

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**STAFF REPORT**

<b>Address:</b>	7310 Willow Ave., Takoma Park	<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10/10/2018
<b>Resource:</b>	<b>Contributing Resource</b> (Takoma Park Historic District)	<b>Report Date:</b>	10/3/2018
<b>Applicant:</b>	Wendy Berger	<b>Public Notice:</b>	9/26/2018
<b>Review:</b>	HAWP	<b>Tax Credit:</b>	N/A
<b>Case Number:</b>	37/03-18MMM	<b>Staff:</b>	Michael Kyne
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Site wall, walkway, and front stair alterations		

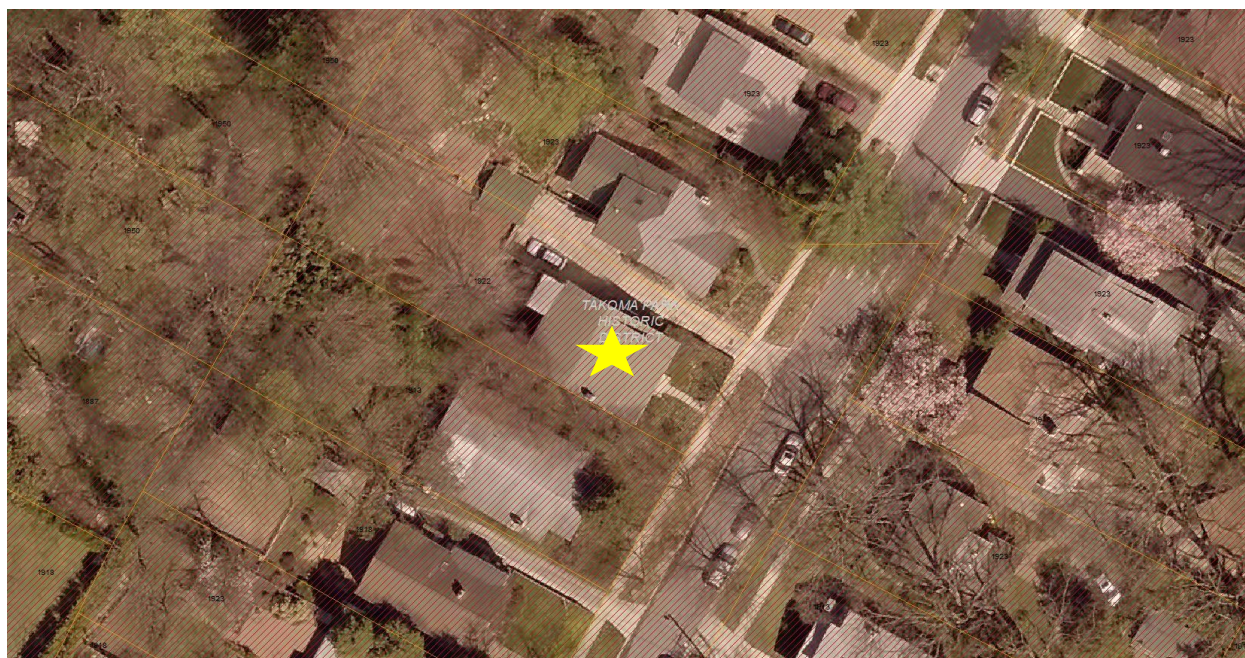
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the HPC **approve** the HAWP application.

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District  
**STYLE:** Bungalow  
**DATE:** c. 1910s



*Fig. 1: Subject property, as indicated by the yellow star.*

**PROPOSAL**

The applicant proposes to alter the existing retaining wall, walkway, and stair at the front of the subject property.

