II.A

Preliminary Consultation

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

Address: 5813 Surrey St., Chevy Chase  Meeting Date: 10/25/2017
Resource: Secondary (Post-1915) Resource  Report Date: 10/18/2017
(Somerset Historic District)  
Public Notice: 10/11/2017
Applicant: Dan & Aviva Rosenthal  
(Tahani Share, Architect)  Tax Credit: N/A

Review: 2nd Preliminary Consultation  Staff: Michael Kyne

Case Number: N/A

PROPOSAL: Side addition and hardscape alterations

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the applicant make any revisions based on the HPC’s recommendations and return with a HAWP application.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Secondary (Post-1915) Resource within the Somerset Historic District
STYLE: Colonial Revival
DATE: c. 1933

BACKGROUND

The applicant previously appeared before the Commission for a preliminary consultation at the September 19, 2017 HPC meeting. At that time, the Commission expressed the following comments/concerns regarding the applicant’s proposal:

- The Commission did not support the proposed rear extension/addition, finding that the rear wing of the house was likely historic, and that, due to the visibility of the rear from Cumberland Avenue, the proposal had the potential to detract from the character of the historic house.
- The Commission expressed general support for the proposed side addition, finding that it was the best location for an addition at the subject property; however, the Commission found that the proposed side addition must take more visual cues from the historic house. Specifically, as previously proposed, the side addition was too complex, with too many roof forms, and needed to be more symmetrical.
- The Commission supported slightly enlarging the existing driveway at the front/right side of the house, but found that the proposed expansion from 8’-4” to 20’ wide was inconsistent with the character of the streetscape.
- The Commission found that the proposed front stairs/walkway were too substantial and suggested that the perceived massing of the stairs/walkway be minimized.
PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes the following work items at the subject property:

- Enlarge an existing one-story addition and below grade garage at the right side of the subject property.
- Construct a second-story expansion over the enlarged right-side addition and garage.
- Enlarge the existing driveway at the front of the subject property.
- Construct a new central walkway/steps at the front of the subject property.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

When reviewing alterations and new construction within the Somerset Historic District several documents are to be utilized as guidelines to assist the Commission in developing their decision. These documents include 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.

Montgomery County Code; Chapter 24A-8

(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; 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.)

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation:

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 archaeological 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.
STAFF DISCUSSION

The applicant previously appeared before the Commission for a preliminary consultation at the September 19, 2017 HPC meeting. At that time, the Commission expressed the following comments/concerns regarding the applicant’s proposal:

- The Commission did not support the proposed rear extension/addition, finding that the rear wing of the house was likely historic, and that, due to the visibility of the rear from Cumberland Avenue, the proposal had the potential to detract from the character of the historic house.
- The Commission expressed general support for the proposed side addition, finding that it was the best location for an addition at the subject property; however, the Commission found that the proposed side addition must take more visual cues from the historic house. Specifically, as previously proposed, the side addition was too complex, with too many roof forms, and needed to be more symmetrical.
- The Commission supported slightly enlarging the existing driveway at the front/right side of the house, but found that the proposed expansion from 8’-4” to 20’ wide was inconsistent with the character of the streetscape.
- The Commission found that the proposed front stairs/walkway were too substantial and suggested that the perceived massing of the stairs/walkway be minimized.

The applicant has made the following revisions to their proposal, attempting to address the Commission’s comments/concerns:

- The previously proposed rear extension/addition has been removed from the proposal.
- The proposed side addition has been simplified and made more symmetrical.
- The windows on the front elevation of the proposed side addition take more cues from the historic house, with double-hung divided lite windows, matching head heights, similar muntin patterns, and a stacked appearance.
- The width of the proposed expanded driveway has been reduced from 20’ to 18’.
- From the submitted plans and elevations, it appears that the width of the proposed front stairs/walkway has been decreased.
- The proposed front stairs/walkway materials also appear to have been revised, with the applicant proposing simple concrete in lieu of the previously proposed stone.

Staff is generally supportive of the applicant’s proposal, finding that most of the Commission’s concerns have been addressed; however, staff asks for the Commission’s guidance regarding the following aspect of the proposal:

- Because they are located on secondary elevations, are the proposed casement windows on the side and rear of the proposed side addition appropriate, or should they be more consistent with the windows of the historic house?
- Has the width of the proposed expanded driveway been reduced enough, or should it be reduced further?
- Because materials have not been specified on the proposed plans and elevations, staff asks the Commission to provide any necessary guidance regarding appropriate and compatible materials for all aspects of the proposed project.
STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the applicant make any revisions based on the HPC’s recommendations and return with a HAWP application.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301/563-3400
APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: tahani@landisconstruction.com
               chris@landisconstruction.com
Contact Person: Tahani Share/ Chris Landis
               chris@landisconstruction.com
Daytime Phone No: 202-370-3410

