MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address: 7216 Holly Ave., Takoma Park
Resource: Outstanding Resource
Takoma Park Historic District
Applicant: Rocco Casagrande
Review: HAWP
Case Number: 31/06-17III
Proposal: Hardscape Alteration

Meeting Date: 09/19/17
Report Date: 09/12/17
Public Notice: 09/05/17
Tax Credit: n/a
Staff: Dan Bruechert

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the HAWP application.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION
SIGNIFICANCE: Outstanding Resource to the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Queen Anne
DATE: c.1885-95

The subject property is a two-and-a-half-story, clapboard sided Queen Anne house, with a front gable roof, and a one-story wrap-around porch that wraps to the left and right of the principle façade. There is decorative scrollwork under the gable and in the second-floor porch. No work is proposed on the house as part of this HAWP.

PROPOSAL
The applicant is proposing to:
  • Enlarge the shared driveway,
  • Construct a new stone retaining wall and stairs in the front,
  • To install boulder steps and a retaining wall in the rear, and
  • To build an on-grade deck in the rear.

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 Design 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 at 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 district.

Outstanding Resources have the highest level of architectural and/or historical significance. While they will receive the most detailed level of design review, it is permissible to make sympathetic alterations, changes and additions. The guiding principles to be utilized by the Historic Preservation Commission are the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation

Specifically, some of the factors to be considered in reviewing HAWPs on Outstanding Resources:

- Plans for all alterations should be compatible with the resource’s original design; additions, specifically, should be sympathetic to existing architectural character, including massing, height, setback, and materials
- Preservation of original building materials and use of appropriate, compatible new materials is encourages
- All changes and additions should respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space

Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A Historic Resources Preservation

(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

STAFF DISCUSSION
The applicant is proposing several alterations to the hardscape of the property at both the front and the rear. The elements that will be altered at the front include, widening the gravel drive by 7' 7 1/2” (seven feet, seven and one-half inch); demolishing the brick retaining wall and constructing a new stone retaining wall and terrace with steps from both the front and side. In the rear, the applicant proposes to add a new on-grade deck accessed by several boulder steps.

To accomplish the hardscape work at the front of the house, the applicant is proposing to
demolish the existing brick knee wall at the front of the lot. The top several feet of the brick wall were removed sometime after 2014 and only 18" to 2' (eighteen inches to two feet) of the brick wall remain. The Staff report conducted in 2014 stated that the remaining portion of the brick retaining wall dated to the period of construction for the house. Based on an evaluation of the brick and mortar, Staff currently believes that the wall more likely dates to sometime after World War I and was likely constructed closer to the 1930s. As this feature was likely constructed outside the identified period of significance for the district, Staff supports its removal.

Expansion of the Driveway
The revised application includes two schemes for the treatment of retaining walls at the front of the building. As one scheme has been identified as ‘preferred’ Staff’s review only evaluates the applicant’s ‘preferred’ proposal and not the alternative plan. Currently, the subject property contains a shared gravel with a small cut to provide access to the non-historic one-stall garage. The front yard contains a short brick knee wall. A significantly taller section of brick wall (added to the older brick base) was lowered as recently as 2014. The applicant is proposing to widen the existing driveway by 7' 7 ½" (seven feet, seven and one-half) for a depth of 17' 4" (seventeen feet, four inches). This expansion will also be covered in gravel to match the existing driveway. This additional gravel will not have a significant impact on either the historic house or the surrounding district and Staff supports the proposed widening.

![Preferred Proposed Driveway](image)

Figure 1: Preferred configuration for side retaining wall.

Part of the existing concrete retaining wall will need to be removed to expand the garage. As this portion of the wall is not in its historic configuration (if it even is historic), Staff believes that its removal will not have a significant impact on the historic character of the house or the surrounding district. The applicant’s proposed use of gravel in this expansion will create a consistent appearance with the existing driveway, so it will blend in with the surrounding environment and respects the environmental setting of the surrounding district, per the Design Guidelines.

Front Retaining Wall
The applicant is proposing to demolish the brick knee wall and to construct a new stone retaining wall at the front with terraced steps. The applicant provided a photo example of the stone wall proposed for the front and side retaining wall (see below). The roughly dressed stones will be
topped by a concrete capstone. Due to the gentle slope of Holly Ave., the wall at the front of the property will vary in height from 2' 2" (two feet, two inches) to 3' (three feet) tall. The new wall will be approximately 2 1/2" (two-and-a-half inches) taller than the existing brink wall. There will be a gap at the center of the wall to provide access to the existing concrete steps to the front porch. The applicant is proposing to retain the existing central concrete steps.

![Figure 2: Proposed stone wall detail](image)

The size and design and size of the proposed wall will have a minimal impact on the house and the surrounding district. Along Holly Ave. there are several other retaining walls. Their materials vary from concrete block, to parged concrete, to dry-laid stones, and brick. The majority of the retaining walls are modern additions to the houses and do not appear to be historic. By employing rough stone coupled with the wall’s low height will help to support the preservation of Takoma Park’s open, park-like setting.