## **APPLICABLE GUIDELINES**

When reviewing alterations and new construction within the Takoma Park Historic District several documents are to be utilized as guidelines to assist the Commission in developing their decision. These documents include the historic preservation review guidelines in the approved and adopted amendment for the *Takoma Park Historic District (Guidelines)*, *Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A)*, and *the Secretary of the Interior's Standard's for Rehabilitation (Standards)*. The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

### ***Montgomery County Code; Chapter 24A-8***

- (b) The commission shall instruct the director to issue a permit, or issue a permit subject to such conditions as are found to be necessary to insure conformity with the purposes and requirements of this chapter, if it finds that:
  - (1) The proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of an historic site or historic resource within an historic district; or
  - (2) The proposal is compatible in character and nature with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural features of the historic site or the historic district in which an historic resource is located and would not be detrimental thereto or to the achievement of the purposes of this chapter; or
  - (3) The proposal would enhance or aid in the protection, preservation and public or private utilization of the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district in a manner compatible with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural value of the historic site or historic district in which an historic resource is located; or
  - (4) The proposal is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied; or
  - (5) The proposal is necessary in order that the owner of the subject property not be deprived of reasonable use of the property or suffer undue hardship; or
  - (6) In balancing the interests of the public in preserving the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district, with the interests of the public from the use and benefit of the alternative proposal, the general public welfare is better served by granting the permit.
- (c) It is not the intent of this chapter to limit new construction, alteration or repairs to any 1 period or architectural style.
- (d) In the case of an application for work on an historic resource located within an historic district, the commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historical or design significance or for plans involving new construction, unless such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding historic resources or would impair the character of the historic district. (Ord. No. 9-4, § 1; Ord. No. 11-59.)

### ***Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines***

There are two very general, broad planning and design concepts which apply to all categories. These are:

- The design review emphasis will be restricted to changes that are all visible from the public right-

of-way, irrespective of landscaping or vegetation (it is expected that the majority of new additions will be reviewed for their impact on the overall district), and

- The importance of assuring that additions and other changes to existing structures act to reinforce and continue existing streetscape, landscape, and building patterns rather than to impair the character of the historic district.

A majority of structures in the Takoma Park Historic District have been assessed as being “Contributing Resources.” While these structures may not have the same level of architectural or historical significance as Outstanding Resources or may have lost some degree of integrity, collectively, they are the basic building blocks of the Takoma Park district. However, they are more important to the overall character of the district and the streetscape due to their size, scale, and architectural character, rather than for their particular architectural features.

Contributing Resources should receive a more lenient level of design review than those structures that have been classified as Outstanding. This design review should emphasize the importance of the resource to the overall streetscape and its compatibility with existing patterns rather than focusing on a close scrutiny of architectural detailing. In general, however, changes to Contributing Resources should respect the predominant architectural style of the resource.

The *Guidelines* that pertain to this project are as follows:

- All exterior alterations, including those to architectural features and details, should be generally consistent with the predominant architectural style and period of the resource and should preserve the predominant architectural features of the resource; exact replication of existing details and features is, however, not required.
- All changes and additions should respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space.

### ***Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation***

The Secretary of the Interior defines rehabilitation as “the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.” *Standards #2 and #9* most directly apply to the application before the commission:

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.
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.

### **STAFF DISCUSSION**

The subject property is a bungalow-style Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District. The historic house is elevated above the front street (Willow Avenue), and there is an existing 2-to-2 ½’ tall exposed CMU block retaining wall at the right/front of the property. There is also a centrally-located stair and walkway at the front of the property. The stair and walkway are constructed from concrete with exposed aggregate.

The applicants propose to alter the existing retaining wall, walkway, and stair at the front of the subject property, with the following specifications:

- Addition of 8” in height (one CMU block) to the existing CMU block retaining wall at the right/front of the property, making the wall a maximum of 36” high.
- Construction of a CMU block retaining wall (with a maximum height of 2’) to match at the left/front of the property.
- Addition of a flagstone cap to both sides of the retaining wall.
- Addition of parged concrete to the CMU block retaining wall.
- Removal of the existing front concrete stair and cheek walls. The existing steps are 3’ wide and consist of four (4) treads and five (5) 8” high risers.
- Construction of new concrete front stair and cheek walls. The proposed new steps will consist of six (6) treads and seven (7) 6” high risers. The new stair treads will be capped with flagstone and the cheek walls will be parged concrete.
- Installation of two (2) paintable metal (iron or steel) handrails on each side of the front stair.
- Removal of the existing 3’ wide concrete front walkway.
- Construction of a new 4’ wide flagstone on concrete front walkway.
- Addition of flagstone treads to the existing front porch steps.