Tax Account No: ____________________________________________

Name of Property Owner: Dan & Aviva Rosenthal
Daytime Phone No: ____________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________
          Street Number  City  State  Zip Code

Contractor: Landis Architects/ Builders
Phone No: ____________________________________________

Contractor Registration No: ____________________________________________

Agent for Owner: Chris Landis
Daytime Phone No: 202-489-1516

LOCATION OF BUILDING PROJECT
House Number: 5813
Street: Surrey St.
Town/City: Chevy Chase  Nearest Cross Street: Surrey St. & Cumberland Ave.
Lot: 13  Block: B-3  Subdivision: ____________________________
Liber: ____________________________  Folio: ____________________________  Parcel: ____________________________

PART ONE: TYPES OF PROPERTY ACTION AND USE

1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:  CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:
□ Construct  □ Extend  □ Alter/Remodel  □ AC  □ Slab  □ Room Addition  □ Porch  □ Deck  □ Shed
□ Move  □ Install  □ Wreck/Tear  □ Solar  □ Fireplace  □ Wood Burning Stove  □ Single Family
□ Revision  □ Repair  □ Revocable  □ Fence/Wall (complete Section 4)  □ Other: ____________________________

1B. Construction cost estimate:  $500,000

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

PART TWO: COMPLIANCE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTENSIONS/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: COMPLIANCE FOR STRUCTURING WALL

3A. Height in feet: ___________ inches: ____________________________

3B. Indicate whether the fence or retaining wall is to be constructed on one of the following locations:
□ 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.

Tahani Share
Signature of owner or authorized agent
Date: 9/7/17

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:

The existing house on 5813. Serry St. was built in 1937. It sits on a corner lot with an area of 11,900 SF. It's comprised of 2 1/2 brick stories. The plan is a typical colonial house with stairs in the center. The house has an existing non-historic one story addition built on a garage at the basement level. The house has two front setbacks (24F & 31F) a side setback (19F) and a rear setback (67F).

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

The proposed addition includes a 2nd story addition over the exact footprint of the existing one story and an extension of 6F into the rear yard to enlarge the 1st floor and the existing 9F-wide garage. The proposed work also include 2nd floor addition at the rear, enlarge the existing driveway and add steps the front of the house.

2. SITE PLAN

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

a. the scale, north arrow, and date;

b. dimensions of all existing and proposed structures;

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, windows and door openings, and other fixed features of both the existing resources 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 labeled 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 site, location, and species of each tree of at least that diameter.

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.
ROSENTHAL RESIDENCE

5813 Surrey Street  Chevy Chase, MD
HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFYING
[Owner, Owner's Agent, Adjacent and Confronting Property Owners]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner's mailing address</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aviva and Dan Rosenthal</td>
<td>Landis Architects/ Builders</td>
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<td>Washington, DC</td>
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<tr>
<td>5803 Surrey St.</td>
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PREVIOUS PROPOSAL
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

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: 
PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION - :
5813 Surrey Street :
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PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION - :
10237 Carroll Place :
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A meeting in the above-entitled matter was held on September 19, 2017, commencing at 7:31 p.m., in the MRO Auditorium at 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, before:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Bill Kirwan, Chair
Sandra Heiler
Marsha Barnes
Richard Arkin
Eliza Voigt
Robert Sutton
ALSO PRESENT:
Phillip Estes
Michael Kyne
Dan Bruechert

APPEARANCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT OF</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chris Landis</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tahani Share</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aviva Rosenthal</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>Dan Rosenthal</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg Weidemann</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## I. HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>5</td>
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## II. PRELIMINARY CONSULTATIONS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Case</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## III. TAX CREDIT APPLICATIONS - 2016 - Group VII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Page</th>
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</table>

## IV. MINUTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Page</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>54</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## IV. OTHER BUSINESS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Case</th>
<th>Page</th>
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<td>54</td>
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Takoma Park; Case 35/13-17CC at 25 Quincy Street, Chevy Chase; Case 18/08-17B revised at 15215 Barnesville Road, Boyds; Case 37/03-17KKK at 7105 Carroll Avenue, Takoma Park; Case 37/03-17LLL at 7113 Carroll Avenue, Takoma Park; Case 35/160-17A at 4717 Drummond Avenue, Chevy Chase; Case 35/36-17H at 4701 Cumberland Avenue, Chevy Chase; Case 31/06-17J at 10400 Montgomery Avenue, Kensington; Case 35/13-17FF at 23 Primrose Street, Chevy Chase; and Case 35/13-17HH at 35 Oxford Street, Chevy Chase.

MR. KIRWAN: Thank you. Is there a second?

MS. BARNES: Mr. Chairman, I second the motion.

MR. KIRWAN: Thank you. Any discussion? All in favor, please raise your right hand.

VOTE.

MR. KIRWAN: The motion passes unanimously. Those historic area work permits have been approved this evening. We want to thank the applicants for the good work they did on those cases to make those easily approvable by the Commission.

