there is no single date to which to interpret the landscape. Allowing the visitor to experience the breadth of history that has occurred in this landscape through the centuries will provide the greatest opportunity for education and involvement.

Landscape treatment of the Nelson House grounds will prioritize interpretation of the Revolutionary War and the struggle for American Independence as the site's the primary period of significance. These priorities require careful attention to landscape spaces immediately adjacent to the historic dwelling. Treatment of these spaces will work in concert with the architecture of the building to convey an understanding of the political power of an important Virginian family. The treatment of these landscape spaces must convey the both the power of the Nelsons, but also the oppression of the unnumbered and unnamed African American families that they enslaved here.

Incomplete documentation, combined with nineteenth and early twentieth century historic events and historic movements in design, have made a restoration of the eighteenth century Nelson House landscape both undesirable and impractical.

Twentieth century landscape elements will be retained where these do not conflict with interpretation of the site's primary themes. However, twentieth century landscape elements will be thoughtfully modified when necessary to accommodate improved accessibility to the historic grounds and residence. While general patterns are to be retained, choices of plantings for rehabilitation of twentieth century garden spaces may appropriately depart from those appearing in surviving design drawings. Revision of garden plantings is justified in support of both economical maintenance and in support of effective interpretation of plantings typical of the eighteenth century.

Landscape treatment will support interpretation of historic relationships of power and powerlessness in contrasting treatment measures prescribed for the front court and rear court.

PRIMARY TREATMENT

Due to the project's stated purpose to accommodate universal accessibility and to creatively interpret the site's multiple layers of significance, the proposed treatment methodology is **rehabilitation**. Rehabilitation is defined by the National Park Service as "the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alteration, or additions while preserving those portions and features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural value."[7]

The Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties for Rehabilitation* are:

1. *A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*
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.*
3. *Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*
4. *Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*
5. *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.*
6. *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*
7. *Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*
8. *Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.*

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.*
10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

TREATMENT PRINCIPLES

The following treatment principles are provided to clarify the intent of the treatments (to follow) recommended by this cultural landscape report:

- **Recommendations will provide clear interpretation of the three periods of significance.** It should be evident for visitors to understand that multiple layers are being interpreted and that each layer is as important as the others. Visitors should come away understanding why each period is significant and relevant to whom. Visitors should understand the role of the landscape in each of the periods of significance.
- **Recommendations will bring garden features up to the standard for life/safety, including International Building Code and Architectural Barriers Act Standards.** Modern elements incorporated into the landscape should be sensitive to the historic landscape and follow preservation tenants to be sympathetically compatible but clearly distinguishable from historic elements. Recommendations will accommodating changes to provide a meaningful landscape experience for visitors with a range of physical abilities.
- **Recommendations will meet the project goal of providing visitors with accessibility to key features of the landscape.** Accessible routes should be provided that allow visitors with mobility impairments the opportunity to experience all significant landscape features, but not necessarily all features within the landscape. Accessible routes should be provided from a universally accessible parking area to key landscape features, including the front and back courts, terrace, formal garden and to the Nelson House's first floor. Accessible routes should be careful not to propose cutting into existing grades given that the landscape is eligible based on the York Village District's potential to yield additional information and as an archaeological resource. Where accessible routes would create an adverse impact to the historic landscape, alternative methods of access should be considered,

where not already provided, e.g., NPS app, virtual visitation experience.

- **Recommendations will preserve and enhance the overall spatial organization of the six house lots which comprise today's Nelson House grounds and the York Hall estate.** That is, the spatial organization that create distinct garden rooms of the front court, back court, terrace, formal garden, lawn, service yard, Poor Potter site, and the Smith and Ballard house parcels. Pedestrian connections can be made between these gardens spaces while maintaining each their own particular character.
- **Recommendations will preserve and enhance distinct garden spaces.** Individual plantings and plant groups which comprise each garden space (e.g., courts, terrace, formal garden, lawn) should be rehabilitated to support the larger garden feature. Where historic species are no longer appropriate, i.e., species now considered invasive or no longer suited to the climate, or species no longer commercially available, a plant of similar quality, size, effect should be considered for replacement. And in the reverse, where replacement plants have been made which do not reflect the original intent, e.g., the existing boxwood in the formal garden planted during the NPS management period as replacements for the much smaller dwarf English boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens 'Suffruticosa'*), these should be replaced to recreate the original design intent.
- **Recommendations will preserve and/or restore historically significant views.** To the extent feasible, views to the York River should be cleared. Viewsheds connecting garden features should be preserved and enhanced.
- **Recommendations will consider new opportunities to creatively interpret missing, but contributing, features**. The Nelson era service yard was located approximately in the same location as the York Hall estate terrace. Interpreting the service yard provides an important opportunity to tell the story of the enslaved who were an integral part of the Nelson era and their lives in eighteenth century Yorktown.
- **Recommendations will preserve and enhance landscape features which express the predominance of the Revolutionary War era Nelson House grounds upon the village of Yorktown.** The landscape will reflect the complete history of the Nelson House grounds, including the history of the enslaved without whom such a stately property would not have functioned.

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The following treatment recommendations have been organized by organized by general recommendations which can be undertake throughout the site, and recommendations or each of the six essential spaces which make up the 3-acre Nelson House grounds: front court, rear court, terrace, formal garden, open lawn, and the service yard. A Proposed Treatment plan, Figure 4.24, has been included at the end of this section and reflects the recommendations that follow.

GENERAL

G-1. Provide universal accessibility to the greatest extent feasible without negatively impacting the historic fabric of the grounds. Ensure that, to some extent, each interpreted garden space is accessible and open to the public.

G-2. Provide clear public access from the Church Street parking area into the Nelson House grounds. Consider developing an interpretive pedestrian loop that connects the Nelson House grounds with the Poor Potter site, the Read Street sidewalk, and Main Street as well as new walkways within the grounds proposed for accessibility. The loop should include a sidewalk along Nelson Street so that the Smith and Ballard House can be included. A new entrance in the Read Street brick wall would support the interpretive loop's accessibility and clarity for first time visitors.

G-3. Non-historic walkways should be constructed of a surface material that is firm and stable for accessibility, that is aesthetically appropriate and sensitive to the historic setting, and that is evident to visitors that it is not a historic material.

G-4. There are several walkways which exist from the NPS management era that accessibility issues: tripping hazards, walkways that terminate with no connection to another accessible feature, gradients that are too steep, widths that are too narrow, etc. Rehabilitate existing walkways for compliance with the ABA Accessibility guidelines and their connectivity around the Nelson House grounds.

G-5. Increase wayfinding signage. As part of the connectivity and accessibility recommendations noted above, improve wayfinding in and around the Nelson House grounds. Connections to the Church Street parking and Poor Potter site should be clear as should the visitor's ability to access the service yard, structures located around the lawn, as well as the Nelson Street façades of the Smith and Ballard Houses.

G-6. Enhance and improve interpretation throughout the Nelson House grounds. It should be evident to visitors that they are walking through and experiencing three distinct eras in one designed historic landscape. Visitors should come away with an understanding of the early and late Nelson periods, the York Hall estate era, and the changes incorporated during the NPS management era.

- Restore the Nelson House wayside along Main Street.
- Add interpretive elements to the terrace; see below for more.
- Add interpretive elements to the formal garden; see below for more.

FRONT COURT

FC-1. Provide universal accessibility to the front court by re-grading the walkways and eliminating steps.

The existing walkway which leads from the terrace (and the Main Street wall entry) to the front court and front steps into the Nelson House currently includes two risers: one at the edge of the brick patio pad and one in line with the boxwood hedge. Both of these risers are around 6 inches in height. The existing walkway which connects the brick patio pad and the brick terrace walkway is 24 feet long. This makes the gradient of the walkway—if the steps were removed—is less than 4.0%. This is under the ADA-ABA Accessibility Guidelines requirements that a walkway with a longitudinal slope of 1:20 or greater must have handrails.

This walkway should be redesigned and reset to follow the grade and remove the steps. The surrounding landscape would also have to be re-graded to accommodate the change in walkway. Replacing the boxwood hedge, recommendation FC-4 below, should be undertaken as part of the rehabilitation of the front court for accessibility.

FC-2. Reconstruct the opening in the Main Street wall and steps to more accurately interpret the Revolutionary War era front court. Consider creating steps which meet universal accessibility guidelines, as well as a locked gate which the Park can use to manage visitor access. See historical images of the Blow family estate for historical examples of wood gates.

This treatment recommendation was one presented and discussed at the stakeholder workshop, as well as at the staff review. The intent behind the recommendation is twofold: (1) it allows a more accurate interpretation of the Nelson era front court, and (2) gives the park



Figure 4.1 2023 photograph of the existing two steps in the walkway from the terrace to the front court.



Figure 4.2 Cropped view of the Nelson House looking north along then Pearl, now Nelson Street, showing the wood gates that once existed. Photograph c. 1931 (Blow photograph, reproduced from Historic American Building Survey, York Hall, HABS VA-100.)



Figure 4.3 Cropped view of c. 1903 postcard of the Nelson House looking southwest showing the steps reach Main Street from the front court. (Colonial National Historical Park archives, YOR_6696.)

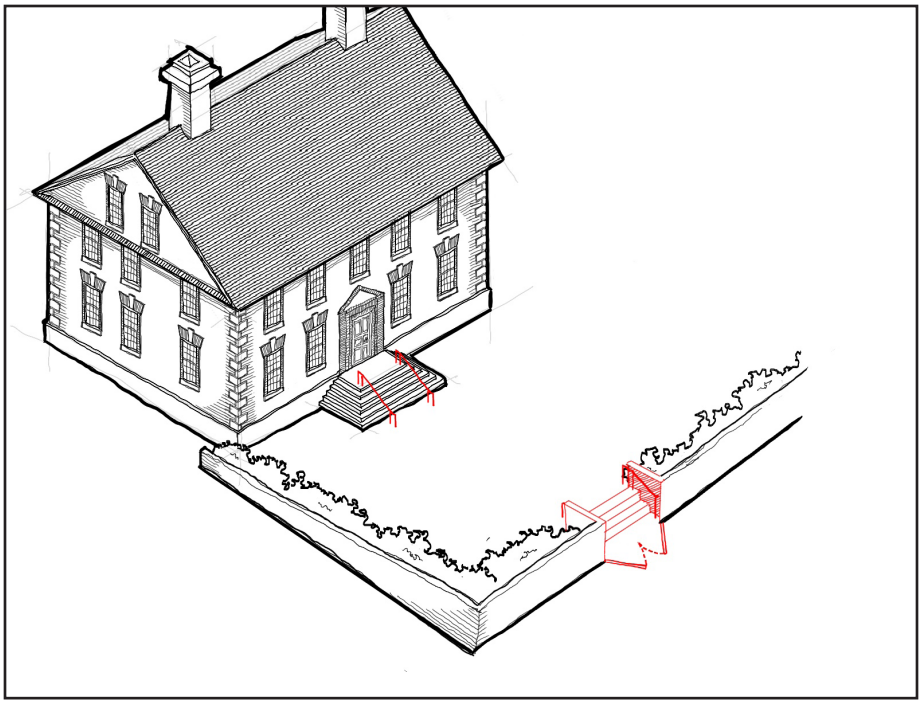


Figure 4.4 Diagram of the front court of Nelson House with two handrails added to front steps, and steps and gate as new entrance into the Nelson House grounds from Main Street. (Prepared by Schwartz/Silver Architects)

the ability to ease the pinch point of pedestrian flow in and out of the Nelson House grounds on busy days.

Alternatives looked at creating a ramp to transition the grades from Main Street to the brick pad, but the grade is such that a ramp would have to extent far into the space, thereby reducing the pad and its interpretive capacity—significantly. Historically the steps were located on the street side of the wall; today that would interfere with pedestrian patterns. Instead, it is recommended that a set of steps be created, with handrails, that moves the steps inside of the wall, similar to those at the main entrance to the west.

FC-3. Provide handrails on the (non-historic) steps at the front door for visitor safety.

FC-4. Restore the boxwood hedge to its Revolutionary War era height. The boxwood hedge has been described as a defining vegetation feature of the landscape from the Civil War, and possibly the colonial era as well, however, the lack of documentation from this era makes the form from the time unclear. The recommendation is to maintain a consistent hedge, of common boxwood, at a height that is just higher than the brick wall. This allows the hedge to be seen, but more importantly, for the views into the front court and of the front facade of the Nelson house to be visible from the Street.

FC-5. Consider reintroducing the Lafayette tree, a laurel—a character-defining feature of the Revolutionary War (likely) and Civil War landscape. The purported Lafayette tree was located to the east side of the center walkway towards the center of the court.