Staff fully supports the applicant’s proposal, finding that the proposal will not detract from the historic district or surrounding streetscape. The proposed alterations are generally consistent with the character of the subject property and historic district, and there are examples of similar features within the surrounding streetscape. The proposal will not detract from the features and spaces that characterize the property, in accordance with the *Guidelines and Standards*.

After full and fair consideration of the applicant’s submission staff finds the proposal as being consistent with the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-(b) 1 and 2, having found the proposal is consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation #2 and #9*, and *Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines* outlined above.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve** the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b), having found that the proposal is consistent with the *Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines* identified above, and therefore will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in character with the district and the purposes of Chapter 24A;

and with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation #2 and #9*;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall present the **3 permit sets of drawings, if applicable to Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) staff for review and stamping** prior to submission for the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) building permits;

and with the general condition that final project design details, not specifically delineated by the Commission, shall be approved by HPC staff or brought back to the Commission as a revised HAWP application at staff’s discretion;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall notify the Historic Preservation Staff if they propose to make **any alterations** to the approved plans. Once the work is completed the applicant will contact the staff person assigned to this application at 301-563-3400 or michael.kyne@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.



AP 852498



DPS - #8

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
301/563-3400

# APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: wendy.b.berger@gmail.com Contact Person: Wendy Berger  
 Daytime Phone No.: 202-751-7031  
 Tax Account No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Property Owner: Wendy Berger Daytime Phone No.: 202-751-7031  
 Address: 7310 Willow Avenue Takoma Park MD 20912  
Street Number City State Zip Code  
 Contractor: Mario's Landscaping, Inc Phone No.: 301-464-3242  
 Contractor Registration No.: 86-10-53082  
 Agent for Owner: Mario Hernandez Daytime Phone No.: 301-370-6652

### LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE

House Number: 7310 Street: Willow Avenue  
 Town/City: Takoma Park Nearest Cross Street: Valley View  
 Lot: 15 Block: 9 Subdivision: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Liber: \_\_\_\_\_ Folio: \_\_\_\_\_ Parcel: # 161301071640

### PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMIT ACTION AND USE

#### 1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

- Construct  Extend  Alter/Renovate  
 Move  Install  Wreck/Raze  
 Revision  Repair  Revocable

#### CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

- A/C  Slab  Room Addition  Porch  Deck  Shed  
 Solar  Fireplace  Woodburning Stove  Single Family  
 Fence/Wall (complete Section 4)  Other: build/repair front steps with banister

1B. Construction cost estimate: \$ 6,000.00

1C. If this is a revision of a previously approved active permit, see Permit # \_\_\_\_\_

### PART TWO: COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTEND/ADDITIONS

2A. Type of sewage disposal: 01  WSSC 02  Septic 03  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 2B. Type of water supply: 01  WSSC 02  Well 03  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### PART THREE: COMPLETE ONLY FOR FENCE/RETAINING WALL

3A. Height \_\_\_\_\_ feet \_\_\_\_\_ inches  
 3B. Indicate whether the fence or retaining wall is to be constructed on one of the following locations:  
 On party line/property line  Entirely on land of owner  On public right of way/easement

I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the foregoing application, that the application is correct, and that the construction will comply with plans approved by all agencies listed and I hereby acknowledge and accept this to be a condition for the issuance of this permit.

