MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address: 6806 Westmoreland Ave., Takoma Park  
Meeting Date: 07/26/17

Resource: Contributing Resource  
Report Date: 07/19/17
Takoma Park Historic District

Applicant: David Dixon-Peugh  
Public Notice: 07/12/17

Review: HAWP  
Tax Credit: n/a

Case Number: 31/06-17-UU  
Staff: Dan Bruechert

Proposal: Demolition of accessory structure and construction of a retaining wall.

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

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION
SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing Resource to the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Craftsman/Bungalow
DATE: c.1910-1920s

The subject property is a one-and-a-half story, front gable bungalow, three bays wide, with a concrete block foundation, and stucco siding.

To the left of the house is a shared driveway that provides access to a single bay garage. The garage has a front gable roof and walls built out of concrete block that match the house foundation. The rear wall of the garage has collapsed and the other walls show signs of structural failure. Adjacent to the garage is a concrete retaining wall that runs the width of the backyard.

PROPOSAL
The applicant is proposing to demolish the exiting garage and extend the existing retaining wall at a height of 4’ 8” (four feet eight inches) in the location of the front wall plane of the garage.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES
When reviewing alterations and additions for new construction to Contributing Resources within the Takoma Park Historic District, decisions are guided by the Takoma Park Historic District Design Guidelines (Design Guidelines) and Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A).
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.

Contributing Resources should receive a more lenient 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. As stated above, 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.

Some of the factors to be considered in reviewing HAWPs on Contributing Resources include:

Major additions should, where feasible, be placed to the rear of existing structures so that they are less visible from the public right-of-way; additions and alterations to the first floor at the front of a structure are discouraged, but not automatically prohibited

Minor alterations to areas that do not directly front on a public right-of-way such as vents, metal stovetop pipes, air conditioners, fences, skylights, etc. – should be allowed as a matter of course; alterations to areas that do not directly front on a public way-of-way which involve the replacement of or damaged to original ornamental or architectural features are discouraged, but may be considered and approved on a case-by-case basis

Some non-original building materials may be acceptable on a case-by-case basis; artificial siding on areas visible to the public right-of-way is discouraged where such materials would replace or damage original building materials that are in good condition

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
(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

STAFF DISCUSSION
The applicant is proposing to demolish the garage and install a retaining wall in its place. This
proposal will not directly impact the historic house.

Building Demolition
The existing garage has suffered significant structural failure. Two-thirds of the rear wall have
collapsed into the building and the side walls show signs of structural deficiency. The masonry
construction of the garage is not reinforced and cannot support the weight of the hillside to the
rear. This will eventually lead to the total structural failure of the garage and will constitute a
hazard that must be remedied. For this reason, Staff supports the demolition of the garage (24A-
8(b)(6)).

Current zoning requirements will not allow the construction of an accessory structure in the same
location. In order to replace the accessory structure in the rear of the property, the applicant
would have to achieve a 5’ (five foot) setback from the lot line, which due to the current
configuration of the rear of the property would likely be infeasible if not impossible. As this
accessory structure is at the rear of the lot, its removal will have only a minor impact on the
streetscape of the district. While Staff would prefer to see a replacement garage as a feature on
this historic site (in keeping with 24A-8(b)(2)), the existing construction in the rear of the
property and zoning requirements would make the reconstruction of the garage an unreasonable
condition.

Retaining Wall Construction
The applicant is proposing to construct a 4’ 8” (four feet, eight inch) retaining wall in the
location of the front wall plane of the extant garage. The location of the garage will be will be
filled in upon completion of the retaining wall with a grade that matches the existing back yard.
This wall extension will match the height and appearance of the existing retaining wall that
currently extends approximately three-fourths of the way across the rear lot. The retaining wall
will be internally reinforced. The drawing shown on circle shows a guardrail, however,
Staff has talked with the project architect and the architect confirmed that no guardrail is
proposed for the top of the mortar wall cap.

The need for a retaining wall is demonstrated by the failure of the rear garage wall. The new
retaining wall will prevent the further erosion of the hill in the rear of the property. By matching
the textured concrete block and height of the historic retaining wall, the new construction will
seamlessly match the historic and reinforces the landscape and hardscape of 6806 Westmoreland
Ave. This proposal is in keeping with the character of the site and the surrounding district and is
consistent with the guidance provided by the Takoma Park Design Guidelines.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve** the 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: INFO@SALLARCHITECTS.COM  Contact Person: ERIC SAUL

Tax Account No.: 017576  Daytime Phone No.: 301.270.0395

Name of Property Owner: DAVID DIXON-PELISH  Daytime Phone No.: 240.463.0498

Address: 8806 WESTMORELAND AVE, TAKOMA PARK, MD 20912

Contractor: TD

Agent for Owner: ERIC SAUL  Daytime Phone No.: 301.270.0395

House Number: 8806  Street: WESTMORELAND

Town/City: TAKOMA PARK  Nearest Cross Street:

Lot: 27  Block: 17  Subdivision: DINEFREST

PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMIT ACTION AND USE

1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:
[ ] Construct [ ] Move [ ] Other/Remodel/Alter/Retool
[ ] Install [ ] Repair]