The laurel was likely a cherry laurel (*Laurocerasus caroliniana*) as it was one of the few laurel species used in the 18th century; others were shrub forms (mountain laurel and sweet bay).

FC-6. Restore the view to the York River to the greatest extent feasible—a character-defining feature of the Revolutionary War and Civil War landscape. This will require coordination with property within the Park but outside of the Nelson House grounds, in particular, the Great Valley and lots 84 and 85 across Main Street.

BACK COURT

BC-1. Provide universal accessibility to the rear court.

As part of the interpretive loop discussed above, and to create an accessible entrance into the Nelson House at the first floor, an accessible walkway should connect from Nelson Street to the steps and ramp at the rear of the house. In order to do this, the majority of the back court will have to be re-graded, fences removed and replaced, and some plantings removed. The proposed grading, seen in the following diagram Figure 4.6 allows the elimination of one of the existing, non-historic granite risers.

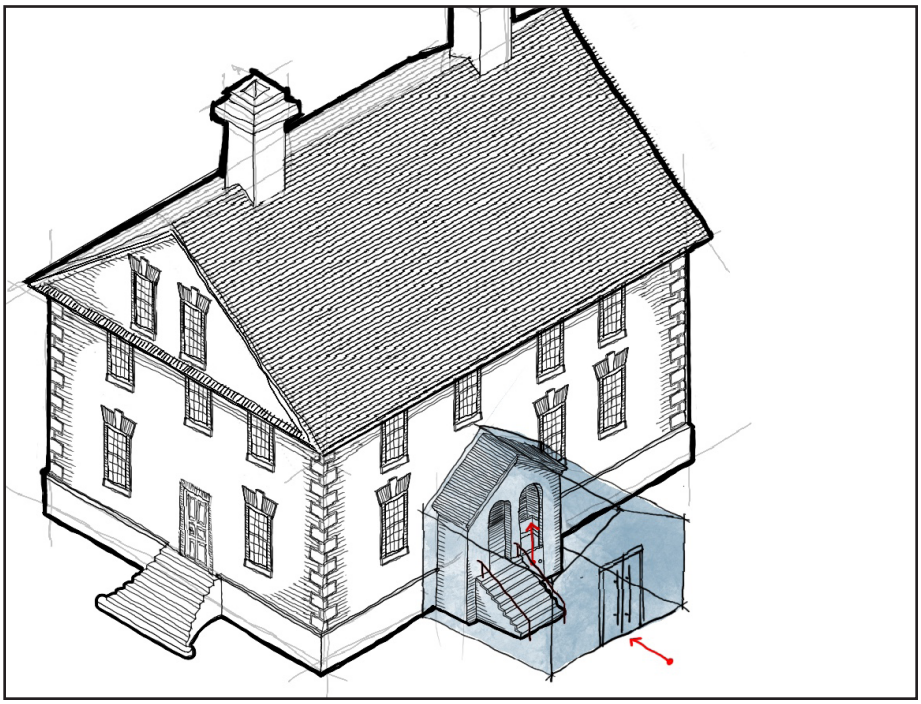


Figure 4.5 Diagram showing an enclosed vestibule to allow for a lift without exposure to the elements, while creating a respectful, and reversible, addition to the Nelson House at the back court. (Prepared by Schwartz/Silver Architects)

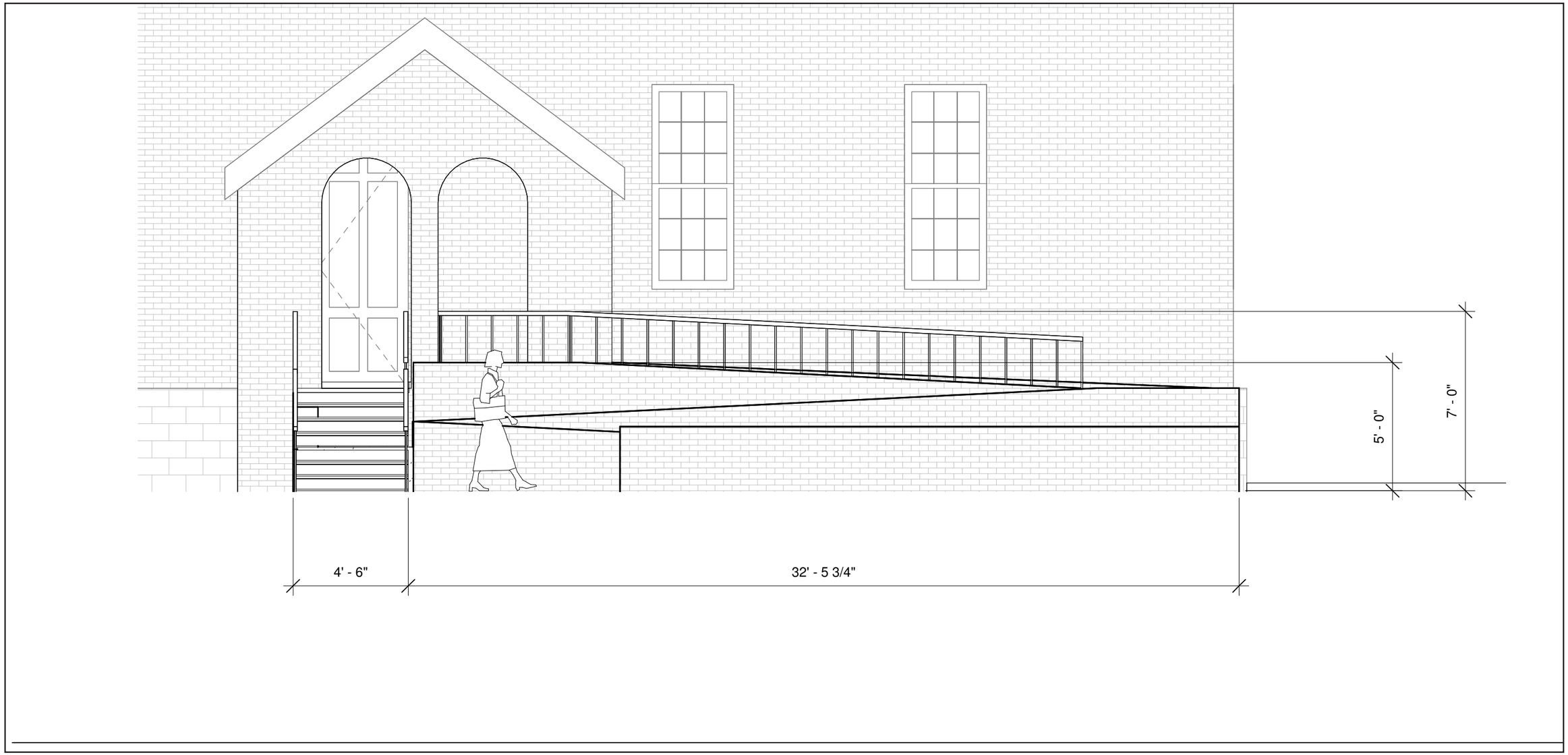


Figure 4.6 Alternative 1 for access ramp at back court with 1:20 gradient which does not require handrails. (Prepared by Schwartz/Silver Architects)

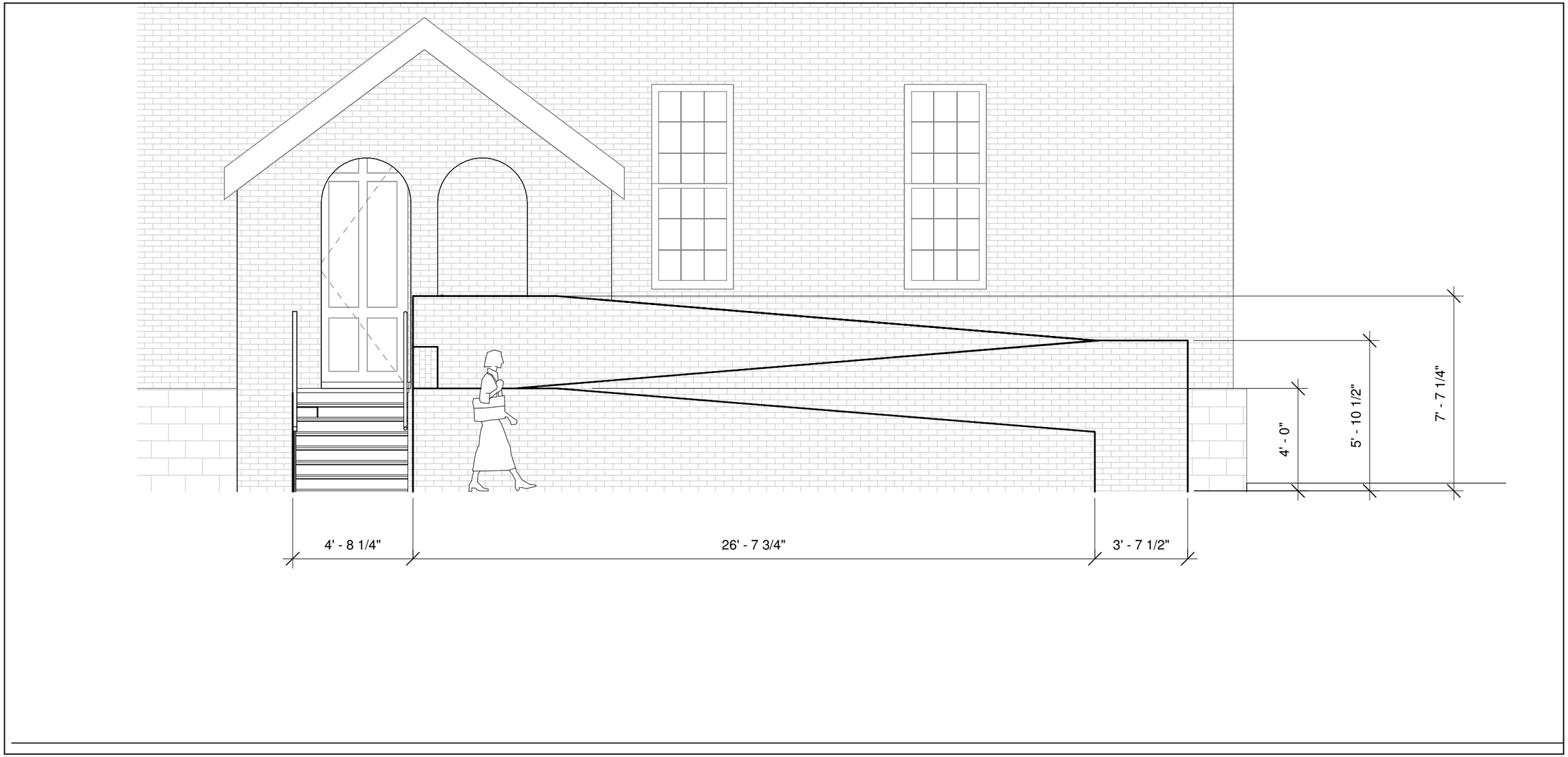


Figure 4.7 Alternative 1 for access ramp at back court with 1:12 gradient. (Prepared by Schwartz/ Silver Architects)