We're going to move on to the next item on our agenda this evening, which is a preliminary consultation. Is there a Staff report for II.A at 5813 Surrey Street in Chevy Chase? Or should we move on to the next one?

MR. BRUECHERT: Yes, there is, Mr. Chairman. Just one second, please.
MR. KIRWAN: Should we move on to the next item to allow the applicants to arrive or?

MR. KYNE: They're here.

MR. KIRWAN: Oh, they are, okay.

MR. KYNE: So, yes we do have a presentation for 5813 Surrey Street, Chevy Chase. And, I do want to note that the applicants are here in the lobby and should be coming into the auditorium briefly. So this is a secondary post-1915 resource, Colonial Revival style, circa 1933. And the proposal is to enlarge an existing one-story addition and below grade at the right side of the property. Construct a second story expansion over the enlarged right side addition and garage. Construct a second story expansion over the left most side and existing one-story rear addition. Enlarge the existing driveway at the front of the subject property, and construct a new central walkway and steps up the front of the subject property.

And I'm just going to walk around the property, starting at the front. From across Surrey Street. And then, from the same side of the street as the house. Looking up the drive at the below grade garage and existing side addition. Existing side addition fenestration. Existing garage door. And here, trying to illustrate the -- where the addition meets the main mass. And this is looking at the side yard at the right side of the house. And again,
looking at the side yard. More of the side yard. More.
And then, from the side yard looking back at the right side
of the house.

And, an existing tree, which is in fairly -- or
two trees, that are in fairly close proximity to the house.
So we may want to ask the applicants if these will have to
be removed, or if they will be impacted by the proposed
addition. And then moving around to the back of the house.
And, you can see the distance between the rear of the house
and the neighboring property to the rear. And, you can see
the existing one-story rear addition. An area way beneath.
And again, this is illustrating where the addition is
connected to the main mass. And here it appears that this
may be original to the house, or they did a really good job
with toothing in the brick when they constructed the
addition.

And then looking from the opposite side of
Cumberland Avenue. Moving back around to the front. And
then, finally, we have a photo looking at the location
where, in the Staff report we noted an alternative might be
to construct a detached garage, which would require a second
curb cut, which would probably in this approximate location.
And then, we have the plans for reference. And we can come
back to these if we need to.

The applicable guidelines in the case are the
Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. And, Staff discussion. As we noted, the property is a 1933 Colonial Revival style secondary resource. The house, as shown in the photographs, is located on a corner lot with the front facing Surrey Street, and the side facing, the left side facing Cumberland Avenue. And there's a driveway at the front right side of the house leading to the below grade garage, and the existing addition.

There's an ell-shaped walkway at the front. Or, I'm sorry, the side from Cumberland Avenue that leads to the front. And the rear of the house is less than 20 feet from the rear property line, and the right side is more than 67 feet from the right side property line.

And Staff expresses the following concerns regarding the right side addition and expansion. The Commission typically requires additions to be at the rear, which is in accordance with preservation best practices. Due to the house's orientation and the county setback requirements, the applicant is limited in their ability to construct additional space at the rear. And because of this, the applicant proposes to enlarge and expand the existing one-story sunroom at the right side of the house.

The proposal will result in a two and a half story right side addition. The existing one-story addition is compatible with the historic house, and is a typical feature
found on colonial revival style houses in the county. The proposed two and a half story right side addition will significantly alter the perceived massing at the subject property, and has the potential to detract from and overwhelm the historic house. The applicant proposes a series and gables and low-pitched first-story shed roof to break up the perceived massing at the right side addition, and to provide differentiation from the historic house. However, Staff finds that the shape and form of the proposed right side addition is too complex, and incompatible with the simple symmetrical features and straight lines of the historic house.

Staff suggests the applicant explore alternatives for the proposed addition which may be more compatible with the historic house and reduce the perceived massing. These alternatives might include widening the proposed second-story read addition and expansion creating some additional living space at the rear, and allowing the size of the right side addition to be reduced. The right side addition with a lower flat roof and more fenestration taking cues from the existing sunroom addition, or constructing a detached garage, allowing below grade living space to be created in the location of the existing garage, and for the overall height of the proposed right side addition to be lowered. And, just as a note, this option would require an additional
curb cut, perhaps in the location we saw earlier, and may present zoning issues, as a detached garage on this specific lot would have to be in the side yard, and forward of the rear plane of the house.

Issues regarding hardscaping. Again, the applicant proposes to widen the existing driveway at the front of the house going from 8 feet, 4 inches to 20 feet. The applicant also proposes to construct a new central walkway and steps from Surrey Street connecting to the existing ell-shaped walkway from Cumberland Avenue. And from the photographs, we can probably understand why the applicants would propose such a feature.