1B. Construction cost estimate: $15,000

PART TWO: FENCE AND RETAINING WALL PLACEMENT AND INFORMATION

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: 4 feet 0 inches

3B. Indicate whether the fence or retaining wall is to be constructed on one of the following locations:
[ ] Entirely on land of owner  [ ] On public right of way/lease

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  6/21/17

Approved: [ ] Disapproved: [ ]

For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission  Date:

Application/Permit No.: 805225

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:

   **EXISTING HOUSE/PROPERTY IS LOCATED IN THE TAKOMA PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT. THE EXISTING GARAGE IS BUILT INTO THE HILLSIDE OF THE BACK YARD. GARAGE HAS COLLAPSED DUE TO HILLSIDE PRESSURE. EXISTING 4' TALL RETAINING WALL RUNS FROM SIDE OF GARAGE TO OPPOSITE SIDE OF PROPERTY.**

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

   **EXISTING GARAGE IS PROPOSED TO BE DEMOLISHED. THE EXISTING RETAINING WALL WILL BE EXTENDED IN PLACE OF THE GARAGE LOCATION. WALL WILL MATCH THE EXISTING WALL IN MATERIAL & HEIGHT.**

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.

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 ON THIS INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE. PLEASE STAY WITHIN THE GUIDES OF THE TEMPLATE, AS THIS WILL BE PHOTOCOPIED DIRECTLY ONTO MAILING LABELS.
# HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFYING

[Owner, Owner’s Agent, Adjacent and Confronting Property Owners]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner’s mailing address</th>
<th>Owner’s Agent’s mailing address</th>
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<tr>
<td>DAVID DIXON-PEUGH</td>
<td>ERIC SAUL</td>
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<tr>
<td>6806 WESTMORELAND AVE.</td>
<td>SAW ARCHITECTS</td>
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<td>TAKOMA PARK, MD 20912</td>
<td>8114 CARROLL AVE.</td>
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<th>Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses</th>
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<tr>
<td>6808 WESTMORELAND AVE TAKOMA PARK, MD 20912</td>
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NOTE:
- If $F(X)$ equals 30" or more a GUARDRAIL is REQUIRED.
- 36" High (Residential)
- 42" High (Commercial)

TABLE 1: TYPICAL MASONRY WALL SPECIFICATIONS

FOR FULLY GROUTED WALL

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**Level Backfill**

| 3'-4"  | 8" | 1'-6" | 2'-6" | 10" | #4@24" O.C. | #4@14" O.C. |
| 4'-0"  | 8" | 1'-9" | 2'-8" | 12" | #4@16" O.C. | #4@12" O.C. |
| 4'-8"  | 8" | 1'-11"| 3'-4" | 12" | #4@16" O.C. | #4@12" O.C. |
| 5'-4"  | 8" | 1'-9" | 3'-9" | 12" | #5@16" O.C. | #4@12" O.C. |
| 6'-0"  | 8" | 1'-3" | 4'-2" | 12" | #5@16" O.C. | #4@12" O.C. |

**Sloped Backfill**

| 3'-4"  | 12" | 1'-8" | 3'-0" | 10" | #4@24" O.C. | #4@14" O.C. |
| 4'-0"  | 12" | 2'-2" | 4'-0" | 12" | #4@16" O.C. | #4@12" O.C. |
| 4'-8"  | 12" | 2'-10"| 4'-8" | 12" | #4@16" O.C. | #4@12" O.C. |
| 5'-4"  | 12" | 3'-6" | 5'-4" | 12" | #5@16" O.C. | #4@12" O.C. |
| 6'-0"  | 12" | 4'-2" | 6'-0" | 12" | #5@16" O.C. | #4@12" O.C. |
NOTE:
If (X) equals 30" or more a
GUARDRAIL is REQUIRED.
56" High (Residential)
42" High (Commercial)

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FOR FULLY GROUTED WALL

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WESTMORELAND AVENUE

LOCATION DRAWING OF:
#6806 WESTMORELAND AVENUE
LOT 27
BLOCK 17
DINECREST

LEGEND:
- FENCE
- S.E. BASEMENT ENTRANCE
- SN. BAY WINDOW
- BR - BRICK
- RL - ELD.S RESTRICTION LINE
- BSMT. - BASEMENT
- CS - CONCRETE STOOP
- CONC - CONCRETE
- D.W. - DRIVEWAY

A Land Surveying Company
DULEY
and
Associates, Inc.

NOTE:
ENCROACHMENTS MAY EXIST

THE LEVEL OF ACCURACY OF
DISTANCES TO APPARENT
PROPERTY LINES IS
1' ±

NEW 4'-8" HIGH RETAINING
WALL (SEE DETAIL)

EXISTING GARAGE TO BE
DEMOLISHED

EXISTING RETAINING WALL

LOT 27
6,300 Sq. Ft. (Plat)

N 45° E
42'

S 45° E
42'

N 45° W
42'

PLAT NO. 142

DECK

DECK
Detail: **DETAIL OF EXISTING RETAINING WALL**
**NEW WALL TO MATCH THIS.**

Applicant: ________________________________