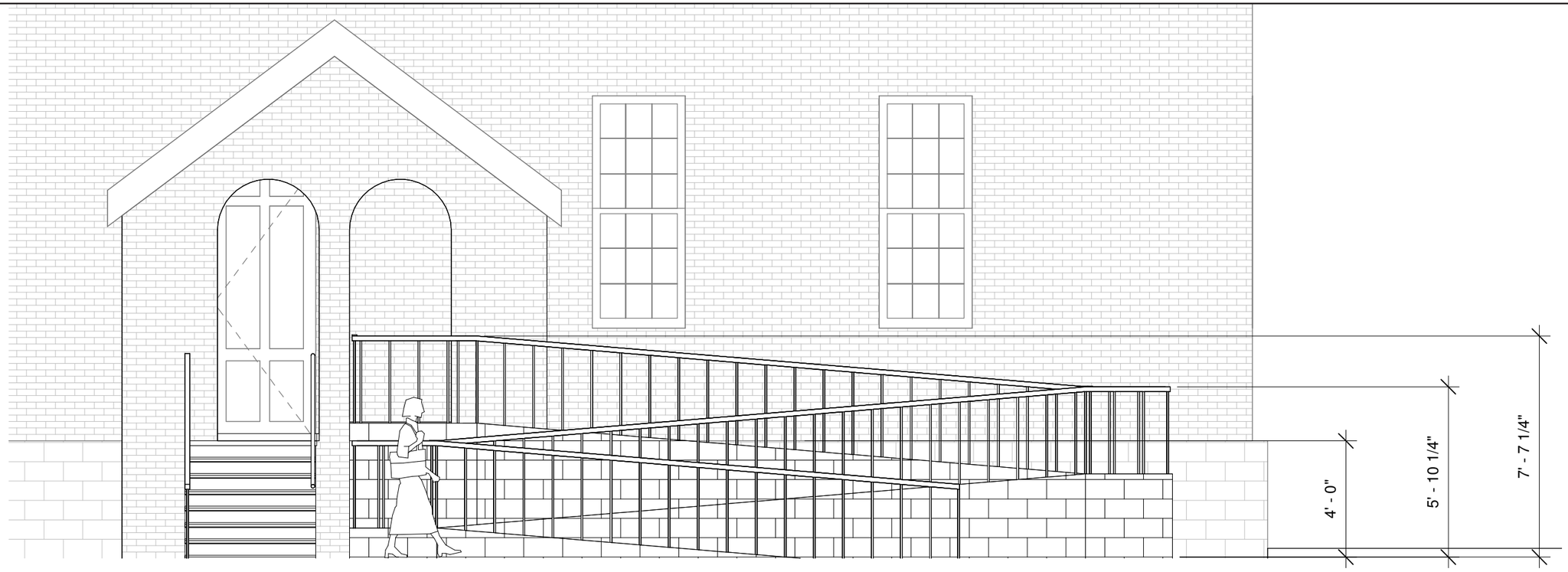


Figure 4.8 Alternative 1 for access ramp at back court with 1:12 gradient. (Prepared by Schwartz/ Silver Architects)

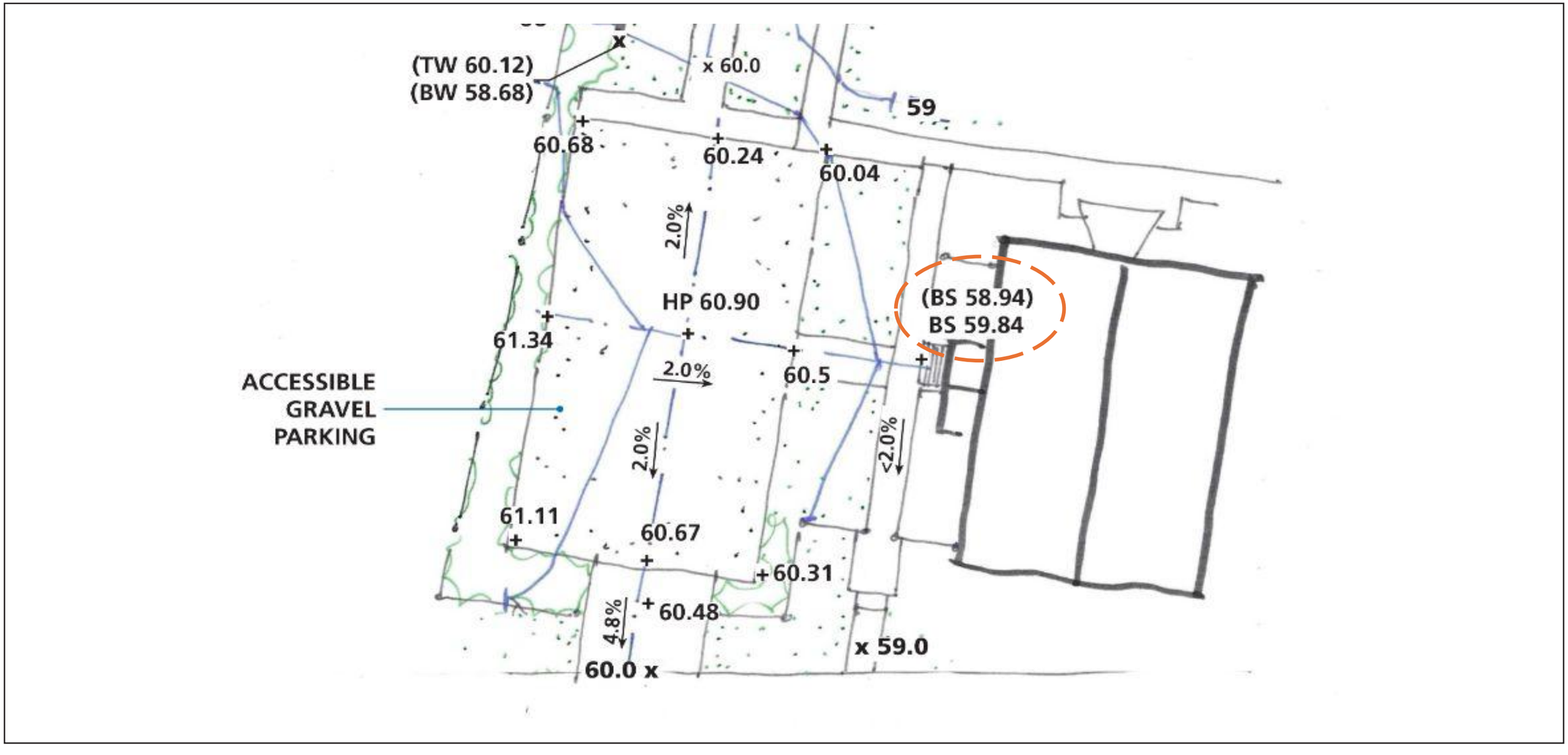


Figure 4.9 Grading study to re-grade the back court of the Nelson House in order to provide universal access from Nelson Street to the rear steps. (Prepared by Kyle Zick Landscape Architects.)

Supporting the recommendation to increase the elevation of the back court, is the discussion in this CLR that the grade was in fact higher than where it currently lies. During the York Hall estate period, the grade was significantly higher, and actually covered much of the basement windows and therefore required a long well for the basement windows. (See the York Hall Estate Period discussion in the Site History section of this report. The grade around the house was later brought back down during the NPS management era.)

BC-2. Provide universal accessibility to the interior of the Nelson House.

Several alternatives were studied to provide universal access to the first floor of the Nelson house. Those alternatives explored have been included at the Appendix A and were presented at the stakeholders workshop, as well as to Park staff. Alternatives included ramps to the front door, ramps that wrapped the east and north façades of the house with portions of ramps and sloped walks, and ramps providing access to the rear of the historic home. Additionally, wheelchairs lifts were also considered, but deemed a non-starter as they would likely be a maintenance issue, not aesthetically appealing against the historic building, and would require park staff to run.

Ultimately, the recommended treatment, preferred by most stakeholders and staff, was a ramp at the rear of the house. General sentiment was that a ramp at the rear created less of an impact to the Main Street face, which also happens to be the main façade.

The ramp access the back door works in combination with the re-grading of the back court which reduces the change in grade from court to finish floor elevation (FFE) by approximately 6 inches. Less ramp is therefore required.

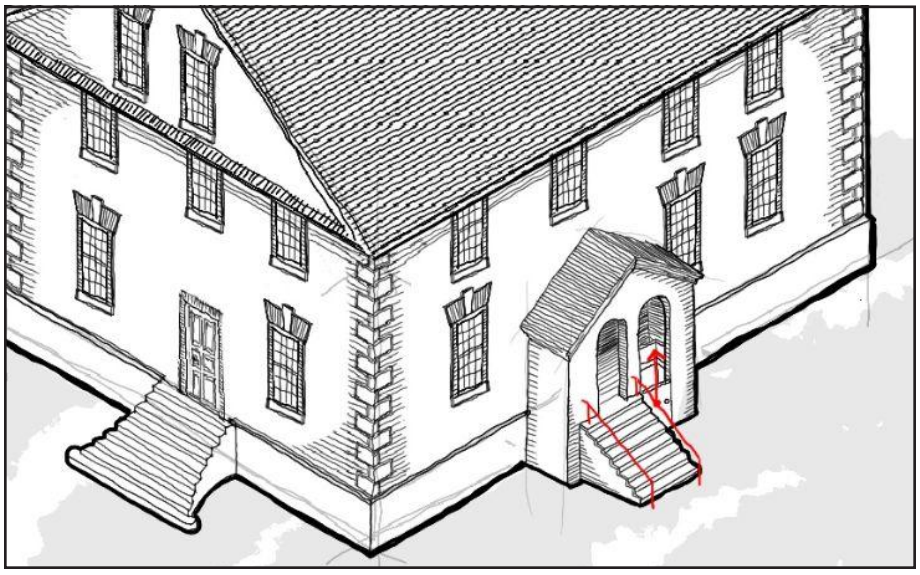


Figure 4.10 Diagrammatic study of handrails on stairs at back court. (Prepared by Schwartz/Silver Architects.)

BC-3. Provide handrails on the (non-historic) steps for visitor safety.

BC-4. Consider providing an accessible parking space which can be managed by NPS staff.

The re-grading of the back court also allows the Park the opportunity to use a portion of the court as a short term accessible parking area, if resurfaced with a 'firm and stable' surface material. This improvement, in association with the re-grading discussed in BC-1 also would provide level ground that the park can use for interpretation and education events.

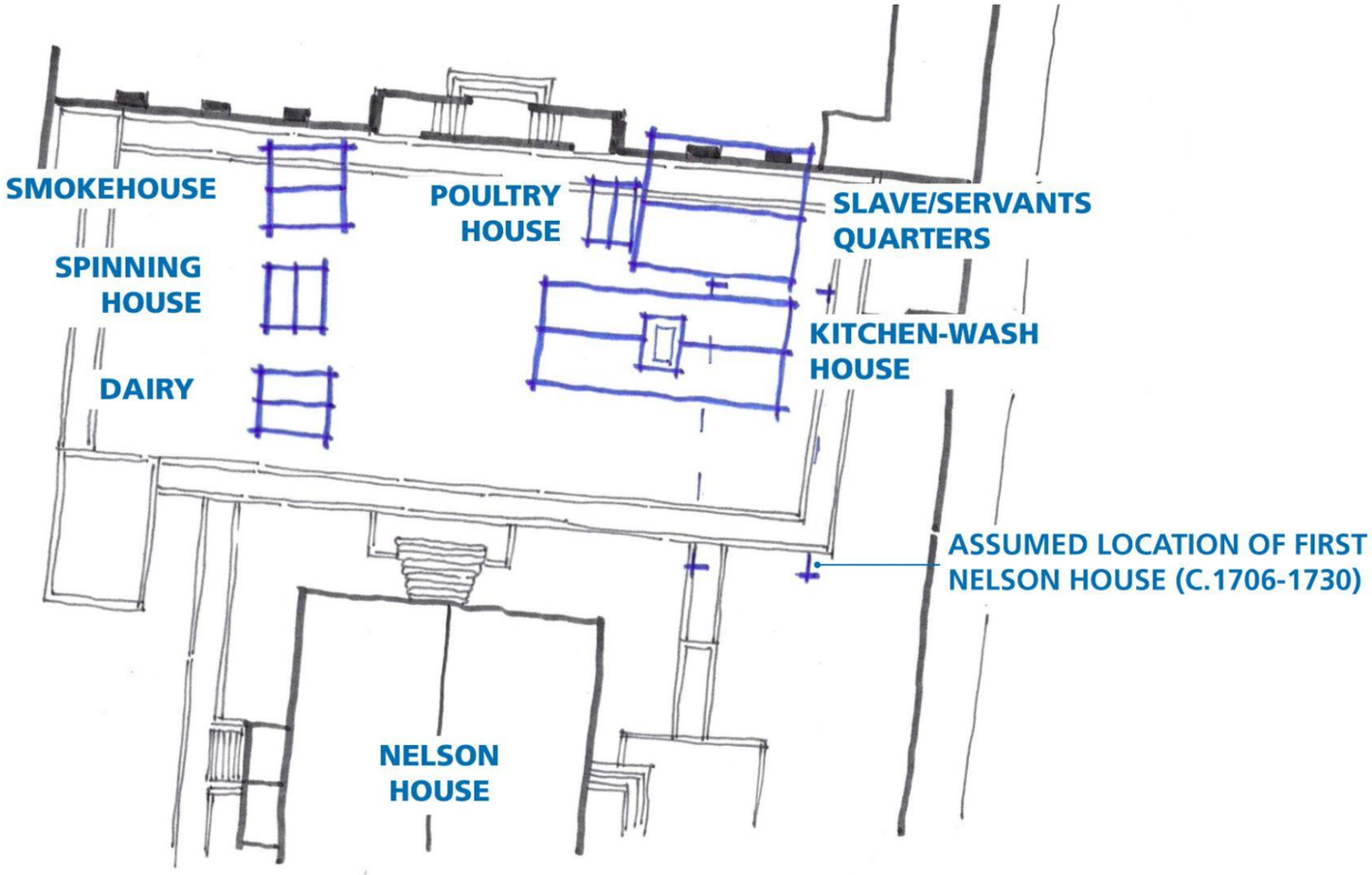
During the stakeholder workshop, it was very clearly expressed that the community did not want to see a parking lot at the rear of the Nelson house. However, providing one or two informal accessible parking spaces in this area which can be controlled by park staff, would assist those visitors with significant mobility impairments to be able to access the house and its immediate grounds without having to traverse the whole landscape from the Church Street parking lot.