Wendy Berger Sept 18, 2018  
 Signature of owner or authorized agent Date

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission  
 Disapproved: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Application/Permit No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Filed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Issued: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE FOLLOWING ITEMS MUST BE COMPLETED AND THE  
REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MUST ACCOMPANY THIS APPLICATION.**

1. **WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT**

- a. Description of existing structure(s) and environmental setting, including their historical features and significance:

Cinderblock retaining wall and concrete steps and path to front porch. The structures are currently cracked, uneven and in some places crumbling into the sidewalk

There are no historical features or significance of note. The current retaining wall exists only on one side of the front entry steps, resulting in soil erosion and poor appearance to the right side of the property.

- b. General description of project and its effect on the historic resource(s), the environmental setting, and, where applicable, the historic district:

Project will resurface existing cinderblock retaining wall and add 1 8" block of height to better retain soil in yard. Resurfacing will be in concrete and capped with grey stone to match local renovations (see 7313 Willow Avenue photo.) Steps will be sized for even depth and breadth (6" high and 4' wide) and a banister added for safety (see 7309 Willow photo). Effect will be to improve safety and symmetry of the historic home and setting.

2. **SITE PLAN**

Site and environmental setting, drawn to scale. You may use your plat. Your site plan must include:

- a. the scale, north arrow, and date;
- b. dimensions of all existing and proposed structures; and
- c. site features such as walkways, driveways, fences, ponds, streams, trash dumpsters, mechanical equipment, and landscaping.

3. **PLANS AND ELEVATIONS**

You must submit 2 copies of plans and elevations in a format no larger than 11" x 17". Plans on 8 1/2" x 11" paper are preferred.

- a. **Schematic construction plans**, with marked dimensions, indicating location, size and general type of walls, window and door openings, and other fixed features of both the existing resource(s) and the proposed work.
- b. Elevations (facades), with marked dimensions, clearly indicating proposed work in relation to existing construction and, when appropriate, context. All materials and fixtures proposed for the exterior must be noted on the elevations drawings. An existing and a proposed elevation drawing of each facade affected by the proposed work is required.

4. **MATERIALS SPECIFICATIONS**

General description of materials and manufactured items proposed for incorporation in the work of the project. This information may be included on your design drawings.

5. **PHOTOGRAPHS**

- a. Clearly labeled photographic prints of each facade of existing resource, including details of the affected portions. All labels should be placed on the front of photographs.
- b. Clearly label photographic prints of the resource as viewed from the public right-of-way and of the adjoining properties. All labels should be placed on the front of photographs.

6. **TREE SURVEY**

If you are proposing construction adjacent to or within the dripline of any tree 6" or larger in diameter (at approximately 4 feet above the ground), you must file an accurate tree survey identifying the size, location, and species of each tree of at least that dimension.

- Not Applicable

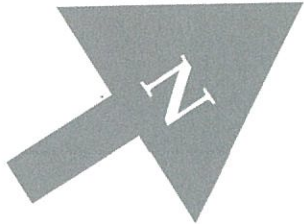
7. **ADDRESSES OF ADJACENT AND CONFRONTING PROPERTY OWNERS**

For **All** projects, provide an accurate list of adjacent and confronting property owners (not tenants), including names, addresses, and zip codes. This list should include the owners of all lots or parcels which adjoin the parcel in question, as well as the owner(s) of lot(s) or parcel(s) which lie directly across the street/highway from the parcel in question.