Typically, the Commission strives to preserve open space and reduce the amount of hardscaping, particularly at the front of a property. In this case, the Commission may find that the unique circumstances, specifically, the house's orientation, and the rather large open space at the right side of the house, allows for a more lenient review of the proposed hardscaping.

And, finally, concerns regarding materials. To date, no material specifications have been provided. But the elevations do suggest that the proposed right side addition will have wood siding or similar. And wood shingles or similar are depicting in the gables, taking cues from the existing rear dormer. Due to the high degree of
visibility of the proposed right side addition, it is important that the proposed materials be compatible with, yet clearly differentiate from the historic house. And, Staff asks for the Commission's guidance regarding appropriate and compatible materials, with particular attention to the right side addition.

And, Staff recommends that the applicant make any revisions based upon the Commission's recommendations, or comments, and return for a second prelim, or if the Commission is largely supportive of this project, perhaps for a HAWP application. And, I can take any questions you might have for me.

MR. KIRWAN: Any questions for Staff? Yes, Commissioner Barnes?

MS. BARNES: Would you be kind enough to bring up some of your photos where there is the discussion of the walkway that would be helpful? So this is the walk from Cumberland?

MR. KYNE: That's correct, yes. And, just moving back around to the front. Let me actually back up. As I said, we could see perhaps why the applicant would propose such a feature. Currently at the front -- oh, here we go -- there's no real access directly from the front, from Surrey Street to the front entrance.

MS. BARNES: And there's no access from the
driveway to the front entrance?

MR. KYNE: No, there is not.

MS. BARNES: Thank you.

MR. KIRWAN: Any other questions for Staff?

MS. VOIGT: Michael, what about the -- you don't really show the setback. So, do we talk about you're not sure about whether the addition is, the existing addition is original?

MR. KYNE: I'm not sure whether the existing right side addition is original. To me it doesn't appear to be, not as much as the rear would appear to be original, or perhaps original. And if this is an original feature, I think that its clearly been, it's experienced alterations over the years. But, at this point, I'm not certain if this is original or not. But I do intend to do additional research looking at Sanborn maps, etcetera, trying to find those maps to see if this feature is shown.

MR. KIRWAN: Any other questions for Staff? All right, if not, we welcome the applicant to please come forward. We can give you seven minutes for your testimony.

MR. KYNE: And, Mr. Chairman, the applicants have brought their own presentation, so I'll pull that up.

MR. KIRWAN: Okay. Before each of you speak, please make sure your microphone is turned on and, you state your name for the record.
MR. LANDIS: Hello, my name is Chris Landis, and
I'm the architect of the project. And I'd like to introduce
my clients, Dan and Aviva Rosenthal. And I'd like to
introduce the project designer, Tahani Share. And I'd like
to make a few introductory comments, and then Tahani will
walk you through the drawings.

As you know, this is a historic home as a
secondary resource. I'd like to review just some of the
challenges of the site. I know you're concerns are specific
to historic, but this is a corner lot, and other lots to the
right of the property are a lot deeper. I think they're
four houses actually on this block, and they have obviously
much deeper lots and backyards. Whereas this lot has a side
yard. The lot coverage of the existing house is 12.8
percent of the allowable area, and with the changes we're
proposing, we would increase that to 14.5 percent. Thirty
percent is what would be allowable through zoning.

So, as you can see, we've tried to keep this as
modest as possible. We do have a very large heritage double
tree in the southern eastern corner of the lot, which we are
very interested in protecting, and will be working up in our
foundations accordingly. Also, a very important aspect of
this property is that there's no allowable parking on either
side, on both Surrey Street and Cumberland Avenue. And
also, the lot in the front of the house -- you do have to go
up about six feet. So it is quite a hike up to the front, as you'll see. And so, that pretty much concludes the challenges of the project. I'm going to let Tahani talk a little bit about the design.

MS. SHARE: Hello, thank you for the Commission, for the opportunity to present, and to the Staff, Michael, for all of your help. I believe the drawings we provided you with clearly show the existing and the proposed design. But I would like to go over some of these drawings to emphasis the intent behind the design and to illustrate some of the challenges that Chris just talked about, that the homeowners are faced with due to existing conditions, and to the configuration of the site.

So, if we look at the existing site plan, as you can see this is a generous lot in terms of its size. It's 11,900 square feet. This is a corner lot, so we have two front setbacks, one at 31 feet, and the other at 25 feet from Cumberland. We have the rear setback of almost 20 feet, not quite 20 feet, and a side setback of 69 feet. The front elevation shows the two and a half story Colonial Revival, and the house was built in 1933. But there is an existing addition that was built, I believe, in 1997 via resources listed as Somerset design guidelines.

If we look at the proposed site plan. So, in looking at the site plan, it's a side setting and the
existing house, and thinking about adding some additional living space, we thought that the best approach would be in making the best use of the existing footprint. And as you see with the proposed plans, we are interested in enlarging some of the interior spaces. And that also recognizing the existing non-historic addition at the right side of the house. But in doing that, we wanted to address one of the most pressing needs for the homeowners, which is the size of the garage. The garage is very small. It's only nine feet wide. It's barely useable for one car. And that's why we are proposing enlarging the addition, and on the basement at first floor level by six and a half feet.