BC-5. Rehabilitate planting to reflect Nelson House era but maintain Kentucky coffeetree which may date to the York Hall estate. Remove invasive and/or aggressive species.

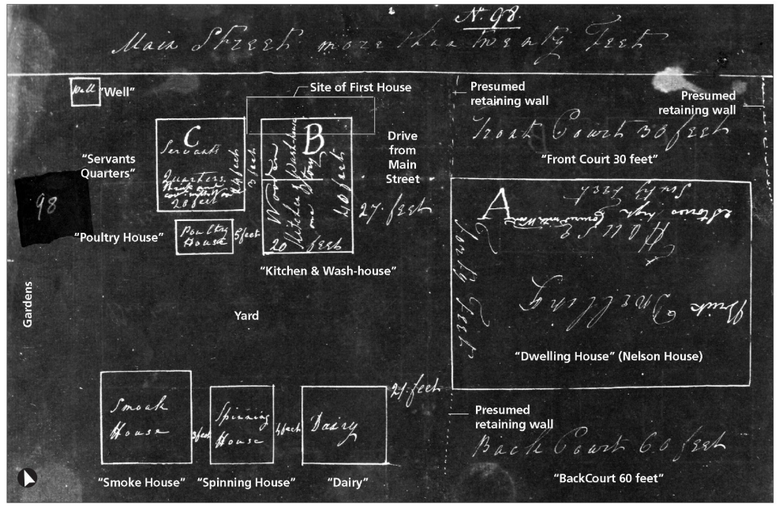
TERRACE

TR-1. Interpret the Nelson-era service yard with six structures (smokehouse, spinning house, dairy, poultry house, slave quarters, and kitchen/wash house) in the terrace lawn and walkways. Interpreting this service yard provides a valuable history of the Nelson House grounds that is currently not represented in the physical landscape, the enslaved.

Consider using a combination of signage which can recreate the view of the service yard, with building outline or foundation markers placed at the corners of the historic structures. This allows for the interpretation of the structures, without impacting the flexibility of programming and use of the open lawn.



Nelson House colonial-era service yard overlaid on existing conditions of terrace.



1796 Insurance survey map of Nelson House showing buildings & structures that likely existed during the colonial period.

Figure 4.11 (left) Overlay of six Nelson house structures in service yard on existing terrace lawn. Layout based on Drawing 1.1 of this CLR Early Nelson Period, 1706-1789. (right) 1796 insurance survey map of Nelson House showing buildings and structures that likely existing during the colonial period. (Overlay prepared by Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, inc. Insurance map from Colonial National Historical Park archives, map 1228, annotated by SUNY ESF.)



Figure 4.12 Mock-up of foundation outline and interpretive signage of historic structures within the terrace lawn. (Prepared by Schwartz/Silver Architects)

TR-2. To address building code requirements for fall heights, relocate the NPS management era brick walkway which parallels the formal garden wall, at least 2 feet from the wall and plant the space. Relocating the walkway away from the wall alleviates the requirement for a 42-inch high railing. Planting between the wall and walkway should be aesthetically appropriate for the terrace garden, but also should be a low woody shrub which will discourage visitors from trampling the plants but allow views into the formal garden, such as a common boxwood hedge or other low ornamental shrub.

TR-3. Consider redesigning the brick walkways on the terrace to eliminate potential tripping hazards with the brick edging lining the walkways.

The current brick walkway layout is a running bond laid perpendicular to the path of travel with a soldier course edging which is described in the 2011 version of the CLR to be similar in design to that of the York Hall estate. However, in that the walks from that era were 'marl edged by staggered upright bricks' and therefore the brick walkways are less reflective of the York Estate. Of concern, the soldier course edging provides a slight lip which could present a tripping hazard. It is recommended to maintain the soldier course edging, but to set it flush to the rest of the walkway and eliminate the lip.

TR-4. Consider reintroducing some of the trees and shrubs from the York Hall era between the northern brick walkway and the brick retaining wall.

FORMAL GARDEN

FG-1. Provide universal access to a portion of the formal garden.

Using the example of the curvilinear stepping stone walkways that connected different elements of the York Hall landscape, two alternatives were studied to make an accessible connection for the back court to the formal garden. These spaces have a change in grade of approximately ten feet. One alternative used a switchback ramp system and the other used a meandering path system which re-graded a portion of the landscape without requiring a ramp with handrails. Both the community stakeholders and the Park staff preferred the option without the switchback ramp. (The other study alternative has been included at Appendix B.) Both options requires the removal of ne segment of historic brick retaining wall which dates to the York Hall estate era.



Figure 4.13 Circa 1920 photograph of the York Hall terrace before additional improvements which raised the grade and added the brick wall and steps which are reflected today. In the front of the image, the marl walkway with staggered brick edging is apparent. The level of planting which was present at the time is visible to the least side of the image and at Main Street. (Colonial National Historical Park archives, Blow Family Photographs, album #13.)

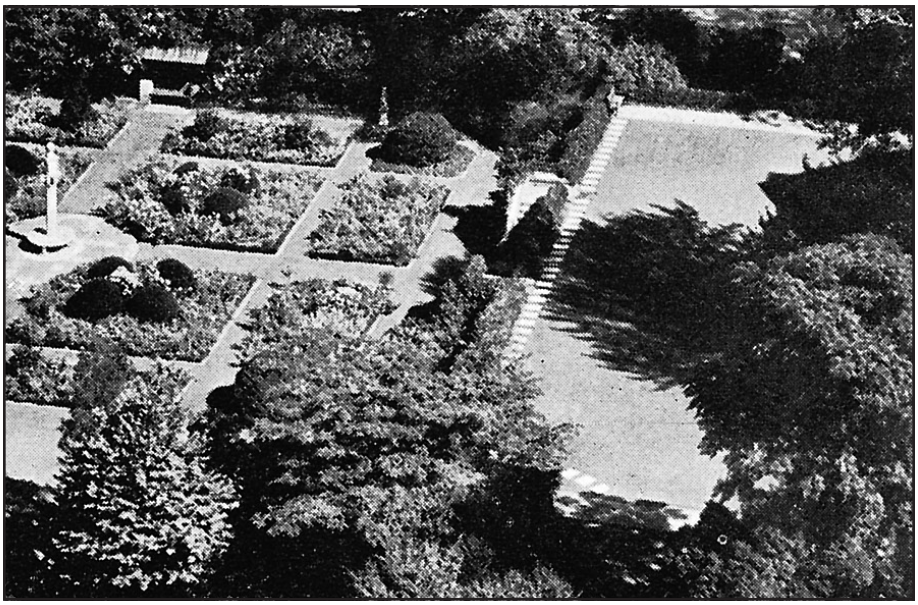


Figure 4.14 Cropped view of a c. 1930 image of the formal garden, brick retaining wall and steps, and re-graded terrace. Note that the terrace walkway is stepping stones, and is pulled away from the retaining wall and separated with a low shrub planting. (Yorktown Sesquicentennial Commission, *The Yorktown Sesquicentennial*, 1932.)



Figure 4.15 Existing brick walks at the terrace are from the NPS management era. The soldier course edging could be a tripping hazard.

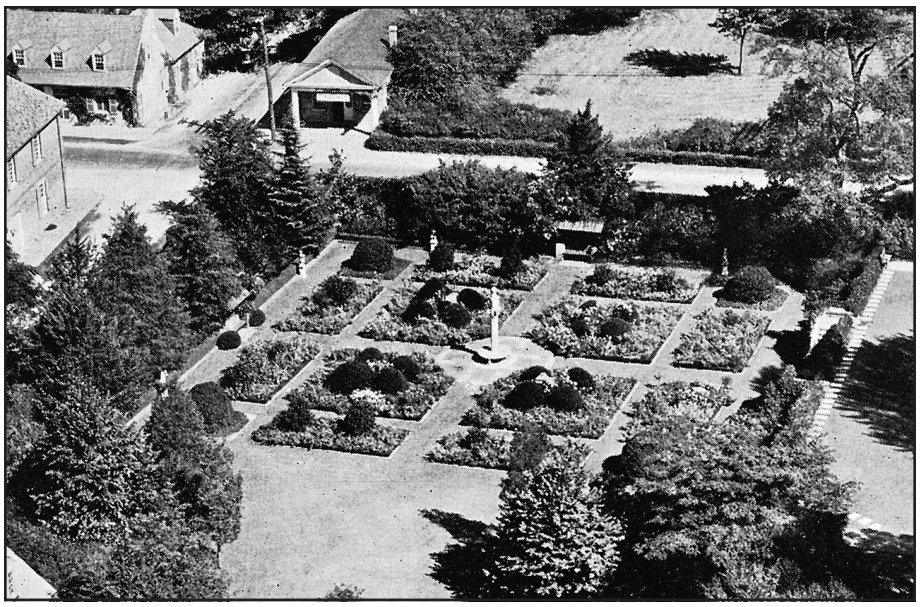


Figure 4.16 The York Hall formal garden, c. 1930. (Yorktown Sesquicentennial Commission, *The Yorktown Sesquicentennial*, 1932.)



Figure 4.17 Frances Benjamin Johnston photographs of the York Hall landscape, c. 1930. View of the formal garden looking towards the west. (Library of Congress, Carnegie Survey of the Architectural South, image 05725.)

The preferred alternative uses gently sloping walkways (with a maximum gradient of five percent (and therefore does not require handrails) to connect the back court, open lawn, and the formal garden. Select slopes would be planted with dense shrubs, reflecting the York Hall estate gardens, to discourage visitors from cutting down the slope. A shorter connection could be made using a stepped walkway or stairs.

FG-2. Prepare plans to rehabilitate the formal garden. Boxwoods to be replaced with original species—dwarf English boxwood—which will maintain a low height and recreate the border that was original to the formal garden. Maintain historic plants in beds which still exist, i.e., the specimen boxwood trees in the out four corners of the plan, and are in good condition. Rehabilitate other specimen shrub plantings in the

center beds (four yews each) and in the other rectilinear beds were one or to deciduous shrubs.

The Site History section of the 2011 CLR describes the formal garden planting as "an informal, old-fashioned mixture of flowering perennials and roses".[8] The plant order, c. 1922, included in the Appendix of that report includes perennials such as sedum, bee balm, hardy verbena, pink, daylilies, geranium, bergamot, forget-me-not, and a large selection of roses.

New perennial plantings should reflect the original Colonial Revival garden's design intent while using native or naturalized species as much as possible to reduce the need on irrigation and tedious maintenance.