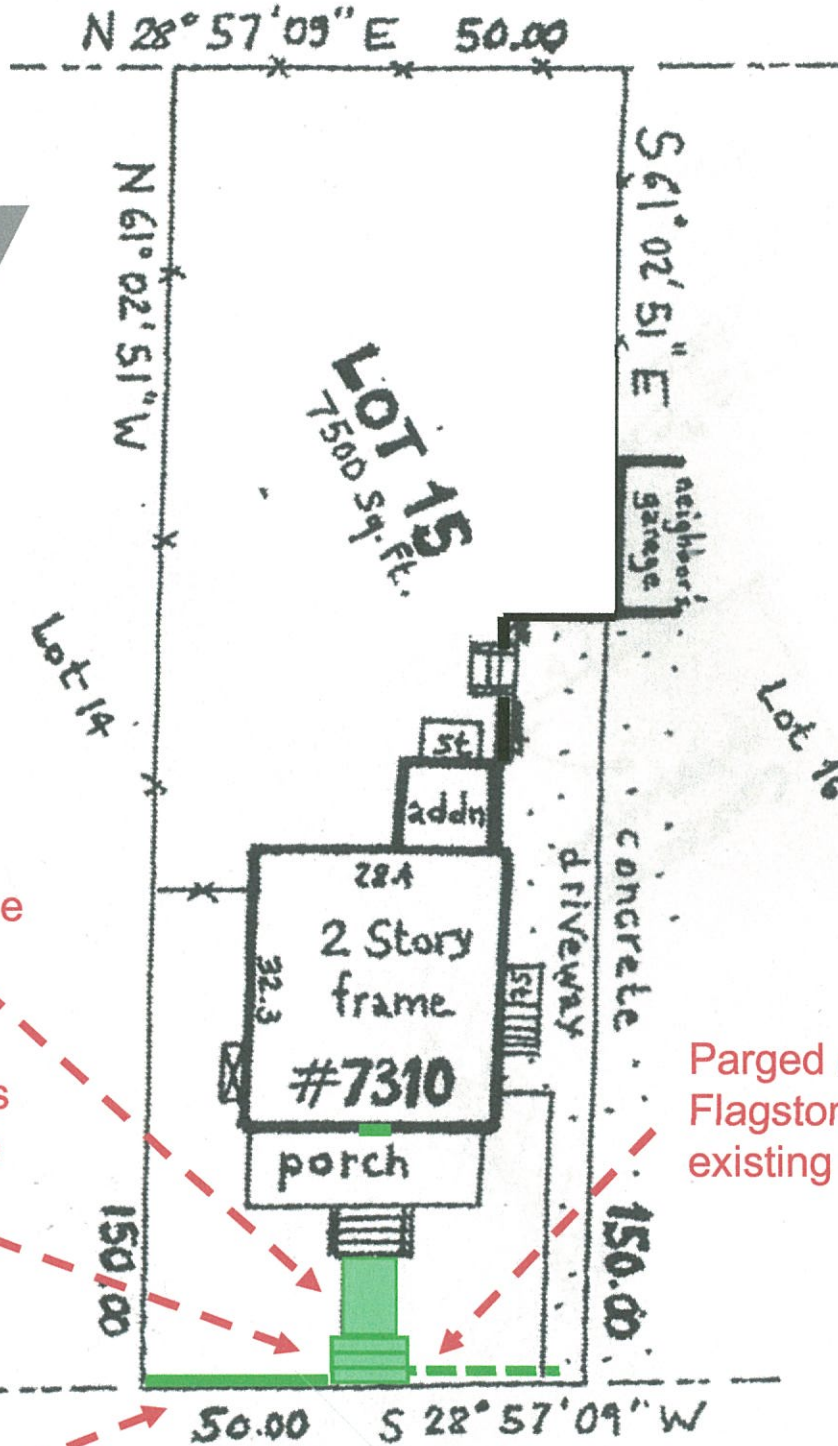


# Site Plan

September 17, 2018



Scale: 1" = 30'