The applicant is proposing to wrap the stone retaining wall around the corner into the proposed expanded driveway. Currently, there is a small section of brick wall with a larger portion of a poured concrete retaining wall that comes to the front edge of the front porch (see Figure 3). The applicant proposes to step-up the height of the wall from a height of 3' (three feet) at the front corner of the lot, to a height of 5' 4" (five feet, four inches) at the corner of the porch. The applicant is proposing to install a centrally-placed set of stairs that are constructed using the same stone as the wall, with a metal pipe railing. The replacement of the two incongruous materials in the garage retaining wall with a unified design will allow the wall to better blend into the landscape.
Rear Alterations
The proposed changes to the rear are a circular, on-grade wooden deck and boulder steps with a boulder retaining wall to access the rear of the yard. These changes are compatible with the landscape features in the rear of the house. The work at the rear does respect the park-like setting of Takoma Park and will not have an impact on the historic resource or the surrounding district. Lastly, as these alterations will not be visible from the public right-of-way, Staff feels they should be approved as a matter of course.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS
Staff recommends that the Commission approve this HAWP application;

and with the general condition applicable to all Historic Area Work Permits that the applicant will present 3 permit sets of drawings to HPC staff for review and stamping prior to submission for permits (if applicable). After issuance of the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) permit, the applicant will arrange for a field inspection by calling the DPS Field Services Office at 240-777-6370 prior to commencement of work and not more than two weeks following completion of work.
APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: Holt@Jordanhoneyman.com  Contact Person: Holt Jordan

Tax Account No.: 01059000  Daytime Phone No.: 202-986-0711

Name of Property Owner: Casagrande Rocco J  Daytime Phone No.: 301-704-2883

Address: 7216 Holly Ave Takoma Park MD 20912

Contractor: TBD  Phone No.: 

Contractor Registration No.: TBD

Agent for Owner: Jordan Honeyman Landscape Architecture  Cross Reference Phone No.: 202-986-0711

LOCATION OF BUILDING/SURFACE

House Number: 7216  Street: Holly Ave

Town/City: Takoma Park  Nearest Cross Street: Tulip Ave.

Lot: 38  Block: 12  Subdivision:

Liber: 51916  Folio: 123  Parcel:

PART TWO - TYPE OF WORK AND USE

1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE

☐ Construct  ☐ Extend  ☑ Alter/Remodel  ☐ A/C  ☐ Slab  ☐ Room Addition  ☐ Porch  ☐ Deck  ☐ Shed

☐ Move  ☐ Install  ☐ Wreck/Raze  ☐ Solar  ☐ Fireplace  ☐ Woodburning Stove  ☐ Single Family

☑ Revision  ☐ Repair  ☐ Revocable  ☑ Fence/Wall (complete Section 4)  ☐ Other:

1B. Construction cost estimator: $

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

PART THREE - COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTENSIONS

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: 5 feet 5 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/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]

08/15/2017

Date

Approved: 

For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission

Disapproved: 

Signature:  Date: 

Application/Permit No.: 

Date Filed:  Date Issued: 

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR INSTRUCTIONS
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:

   Fill. Holly Ave is a hillside Victorian House with an
   outstanding resource. This steeply sloped sit has 4
   large shade trees, a tulip poplar and a hickory. It also
   included several large American Hollies.

   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________

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

   Landscaping & enlarged shared driveway with new
   stone retaining walls in the front & new stone terrace,
   boulder steps and on grade deck in the rear.

   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________
   ________________________________

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 5" 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 lot(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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner’s mailing address</th>
<th>Owner’s Agent’s mailing address</th>
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<tr>
<td>Casagrande Rocco J. &amp; Kate Rhudy</td>
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<td>7216 Holly Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912</td>
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<th>Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Coffey Pamela Sumner &amp; Curtin Theodore Charles</td>
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<tr>
<td>7214 Holly Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912</td>
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<td>7217 Holly Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912</td>
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<td>Voris Linda &amp; Kakoudakis Despina</td>
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<td>7327 Piney Branch Rd, Takoma Park, MD 20912</td>
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<td>Peyrenc Guion &amp; Kristin</td>
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<td>7329 Piney Branch Rd, Takoma Park, MD 20912</td>
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PRECEDENT

BOULDER STEPS IN REAR YARD

BOULDER RETAINING WALL FOR REAR YARD

HOLLY AVE STONE RETAINING WALL PROJECT, APPROVED PREVIOUSLY BY HAWP

HOLLY AVE STONE RETAINING WALL PROJECT 2, APPROVED PREVIOUSLY BY HAWP

DECK ON GRADE
FRONT EXISTING CONDITION

EXISTING FRONT WALL CONDITION

Cassgrande Residence
7216 Holly Ave
Takoma Park, MD 20912