On the second floor, we are staying within the existing footprint of the addition, and providing some additional space for the master bedroom. From the back we are filling in the corner and proposing and one-story addition. And from Cumberland Avenue, we are proposing a second story addition over the existing one-story. Staying on this plan, we are also proposing enlarging the driveway. We followed Somerset Design Guidelines with regard to driveways. They allow for a maximum 20 feet for a driveway on the property side, but the curb cut needs to stay at 10 feet, which is buffer zone.

We're also proposing new steps that provide access from Surrey Street to the front of the house. Currently
there is no access. You have to go up all the way to Cumberland and use the existing walkway to go through the front door. One last comment on this drawing is that, this is emphasizing what Chris just said. By reconfiguring the existing interior of the space there and utilizing the existing non-historic addition, we are only adding two percent additional lot coverage.

The elevations show the new massing. The existing garage is set back one foot from the front edge of the house. We are staying with that setback with our proposed enlargement of the first story and the second story addition. We are keeping the slope of the existing roof, but stepping down providing a lower roof height. And as you can see from the front elevation, the existing elevation of the historic house will remain completely intact. We're not proposing any changes to the material, even of the windows. Those are side windows, we plan on keeping them. Some of them need some minor repairs, which we plan on doing and some repainting.

The materials we're proposing. We're thinking about Hardie siding for the addition. We could also go with Hardie boards or panels. We are proposing architectural shingles for the roof, and on the gable ends we're proposing using shakes, same material that already exists on the rear, the dormer of the house. The windows will be casement
windows, clad casement windows, and also I like the idea of differentiating the addition from the existing house.

At the end we have a few pictures that we would like to show you. The first one is actually the existing driveway. So this is the existing driveway, and as you see the homeowner actually went and took a picture of the driveway. And the size of the driveway is exactly the same size of the garage. As you can see, it's really not, not useable even for one car. And the other pictures that we want to show you, we drove around Somerset and we looked at additions that have similar finishes to our case.

We understand that some of these are not in the historic district, but those additions exist and they sort of flaunt the character in the town. And you can see a variety of massing. Actually, if you look, some of them are under construction, and if you look at this house, it's actually older. It was built prior to the house that we are discussing, and you can see a large addition on the side face-fronting with big driveways.

We want to emphasize that the resource is a secondary resource, and I believe there is slightly different criteria of reviewing secondary resources with a slightly maybe lower level of scrutiny for secondary resources. The homeowners also took some pictures to show you different angles of looking at house, and specifically
the right side of the house, that is almost sometimes not
completely visible from the street. I conclude my
presentation, and if you have any questions for us, please
let us know. But also, the owners would like to address the
Commission with some additional things.

MS. ROSENTHAL: Hi, I'm Aviva Rosenthal. We're
the homeowners. We have two daughters. We're really
excited to move into Somerset. We're very excited to live
in that community. I think we just wanted to add as part of
the Somerset process, we actually managed to come and talk
to seven of our neighbors around the town, as part of the
Somerset process. It was great for us, we got a chance to
meet all of our neighbors, they all have young kids. But
the feedback we got was really great. And, I just want to
say that we spoke to them all. They were all very
comfortable with the plans.

We actually spent extra time with the neighbors
directly to the right and directly to the back, since they
were the ones that are going to be affected by the work,
especially the workmen, and especially to the house to the
right, making sure they understood the plan and how it would
affect them and their views. And there's nothing but
positivity. They were looking forward to the work. They
didn't have any comments that were negative at all. And, in
fact, the neighbors really commented to us that the
expansion of the driveway and the garage is really going to benefit all of the neighbors, because there is no parking on that corner for us at all. And the other neighbors, they can't even turn around in this driveway as they explained to us. So, they're looking forward to having hopefully a driveway that they also can turn around in, as they turn into the school.

And, we just wanted to say that, as we said, we feel that we've offered a very reasonable addition, it really helps us add bathrooms so that our daughters can have bathrooms, and that we can have kind of a modern bathroom and closet to our master, and opening up the first floor and just make it that much more livable. Otherwise, we really like the front of the house so we're not making any changes.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Thank you. I'm Dan Rosenthal. Good evening everyone. I don't really have much to add other than that I just want to say that we knew when we bought this house that it was an historic home. We respect what that means, and we're committed to having a home that is consistent with that at the end of this process. So, we appreciate your consideration.

MS. ROSENTHAL: Actually, sorry, he reminded me of one thing. In terms of consistency, I think one of the things you guys might recognize is that this is a brick colonial house. Actually not consistent totally with our
neighbors. Actually, all of our neighbors have mostly Queen Anne's or Victorians. That's part of what we're trying to do and make it actually seem slightly more in line with the rest of the houses. This is an oddity, actually, mostly, in this neighborhood. So, we wanted to have you take that into consideration.