Cross-referencing the plant order against a list prepared of very hardy plants by the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation which was derived from the plant list provided in *American Gardens on the Eighteenth Century* by Ann Leighton (1976), and *Plants of Colonial Days* by Raymond L. Taylor (1996) which identifies the plantings in the gardens of Colonial Williamsburg with the known plants of the York Hall formal garden as designed by Charles Gillette, the following list of potential perennial plantings for the formal garden include:

Table 4.1
Potential perennials for formal garden rehabilitation

Botanical name	Common name	*Native to Virginia?
Achillea millefolium	Yarrow	Y
Althaea rosea	Hollyhock	N
Asarum canadense	Wild ginger	Y
Aster virginiana	Aster	Species dependent
Bellis perennis	English daisy	Introduced
Centaurea cyanus	Garden cornflower	Introduced
Chrysanthemum leucanthemum	Field daisy	Unknown
Dianthus barbatus	Sweet William	Introduced
Digitalis purpurea	Foxglove	N
Galanthus nivalis	Snowdrop	Introduced
Helianthus annus	Sunflower	Y
Hemerocallis flava (fulva)	Daylily	Introduced
Iberis sempervirens	Candytuft	N
Iris sibirica	Siberian iris	N
Iris versicolor	Harlequin blueflag	Y

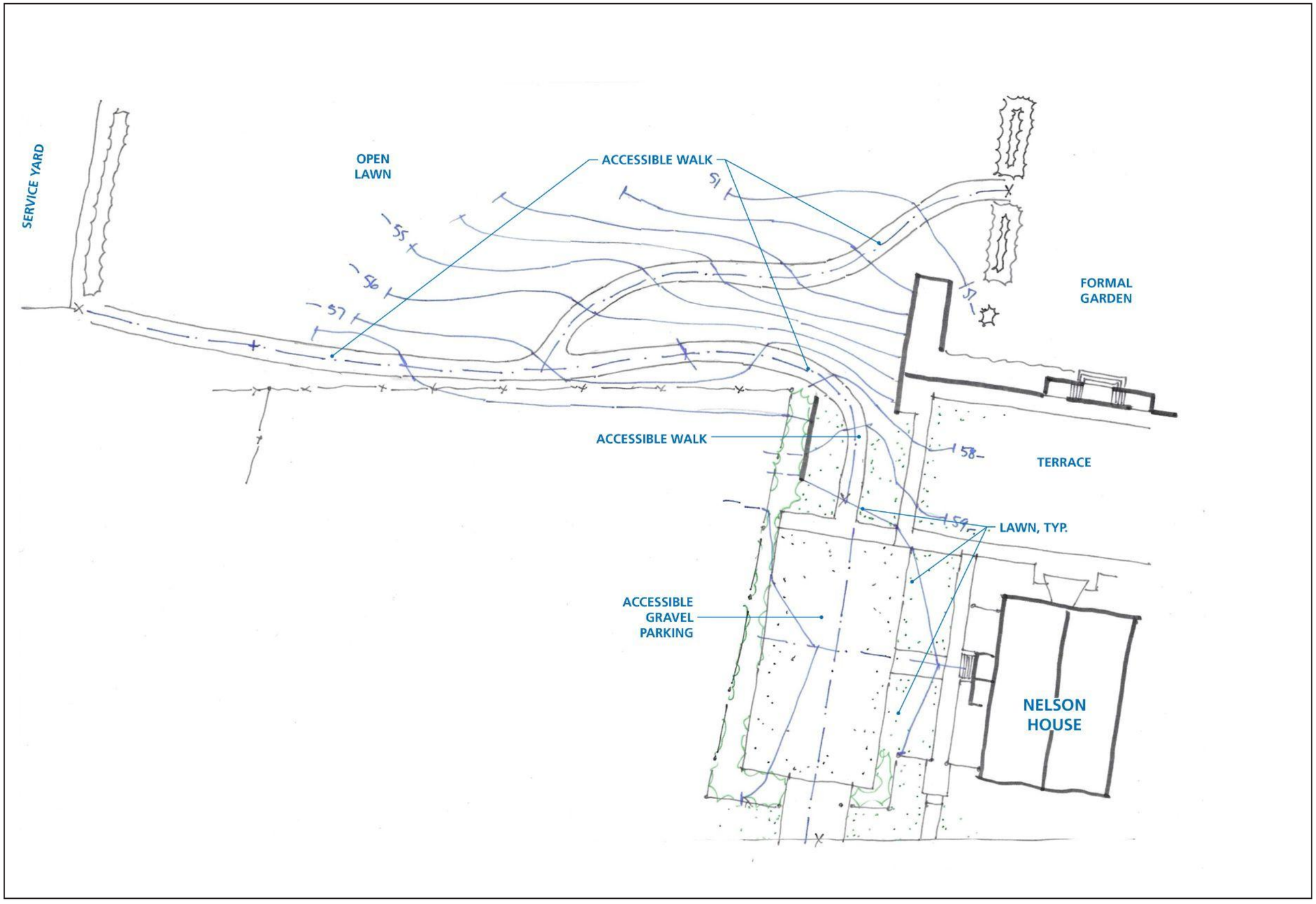


Figure 4.18 Layout study for universal access from back court to formal garden and open lawn. (Prepared by Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc.)

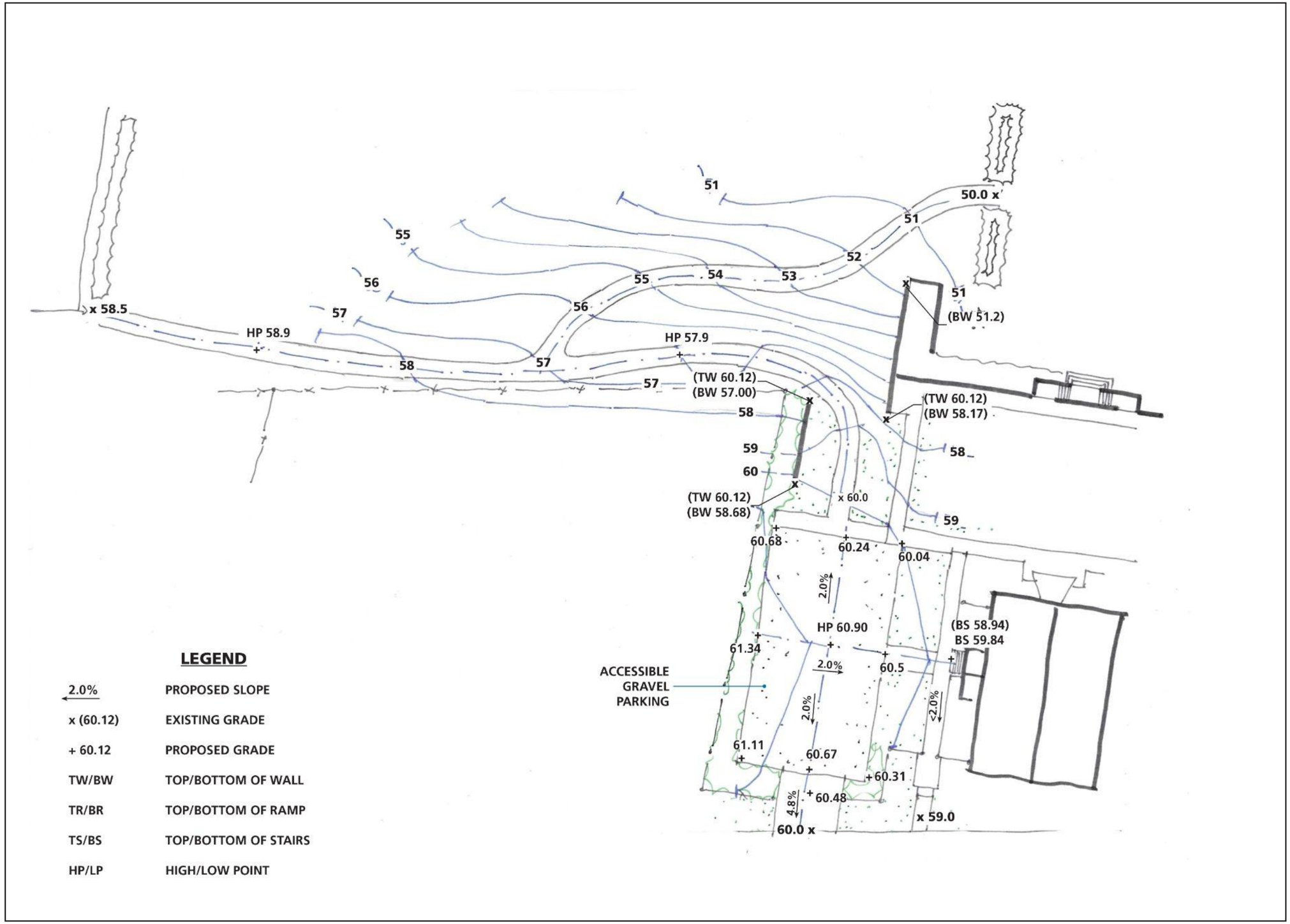


Figure 4.19 Grading study for universal access from back court to formal garden and open lawn. (Prepared by Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc.)



Figure 4.20 Graphic representation of re-grading and universal access between the back court and formal garden. (Prepared by Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc. with assistance from Intec Infra Technologies Pvt. Ltd.)



Figure 4.21 Graphic representation of re-grading and universal access between the back court and formal garden. (Prepared by Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc. with assistance from Intec Infra Technologies Pvt. Ltd.)

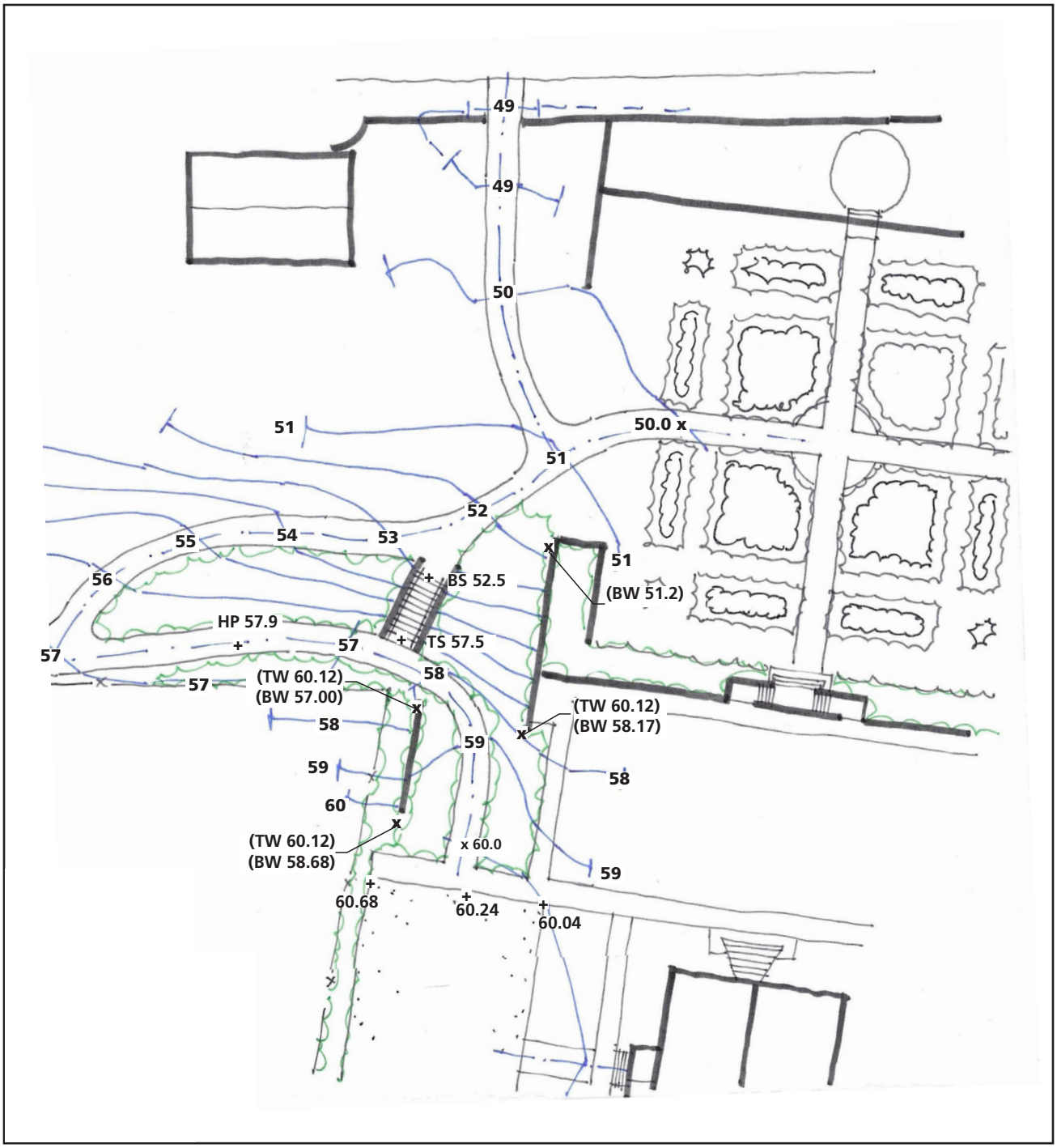


Figure 4.22 Layout study for universal access from back court to formal garden and open lawn, as well as stair connection, with new opening in Read Street perimeter wall and access to Read Street sidewalk. (Prepared by Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc.)