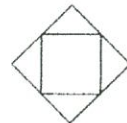
New 4' flagstone landing

Rebuilt front concrete steps with flagstone material + added banisters

Parged and Flagstone-capped existing wall

New low wall (max. height: 2') to match wall on other side of stairs

## WILLOW AVENUE

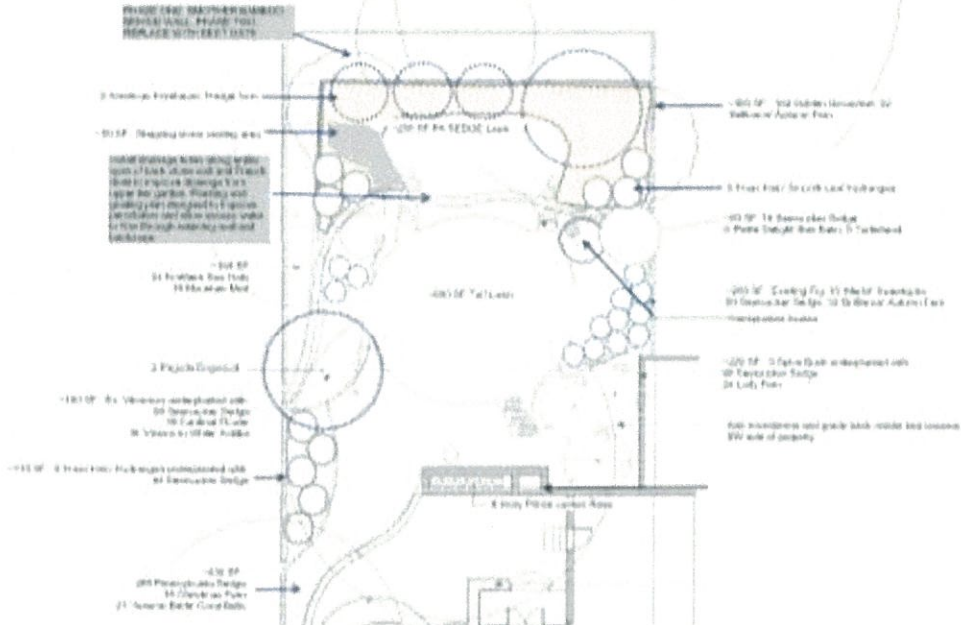


Shade portion to indicate North

Applicant: Wendy B. Berger  
 7310 Willow Ave  
 Takoma Park, MD 20912

Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant:** Wendy Berger  
 7310 Willow Ave  
 Takoma Park, MD 20912



Install 4' wide flagstone landing between top of new stone steps and front porch to replace cracked concrete walkway. Front porch steps will include matching flagstone treads.

Add a short cinderblock wall of 2' in height above ground by 4' width within the property line to match the symmetry of the other side of the steps. Cinderblock will be covered with parged concrete with flagstone cap.

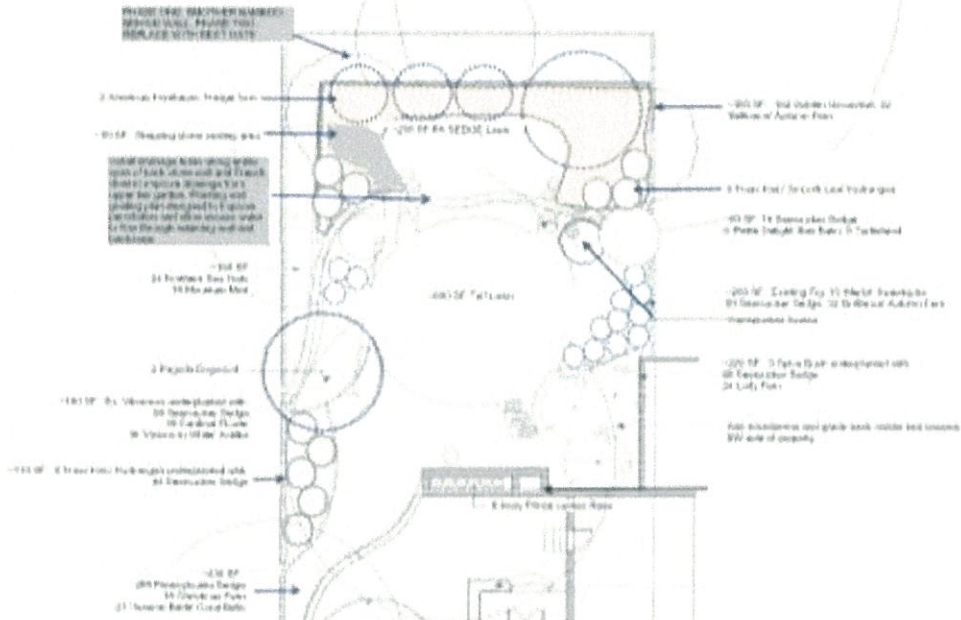
Rebuild 5 front concrete steps currently 8" high each and 3' wide to include two additional steps, reducing each step's height to 6", adding hand banisters, and widening to 4' the stairwell all to increase safety. Stair treads will be flagstone material. Cheekwalls will be parged concrete.