MR. ROSENTHAL: So, I'll just say thank you again, and I'm happy to address any questions that you have.

MR. KIRWAN: All right, thank you, appreciate that. Any questions for the applicant? Yes, Commissioner Barnes?

MS. BARNES: I have a series of questions, and I'll just put them out there and you all can decide who best can answer them. There was mention made of a large double trunked tree, and we saw it in the Staff report. Is that a Tulip Poplar, do you know?

MR. LANDIS: It is.

MS. BARNES: Okay. Then, I wondered if you had given any thought, there's a dormer on the rear of the house at the present time, which presumably gives some useable space in the attic. And I wondered if you had given any thought to expanding that dormer in terms of creating more livable space?

MS. SHARE: We did at one point, but I think the whole idea with the addition was really adding exactly what
we needed. And in the attic, putting a full dormer was actually an additional space that we didn't need for one of the rooms, or useful for one room. So, the form would actually be completely different with just putting actual dormer and that continuing with the whole dormer. So it wasn't really completely useful to make a full dormer at the back of the house in terms of our plans, programming needs.

MS. BANNES: And, I'm a little confused as to what's proposed with the garage and the driveway. Are you hoping to have something more than a single car garage when this process is finished?

MS. SHARE: Yes. Actually, if you look at the size of the -- so the size of the existing garage is 9 feet. We're proposing an additional 6 feet, so that makes the interior of the garage, the width at approximately 14.6 and that is a, according to architecture standards, that's the size of a one car garage. The turning way, because Somerset town allows for 20 feet driveway. Might be, we might, and actually with the existing retaining walls, that might also be just enough for one car.

MS. BARNES: And, what were you proposing for the driveway? Some permeable surface or concrete?

MS. SHARE: Yes. Yes. So we do not go with concrete pavers with grass joints or go with animated permeable materials that would allow for that.
MS. BARNES: And, my final question, and I appreciate people's patience, is in the drawings that you've submitted, on the proposed right hand side addition, you have two windows on the ground floor, and then you retract a bit and the addition is smaller on the second floor. Did you ever give thought to just going straight up there and having --

MS. SHARE: Right. So, actually, again, it's, it's following the same theme of just adding, you know, what we need. The living space on the first floor would be actually an additional 14 feet to the existing footprint, including the existing addition. But on the second floor for the master bedroom, we really don't need all that space. We only needed some additional space to make the room slightly bigger, and in the other back we needed additional space for the bathroom which, I believe, is one of the concerns that the Staff had mentioned. But we can also work with moving the master bathroom addition to align with the existing enlargement of the bedroom so we can --

MS. BARNES: The reason I asked the question is, when I'm looking at the drawing on what is Circle 18 in my packet, it's a more complicated presentation than the existing house, because you have an addition that starts out, goes out, and then visible in this drawing is also something that buts out presumably where a bathroom is in
the back?

MS. SHARE: Right.

MS. BARNES: So there's a lot going on.

MS. SHARE: We understand that. I'm speaking as a design, from a design perspective. We thought that would actually be an asset to the design, making, basically, to break up the mass so we don't end up with a big square next to the existing house. So, we sort of played with some of the areas, but after we read the Staff report, if you think that that is creating complex roof lines, I'm trying to say that the second story gable can be eliminated, and we can go back to the more simple form on the second floor.

MS. BARNES: Thank you.

MR. KIRWAN: Any other questions for the applicant? Yes, Commissioner Arkin?

MR. ARKIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Have you had a chance to review the Staff report?

MS. SHARE: Yes, we have.

MR. ARKIN: The Staff made a number of comments, or raised issues about what they considered a number of concerns. And I was wondering if you could address the concerns --

MS. SHARE: Yes.

MR. ARKIN: -- that Staff has raised?

MS. SHARE: Right. So, and actually we can
address the Staff concerns and the Staff's, you know, alternative that they proposed. And, so again, in terms of the massing and the rooflines, I talked about the second gable that is maybe being -- and this is something that we also talked to Michael about when we met -- that the second gable, if you think it is creating a complex roofline, we can eliminate that. We can stop this comment by eliminating that gable line. But in terms of the massing, we believe that actually, if you look at the dimensions of what we are proposing, it's really in terms of scale. It's really very small. The second story addition is barley 9 feet wide. And the first floor, the overall will be 16 feet. That's almost less than half of the existing house.

So, the scale, we believe that it's actually in harmony with the existing house, and being recessed to the back with the lower ridge is actually looking like a subordinate to the existing house, which is what the design guidelines are directing us to do. But, if you have other recommendations for us, or other comments to us, we will listen to them.