Table 4.1
Potential perennials for formal garden rehabilitation

Botanical name	Common name	*Native to Virginia?
Lavandula vera	Lavender	N
Lilium superbum	Turk's cap lily	Y
Limonium vulgare	Statice	N
Lobelia cardinalis	Cardinal flower	Y
Origanum majorana	Sweet marjoram	N
Mitchella repens	Partridge berry	Y
Monarda didyma	Bee balm	Y
Muscari botryoides	Grape hyacinth	Introduced
Narcissus jonquilla	Jonquils	N
Nicotiana tabacum	Tobacco	Introduced
Paeonia officinalis	Peony	N
Papaver orientale	Papaver orientale	Introduced
Phlox paniculata	Fall phlox	Y
Podophyllum peltatum	Mayapple	Y
Rheum rhaponticum	Rhubarb	Introduced
Rudbeckia hirta	Blackeyed Susan	Y
Salvia officinalis	Sage	Introduced
Santolina chamaecyparissus	Cotton lavender	N
Satureja hortensis	Savory	Introduced
Hyacinthoides non-scripta	Squill	Introduced
Sedum spp.	Stonecrop	Species dependent
Tropaeolum majus	Nasturtium	Introduced
Vinca major (and minor)	Periwinkle	Introduced
Viola tricolor	Johnny jump-up	Introduced
Yucca filamentoas	Yucca	Unknown

(**Native status as identified by the USDA* Natural Resources Conservation Service *Plants Database website.*)

Additional considerations for the rehabilitation of the formal garden include:

- Consider a phased approach to rehabilitation based on resource availability.
- As part of the formal garden rehabilitation, consider removing any remaining lumber edging and replace with brick edging historic to the York Hall estate.

FG-3. Reset brick pads in formal garden to eliminate root and tripping hazards. This includes the circular pad to the west by the Cornwallis plaque and the pad to the north. Additionally, consider the brick pad central to the formal garden, which once held the sundial.

FG-4. Remove wood benches from the interior of the boxwood planting beds which encourages visitors to walk inside. Consider replacing benches with a contemporary, but contextually sensitive bench.

FG-5. Rehabilitate the perimeter plantings as well to provide a suitable setting for the formal garden boxwood garden and perennial plantings. Included in this is the tree well in the northeast corner of the perimeter beds.

FG-6. Rehabilitate the plantings at the south entrance of the formal gardens. This crepe myrtle hedge dates to the York Hall estate and were intended to screen the pool (removed) from the rest of the lawn and were installed after the Period of Significance. The hedge blocks the view of the open lawn from the formal garden.

- The planting plan at the transition between the formal garden and the open lawn should be studied as part of the advanced design of the accessibility route connecting the formal garden and the back court. The area will need to be re-graded and existing plants will likely have to be removed to undertake this work.

FG-7. Provide historic imagery of the formal garden in its heyday on interpretive panels. This would also provide an opportunity to discuss sustainability and trends in landscape design and other pertinent themes.

OPEN LAWN

LA-1. Provide universal access to portions of the open lawn. Reintroduce pedestrian walkways which connect the lawn to the formal garden, service yard, and rear court. Using the sweeping curvilinear design of York Hall estate era stepping stone walkways. See recommendation FG-1.

LA-2. Consider providing a new access point through the brick wall at Read Street between the carriage house and the formal garden. Creating an entrance near the formal garden is not historic but would provide a welcoming entrance from the Church Street parking and Read Street sidewalk that is at or close to the existing grade (providing accessibility) of the formal garden. This would provide a more entrance from Read Street. This can also connect to the recommended path system through the lawn and into the service yard. See Figure 4.23.

Figure 4.23 Simple diagram of where a new access point could be created in the Read Street wall, as described in recommendation LA-2. (Prepared by Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc.)



SERVICE AREA

SA-1. Consider removing the stable yard walls which date to the NPS management era. (Maintain the serpentine walls which dated to the York Hall estate.) The stable yard walls appear to be in decline as they are propped up and caution signs ask visitors to stay out. Removing these walls eliminates a safety hazard and allows a more accurate interpretation of the York Hall estate.

SA-2. Consider repaving the service drive for accessibility. The current pavement dates to the NPS management era and is in poor condition.

SA-3. The walkway connecting Read Street to the Poor Potter site does not meet accessibility requirements for maximum gradients or for minimum walkways width. Redesign walkway to create ABA complaint access route to the Poor Potter site.

Cultural Landscape Report

Colonial National Historical Park
Yorktown, Virginia

Nelson House Proposed Treatment Plan

National Park Service
Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
www.nps.gov/oclp

SOURCES

1. United States Geological Survey, Digital Elevation Model, 2019
2. Virginia Geographic Information Network, Orthoimagery, 2019
3. Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Cultural Landscape Report, 2010
4. NPS Landsnet Boundaries and Tracts
5. Field Review, November, 2023

DRAWN BY

Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc., ArcGIS Pro 3.2.0, 2024; Adobe Illustrator 20.0

LEGEND

- CLR Study Area Boundary
- Legislative Boundary
- Lawn
- Woods
- Road
- Building
- Deciduous Tree
- Evergreen Tree
- Wayside Interpretive Panel
- Gate
- Fence
- Removed Feature
- Groundcover
- Path
- Movable Bench
- Lightpost
- Deciduous Shrub
- Evergreen Shrub
- Yorktown Street Sign

NOTES

1. Projection: NAD 1983 (2011) UTM Zone 18N
2. Contour Interval = 1'
3. All features shown in approximate scale and location

0 13 25 50 Feet

Figure 4.24

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ENDNOTES, TREATMENT

1 *Foundation Document for Colonial National Historical Park*, 2018. 9.

2 *Ibid*. 14.

3 *General Management Plan for all of Colonial National Historical Park*, Virginia 1993. 24.

4 *Ibid*. 29.

5 *Ibid*. 50.

6 *Cultural Landscapes Inventory, Nelson House, Colonial National Historical Park*, 2012. 8-9.

7 Birnbaum, Charles, and Christine C. Peters. The Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1996. 48.

8 Riley, Bryne D., John Auwaerter, and Paul Fritz. *Cultural Landscape Report for the Nelson House Grounds, Colonial National Historical Park Yorktown, Virginia*. National Park Service, Boston, MA, 2011. 69.

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Global Security.org, "Naval Weapons Station, Yorktown, Virginia," http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/yorktown.htm. Accessed September 2010.

National Park Service and Heritage Landscapes, Inc., *Cultural Landscape Inventory, Yorktown, Colonial National Historical Park*. National Park Service database and unpublished report, 1999, revised 2006.

National Park Service, *List of Classified Structures*. National Park Service database, Structure 36Y095S3, updated to 2006.

"Operating Hours & Seasons - Yorktown Battlefield Part of Colonial National Historical Park (U.S. National Park Service)." *NPS.gov*, 2023, www.nps.gov/york/planyourvisit/hours.htm. Accessed December 2023.

Riley, Bryne D., John Auwaerter, and Paul Fritz. *Cultural Landscape Report for the Nelson House Grounds, Colonial National Historical Park Yorktown, Virginia*. National Park Service, Boston, MA, 2011.

"Yorktown, Virginia Population 2024." *Worldpopulationreview.com*, 2023, worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/virginia/yorktown. Accessed December 2023.

"Yorktown Historic District and Design Guidelines" (Report prepared for the York County Board of Supervisors, Adopted December 2, 2003). Ownership and lot designations are based on York County Tax Assessment Records, updated to 2007.

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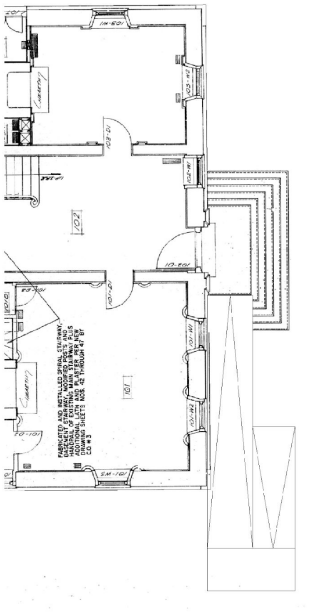
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. ALTERNATIVES STUDIED TO PROVIDE UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY TO THE INTERIOR OF THE NELSON HOUSE.

APPENDIX B. ALTERNATIVES STUDIED TO PROVIDE UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO A PORTION OF THE FORMAL GARDEN.

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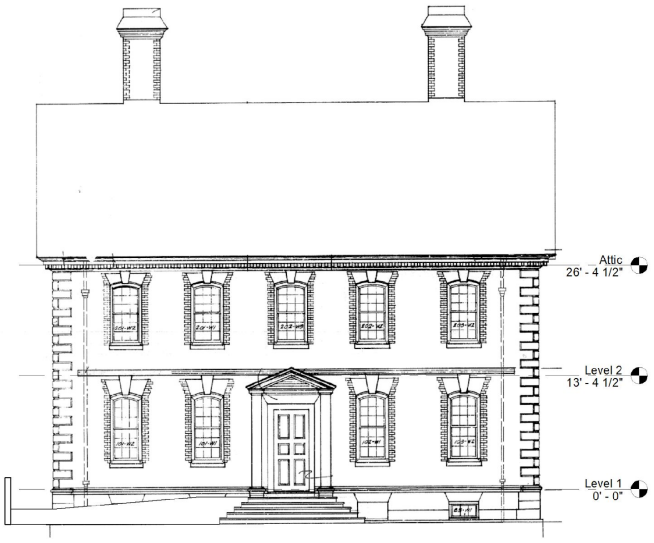


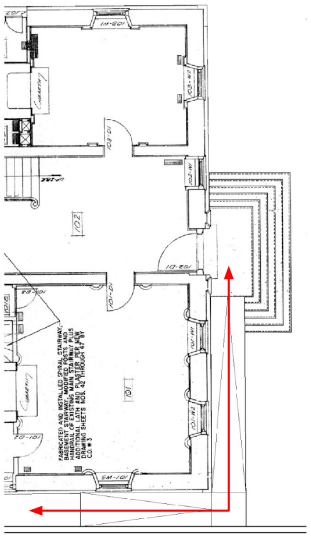


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Front Court – Internal Lift

Nelson House
Yorktown Battlefield Part of Colonial National Historical Park

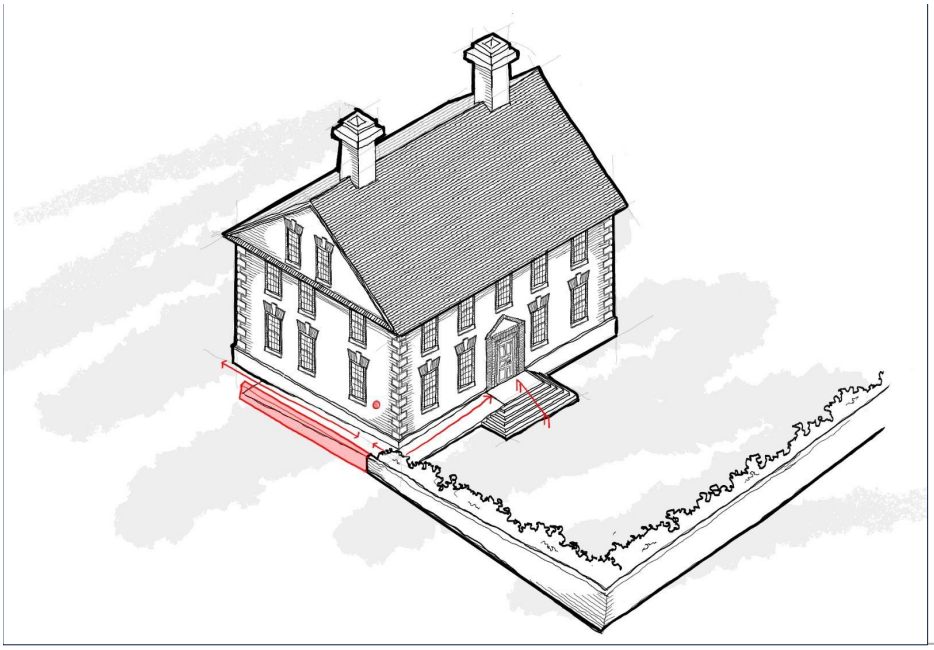


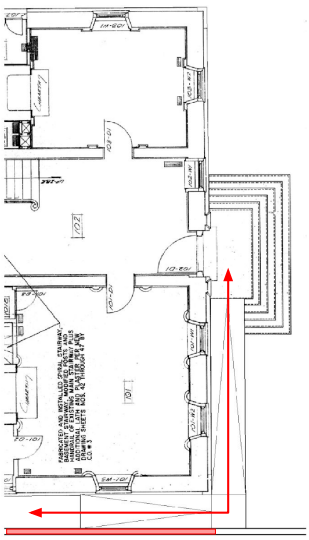


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Front Court – Internal Lift

Nelson House
Yorktown Battlefield Part of Colonial National Historical Park





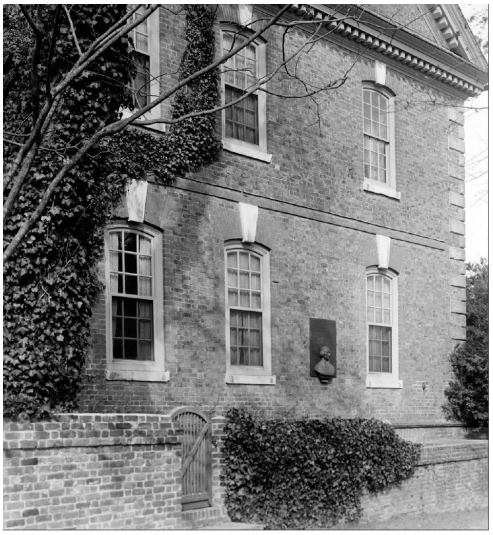
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Front Court – Internal Lift