Add one level of cinderblock to bring height to 36" maximum above ground. Parge the cinderblock retaining wall and add a flagstone cap.





**Applicant:** Wendy Berger  
 7310 Willow Ave  
 Takoma Park, MD 20912



Install 4' wide flagstone landing between top of new stone steps and front porch steps to replace cracked concrete walkway. Front porch steps will include matching flagstone treads.

Add a short cinderblock wall of 2' in height above ground by 4' width within the property line to match the symmetry of the other side of the steps. Cinderblock will be covered with parged concrete with flagstone cap.

Rebuild 5 front concrete steps currently 8" high each and 3' wide to include two additional steps, reducing each step's height to 6", adding hand banisters, and widening to 4' the stairwell all to increase safety. Stair treads will be flagstone material. Cheekwalls will be parged concrete.

Add one level of cinderblock to bring height to 36" maximum above ground. Parge the cinderblock retaining wall and add a flagstone cap.



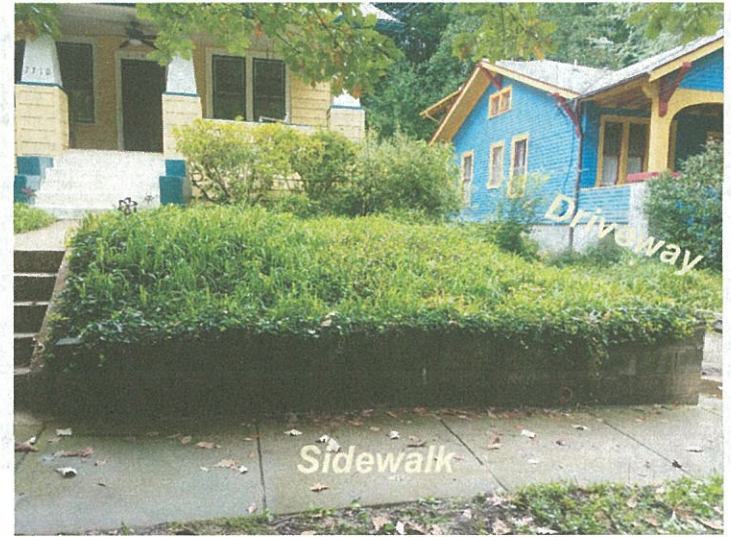


**Current: Street front line**

**Left side of stairs**



**Right side of stairs**



**Lateral View (from House# 7308)**



**Applicant:** Wendy B Berger - 7310 Willow Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912



**Proposed changes: install banisters**



**Proposed changes: Wall parging and stone capping**



**Applicant:** Wendy B Berger - 7310 Willow Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912



**HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFYING**  
 [Owner, Owner's Agent, Adjacent and Confronting Property Owners]

<p><b>Owner's mailing address</b>                  Wendy Berger                  7310 Willow Avenue                  Takoma Park MD 20912</p>	<p><b>Owner's Agent's mailing address</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses</b></p>	
<p>Tony Melak                  7308 Willow Avenue                  Takoma Park MD                  20912</p>	<p>Susic Strasser / Bob Guldin                  7309 Willow Avenue                  Takoma Park MD 20912</p>
<p>Nancy Hughes &amp; Tim Rahn                  7312 Willow Avenue                  Takoma Park MD                  20912</p>	<p>Nancy Boocker                  7311 Willow Avenue                  Takoma Park MD 20912</p>
	<p>Larry Lempert &amp; Pat Ricci                  7313 Willow Avenue                  Takoma Park MD 20912</p>