MR. ARKIN: Well, I wonder if you could describe in some detail the materials you plan to use on the addition? I'm looking primarily at the right side addition right now. Why you've chosen those materials and why you've chosen to add casement windows where the other windows, I
guess, are eight over eight windows, why you have chosen to adopt a different form for the windows? And why you are deviating from the Colonial Revival aspects of the original house?

MS. SHARE: So with regard to the windows, this is one detail that we thought that would actually help in differentiating the addition from the existing house. We are going with the same size windows in terms of sill heights and head heights, but the type of windows are different, and the colors of the windows will also be different. With regard to the materials we're proposing, we are thinking about Hardie siding, or we can potentially go with Hardie boards or panels on the front and side additions. The roofing would be the architectural shingles, because the existing roof is slate, so architectural shingles sort of go in harmony with the existing slate roof.

MR. ARKIN: You have mentioned distinguishing the old from the new, I wonder if you would talk about how you feel this addition is compatible with the historic resource?

MS. SHARE: Yeah. Well, first of all, the scale of the addition, I believe it's in harmony with the existing house, and at the same time it is still looking as a subordinate to the existing house, it's an attachment to the existing house. We are matching the slope of the roof. We are staying within the setback of the existing garage. And,
the massing is also a way of making the addition look
subordinate to the existing house.

MR. ARKIN: Thank you.

MR. KIRWAN: Commissioner Heiler, do you have a
question?

MS. HEILER: Yes, I have a question. The Staff
had noted the possibility of considering a detached garage
to avoid all these things, and the possibility that that
would raise zoning issues. Have you looked into whether it
would and what the zoning situation would be?

MS. SHARE: Yeah, and actually, it's not just the
zoning requirements, it's also the grade of the site. The
site is elevated by an average grade of almost six feet.
So, and that would actually mean digging another, you know,
basement level garage that might not work, and actually, I
don't think an additional curb cut to this existing -- and
another thing is that part of everything originally in
minimizing the footprint is also to keep the open space,
which is a main characteristic of houses in Somerset town.
So we didn't want to add a second story that would disturb
the historic setting and the natural setting on the side
setback. Because that's the only, the reason for that.

MR. LANDIS: And I'll add something to that. We
did an EBL survey, and the garage would need to be almost
like in the middle of their yard, so that you'd have a large
driveway going way back, and it would really destroy the whole side yard.

MS. ROSENTHAL: I just want add, as the homeowner, that side yard is quite beautiful. Really overgrown plants. And so, we want to keep as much of that beautiful existing side yard as possible.

MR. KIRWAN: Any other questions for the applicant? Commissioner Sutton?

MR. SUTTON: Had you considered expanding perhaps to the rear, a larger area to the rear as a possibility?

MS. SHARE: Actually, yeah. In the first schematic phase of the design, we did explore that option. But if you look at, especially the second floor plan, actually the rooms and the floor plans don't need an addition from that side. It's already a long, you know, room. The room is really tight in its width, and the, need is to add from that side to make the room useable. We did the addition at the back and it just did not work with the existing floor plan, and did not provide the homeowners with their daily needs.

MR. KIRWAN: All right, any other questions for the applicants? If not, then we will move into our deliberations and share our thoughts on your proposal tonight. If you could please turn off your microphones, and we will get started. I'll just go ahead and kick things
off. I think in general I'm okay with the proposed expansion of this house. I think given the characteristics and the challenges of a corner lot, I think expanding the side addition makes a lot of sense. I think expanding on that side does. I have hesitations about currently the way it's rendered and the massing. I mean, I think it kind of needs to go back to the drawing board with regard to the way it's currently designed.

I've have concerns about adding on to the existing one-story wing on the rear of the house. Particularly adding on to it so close to Cumberland. Cumberland being a very important road in the historic district. That's altering that side corner of the house pretty dramatically to put a second story addition on top of that one-story wing that appears to be original to the house. So, I would not support adding on to it, at least in that location, and most likely not adding onto it at all on the rear.

So, I think really the focus ought to be to the side and the side yard of the house. My concerns about the current design of it and the massing are, it's not taking enough clues from the existing resource. It seems overly complex. It's too busy. It has conditions, for instance, what we see right here on the screen at Circle 18, I think the condition with the second story portion of that addition sort of coming down on top of that window on the one story
feels a little unsettling. When you look at the proposed
side elevation, I think it too, is way too complex with the
roof massing and the forms we see rendered there.

I think if you go back to Circle 13 in the Staff
report, and you look at how the previous or some owner prior
to them, enclosed what was likely a screen porch over the
garage. And they enclosed it into a garden room to look out
onto that very nice side yard that you have on the property.
They did a very nice subtle job with the way they handled
the massing. They kept the front corner of the existing
screen porch, most likely. And then, where they bumped it
out was symmetrical to the rear facade of the house. And
then returned it back to the original corner. And, I think
you ought to take some clues to how they handled that side
yard. It's very simple the way the did that sunroom
addition. It works very well with the symmetry of that side
wing of the house, and I think some version of that as a
two-story addition could be successful in that side yard.