Nelson House
Yorktown Battlefield Part of Colonial National Historical Park



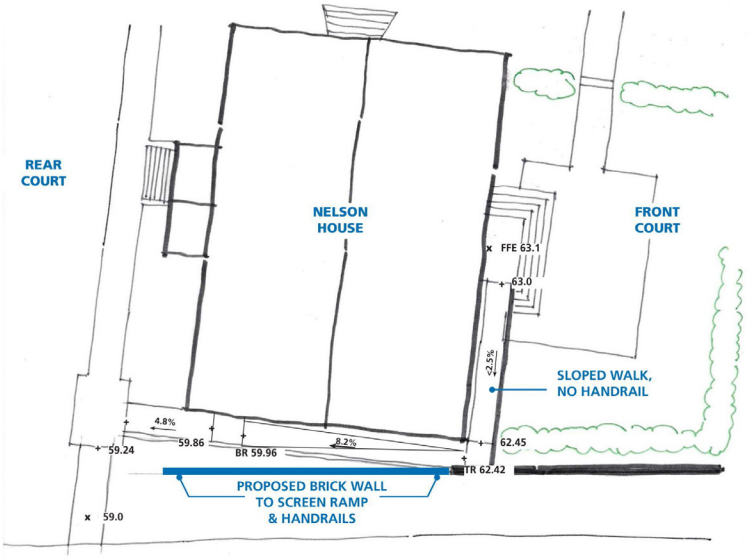
Circa 1918 view of fore (rear) court and Pearl (Nelson) Street with brick boundary wall.



Circa 1931 view of Nelson Street facade with wood gate in brick boundary wall.

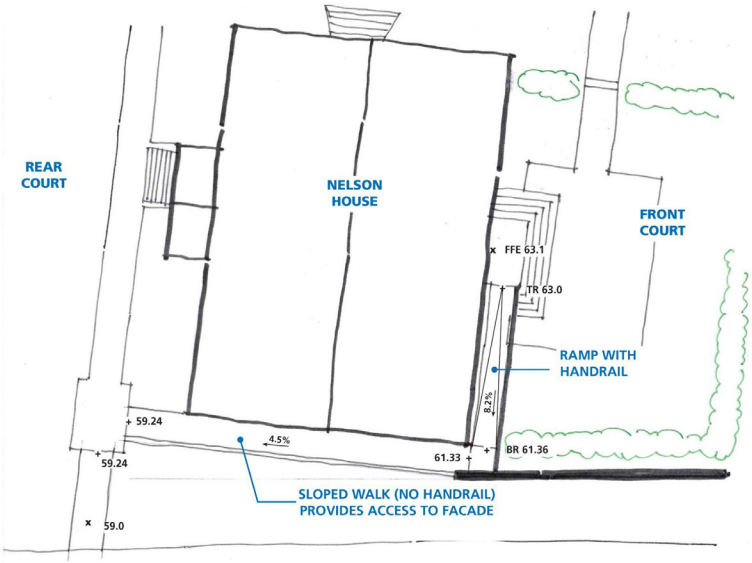
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Nelson House
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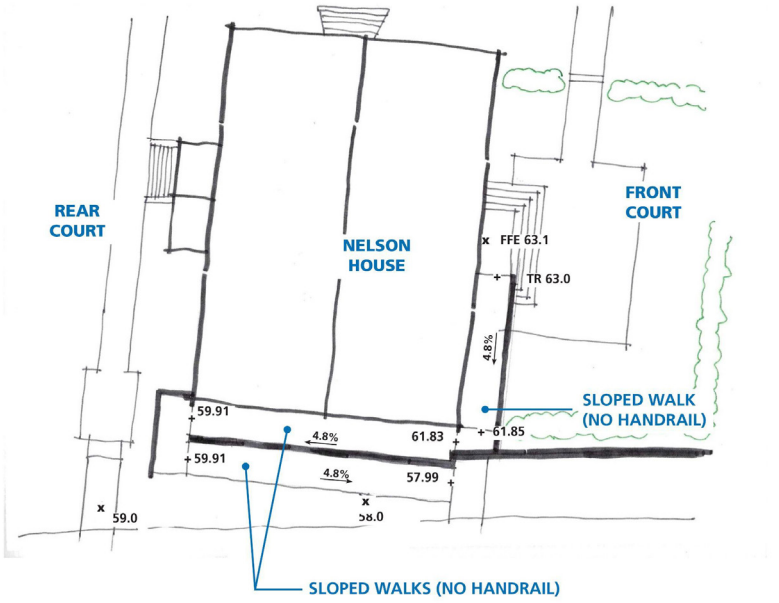
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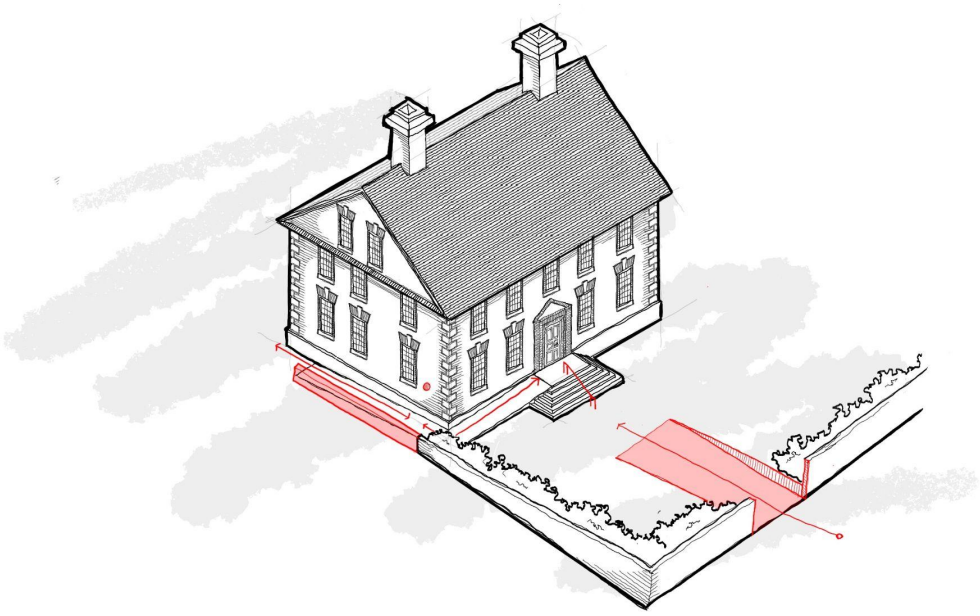
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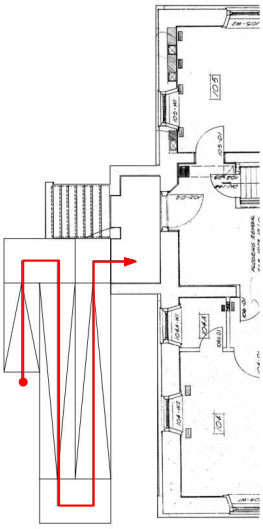


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Front Court – Internal Lift

Nelson House
Yorktown Battlefield Part of Colonial National Historical Park

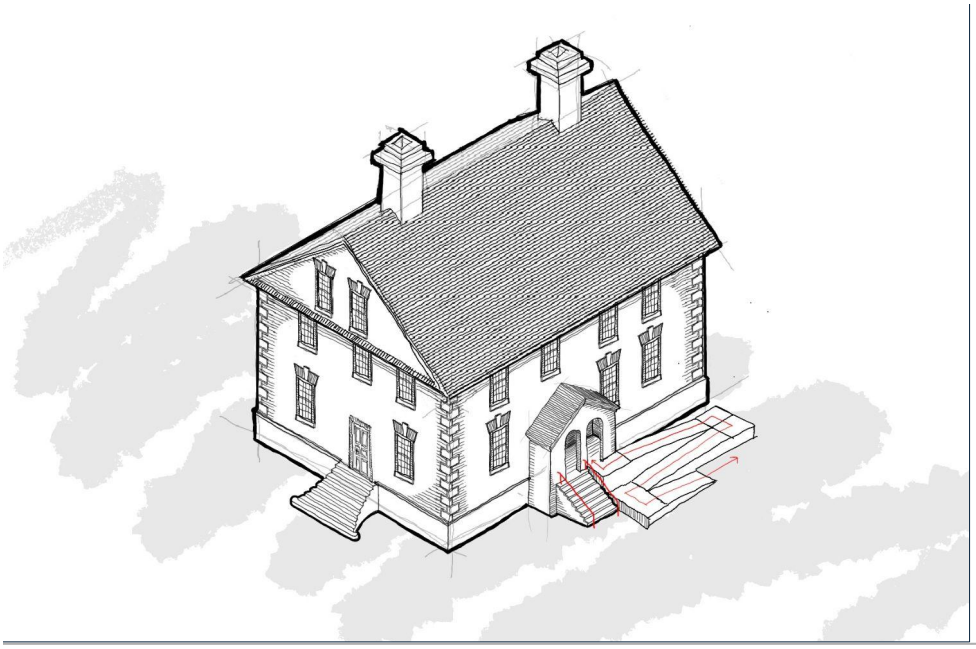


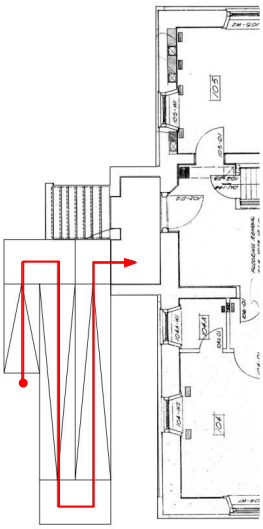


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Back Court - Ramp

Nelson House
Yorktown Battlefield Part of Colonial National Historical Park

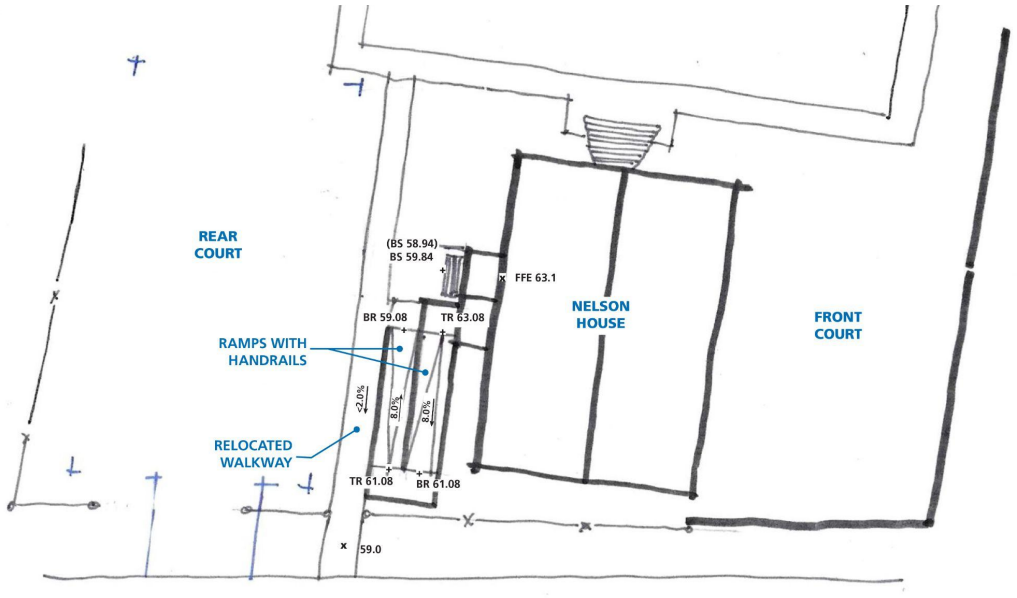




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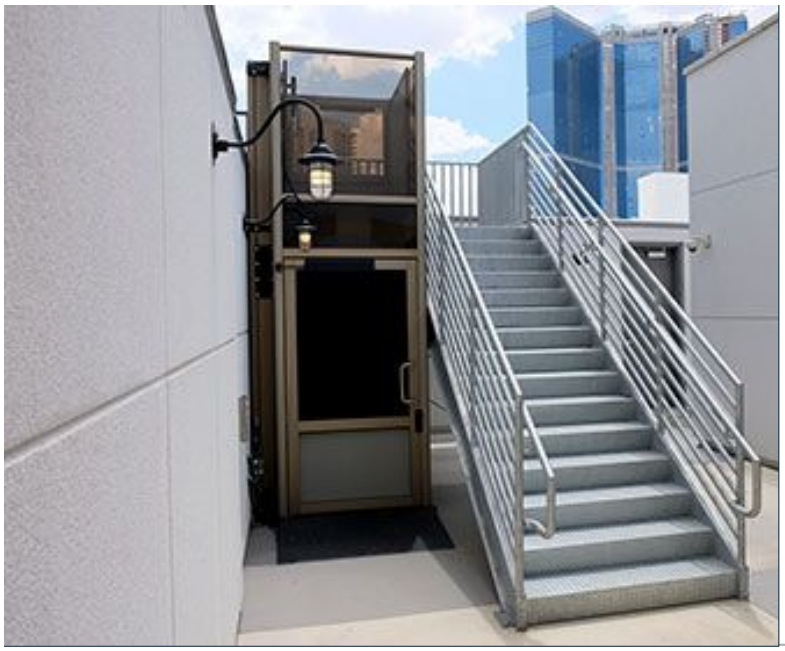
Back Court - Ramp

