MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address: 53 Philadelphia Avenue, Takoma Park
Resource: Contributing Resource
           Takoma Park Historic District
Applicant: Jeff Leasure
Review: HAWP
Case Number: 37/03-16AAA
STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the HPC approve the HAWP application.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Craftsman
DATE: c. 1920s-30s

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to replace the front door at 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 Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards). The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

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.

Sec. 24A-8. Same-Criteria for issuance.

(a) The commission shall instruct the director to deny a permit if it finds, based on the evidence and information presented to or before the commission that the alteration for which the permit is sought would be inappropriate, inconsistent with or detrimental to the preservation, enhancement or ultimate protection of the historic site or historic resource within an historic district, and to the purposes of this chapter.

(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; [emphasis added] 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 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)

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.” Standard 2 most directly applies 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.

STAFF DISCUSSION

The subject property is a c. 1920s-30s Craftsman-style Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District. Currently, the house has a 15-lite wooden front door behind an ornate, Victorian inspired screen door. It is unclear whether the 15-lite door is historic or original to the house, but the house has certainly experienced alterations over the years, and such doors are not typically found on Craftsman-style houses in the Takoma Park Historic District; however, Lorraine Pearsoll of Historic Takoma, Inc. has stated that are a few examples of other Craftsman-style houses in the historic district with similar doors.

The applicant initially proposed to replace the 15-lite door with a modern door, which was incompatible with the style of the house. Per staff’s suggestion, the applicant worked with Historic Takoma, Inc. to find an appropriate and compatible door that is consistent with other Craftsman-style houses within the historic district. Staff has shared the current proposal with Historic Takoma, Inc., and they fully support the proposal.

Staff is supportive of the applicant’s proposal, finding that, in accordance with the Guidelines, the proposed replacement door is consistent with the predominant architectural style and period of the resource. The proposal will enhance the preservation of the subject property and will not detract from the surrounding historic district.

It is unclear whether the existing Victorian inspired screen door is historic, but it is certainly not original to or compatible with the Craftsman-style subject property. In discussing the screen door with Lorraine Pearsoll, the applicant stated that it may be moved to another part of the house, where it will be preserved, but it will be less visible from the public right-of-way.

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 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;

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.
APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: jgleasure@yahoo.com
Contact Person: Jeff Leasure
Daytime Phone No.: 202.320.4069

Tax Account No.: 4

Name of Property Owner: Jeff Leasure
Daytime Phone No.: 202.320.4069

Address: 53 Philadelphia Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Contractor: Maryland Complete Home Improvements, Inc.
Phone No.: 240.912.5511
Contractor Registration No.: 110034
Agent for Owner: 
Daytime Phone No.: 

LOCATION OF BUILDING PREMISE

House Number: 53
Street: Philadelphia Avenue

Town/City: Takoma Park
Nearest Cross Street: Maple

Lot: 
Block: 
Subdivision: 

Lot: 
Block: 
Subdivision: 

PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMIT/ACTION AND USE

1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:
- [ ] Construct
- [x] Alter/Remodel
- [ ] Extend
- [ ] Move
- [ ] Repair
- [ ] Revision

1B. Construction cost estimate: $2,142

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

PART TWO: COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS

2A. Type of sewage disposal:
- [ ] WSSC
- [ ] Septic
- [ ] Other:

2B. Type of water supply:
- [ ] WSSC
- [ ] Well
- [ ] Other:

PART THREE: COMPLETE ONLY FOR FENCE/RETAINING WALL

3A. Height: 

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/assessment

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.

Signature of owner or authorized agent: 
Date: 7.5.16

Approved: 
For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission

Disapproved: 
Signature: 
Date: 

Application/Permit No.: 
Date Filed: 
Date Issued:

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR INSTRUCTIONS

764771
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:
      
      * Single story house. No historical significance.
      * Broken front door. Door needs glass panels.

   b. General description of project and its effect on the historic resource(s), the environmental setting, and, where applicable, the historic district:
      
      * Replace broken, unsafe front door.
      * Replace w/similar style front door, also adding glass panels.

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 drip line 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.

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 lots(s) or parcel(s) which lie directly across the street/highway from the parcel in question.

PLEASE PRINT (IN BLUE OR BLACK INK) OR TYPE THIS INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.
PLEASE STAY WITHIN THE GUIDES OF THE TEMPLATE, AS THIS WILL BE PHOTOCOPIED DIRECTLY ONTO MAILING LABELS.
NOTES

1) Flood zone "X" per H.U.D. panel No. 0439D.

2) Setback distances as shown to the principal structure from property lines are approximate. The level of accuracy for this drawing should be taken to be no greater than plus or minus 1 foot. Fences, if shown, have been located by approximate methods.

LOCATION DRAWING

B.J. DAVIDSON PROPERTY
LIBER 5566 FOLIO 624
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

SURVEYOR'S CERTIFICATE

"THE INFORMATION SHOWN HEREBY HAS BEEN BASED UPON THE RESULTS OF A FIELD INSPECTION PURSUANT TO THE DEED OR PLAT OF RECORD. EXISTING STRUCTURES SHOWN HAVE BEEN FIELD LOCATED BASED UPON MEASUREMENTS FROM PROPERTY MARKERS FOUND OR FROM EVIDENCE OF LINES OF APPARENT OCCUPATION."

JEFFREY A. TAYLOR
MARYLAND PROPERTY LINE SURVEYOR REG. NO. 587

REFERENCES

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SCALE: 1"=20'

WALL CHECK: DRAWN BY: J.M.

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<th>Owner's Agent's mailing address</th>
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<td>Takoma Park MD 20912</td>
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