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Nelson House
Yorktown Battlefield Part of Colonial National Historical Park



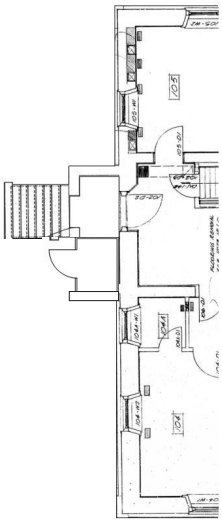




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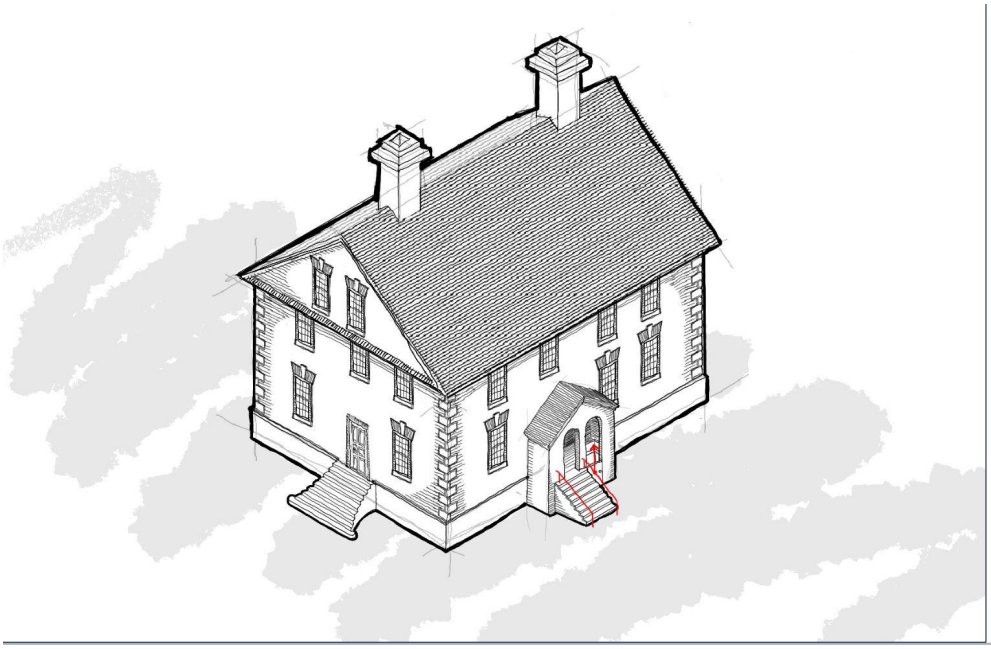


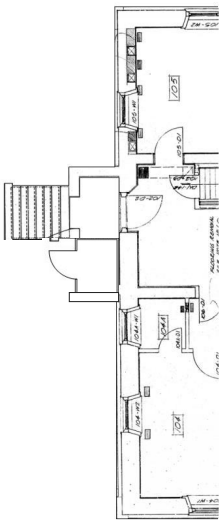


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Back Court – Internal Lift

Nelson House
Yorktown Battlefield Part of Colonial National Historical Park





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Back Court – Internal Lift

Nelson House
Yorktown Battlefield Part of Colonial National Historical Park

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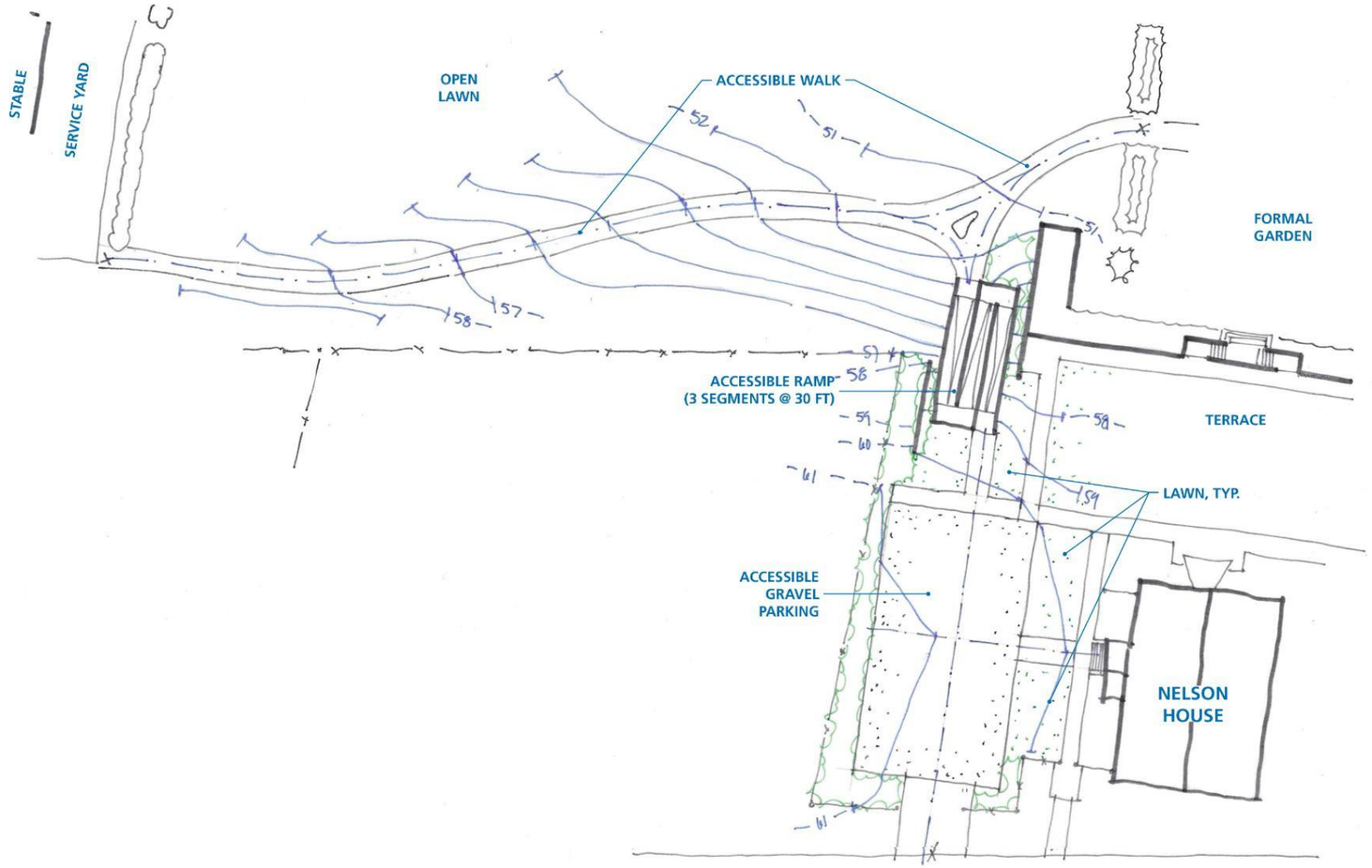


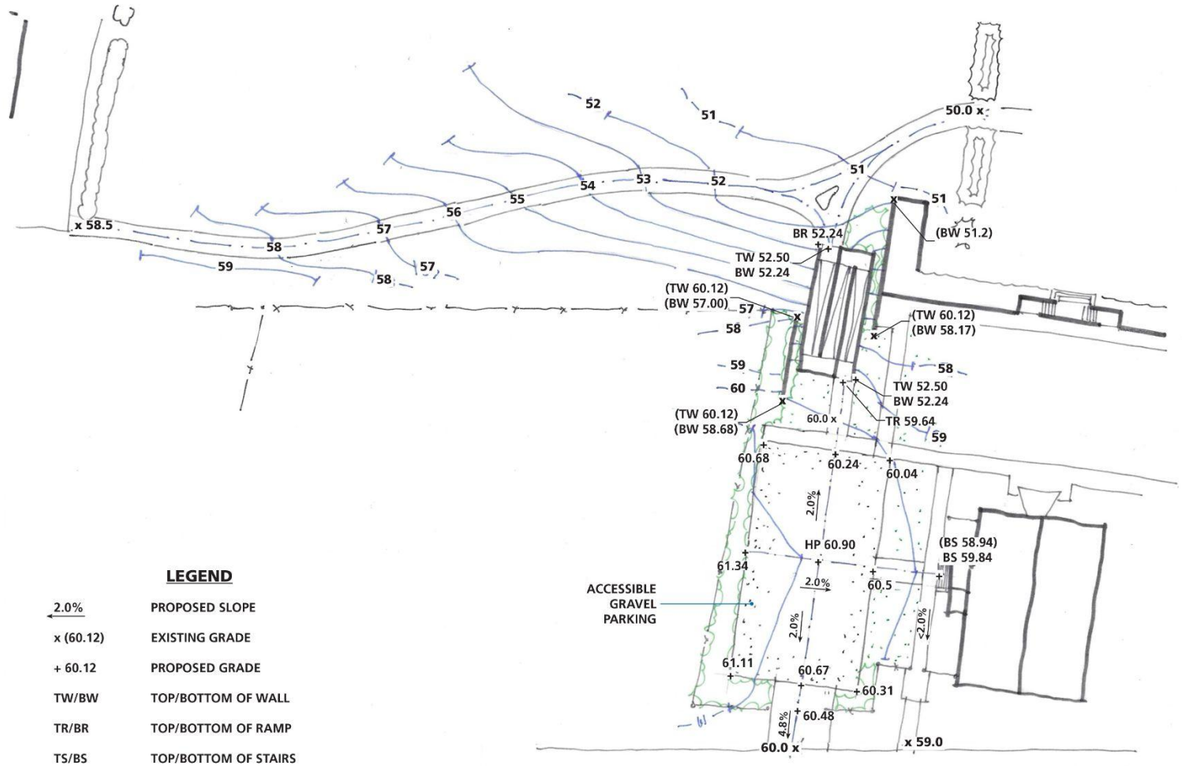


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Nelson House
Yorktown Battlefield Part of Colonial National Historical Park

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STABLE
SERVICE YARD
OPEN LAWN
ACCESSIBLE WALK
FORMAL GARDEN
ACCESSIBLE RAMP (3 SEGMENTS @ 30 FT)
TERRACE
LAWN, TYP.
ACCESSIBLE GRAVEL PARKING
NELSON HOUSE
51
52
57
58
59
60
61



LEGEND

2.0%	PROPOSED SLOPE
x (60.12)	EXISTING GRADE
+ 60.12	PROPOSED GRADE
TW/BW	TOP/BOTTOM OF WALL
TR/BR	TOP/BOTTOM OF RAMP
TS/BS	TOP/BOTTOM OF STAIRS
HP/LP	HIGH/LOW POINT

kzla schwartzsilver

Nelson House
Yorktown Battlefield Part of Colonial National Historical Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation
National Park Service
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web: www.nps.gov/oclp/