I don't think you necessarily have to adhere to
the original front corner of that screened porch and garage.
I'd be willing to maybe accept a 12-foot wide garage, or you
know, maybe up to a 14-foot garage. But I am concerned
about introducing a much larger driveway in this district.
I think that sort of makes it look like a house that's in,
further out in the suburbs somewhere where you have this
very wide driveway on this very nice historic street in
Somerset. So I'm not supportive of the driveway as wide as
it's proposed. I think it ought to be a narrower driveway.
But I do agree with you that the current garage is too
narrow, and you should be allowed to do something there to
make it more functional in contemporary times. So, those
are my thoughts in a nutshell. I'll turn it over to any
other commissioner that would like to speak next.

MS. VOIGT: Yeah, I agree with the Chairman in
terms of the complexity of the addition. I think that this
is a beautiful house, and I think that you probably need to
have an addition. But, I do think that looking at it from
the front, and which that's primarily our concern, it is
complex with all the different roofs.

So, I support an addition. I just think that if
you can make it more simple, that would be great. And, I
also agree with the driveway width. I think that that to,
it just, and it could be, I'm looking at 20, Circle 20.
And, you know, it could be the way that that's rendered, but
it does look, in the picture here, kind of vacuous. So, and
I think that the front stairs as well, I think that's a
great idea. I understand, you know, you want a path to your
front door. But I think in this plan, in this drawing, they
look too heavy. So it's hard for me to tell what material
they are. But they just seem to take away, again, from the
house.

So, I think you're on the right track. The Commissioner here has stated it very well. But, if you could just lighten everything up, I think that would be great.

MS. HEILER: I also think that the driveway is just too wide. That 20 feet is very wide, even though it's legal in that area. It will take away from the house. I think one of the biggest problems with this addition is that everything looks asymmetrical because it's narrower at the top. The way you have a single window on the second floor, two on the bottom, and then centered peculiarly between them is the garage door. If the driveway is made narrower, then I can imagine an addition that is almost that wide. And, as Commissioner Kirwan suggested, the existing addition, which gets extra space by a bump up part way down it accomplishes a lot without making the front of that addition much wider.

I think your idea to put the front steps in is, you know, an obvious one that needs, definitely needs front stairs. But all of the comments about the complexity of this, which just fights the simplicity of this Colonial Revival design, I think is a problem. You can probably get enough space just by following the footprint, or a little bit larger than the footprint of the existing addition, but adding a second floor.
MS. BARNES: As you know, the general recommendation is that additions should be to the rear. We understand that this situation of these corners, and this house makes an addition to the side a much better option to give them the space they need, and not run up against the lines. I would be very supportive of the proposed 16 foot wide addition provided it was simplified. You've suggested that you didn't need the additional space on the second floor. I think you'd find very quickly that it was useful. But I think the recommendation of the Chair of perhaps capturing additional space by bumping out somewhere midway along the side of the addition would be advisable.

I am supportive of the comments that have been made about the width of the driveway. I think people understand you need a wider driveway. But I think the sense is it needs to be discreetly wider. I also would like to associate myself with the Chair's comment about the addition at the back of the house on the second floor. I understand the desire there is to acquire another bathroom for one of the upstairs bedrooms, and it may revolve around reconfiguring the laundry or something. But, I think that the comment about adding the second floor addition in the back is one that I am supportive of, that it does not work well when you have a busy street where that's quite visible.

And, with regard to the front steps, I understand
the desire for that. And I would just urge you to tread lightly when you are doing those.

MR. KIRWAN: Commissioner Arkin?

MR. ARKIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am in agreement in large part with the prior comments that were made by the previous commissioners, particular with regard to the rear addition, and the driveway, and also the front steps. I do think the front steps should be lighter, the lighter touch would be desirable. My major concern though is with taking what is right now an excellent example of the Colonial Revival architecture in its symmetry and its form and massing, and making the entire house with the additions quite asymmetrical. All of the additions appear to be asymmetrical, and because of the asymmetry, they have a tendency to overwhelm the original massing.

I recognize that the additions are much smaller than the original massing, but I think the asymmetry and the change in materials the way you've illustrated them, really draws attention to the addition. Similarly, I don't see, I believe it was the Chairman who suggested that more cues should be taken from the original design in designing your addition, and I think that that suggestion is an excellent one. And, I think unless you have a statement you want to make of some sort with your addition, I don't really understand the change in form and orientation with the
windows in the addition.

The roof shape, for example, on the -- I'm looking at the Circle 18 at the front elevation -- the roof shape on the addition in transitioning from first to second floor doesn't seem to have any logic to it. And, I think it deserves a second look. I can understand the need that has been stated for a wider driveway, but I do think what you're proposing is too wide, too intrusive.

I do think that the major focus of this should be on an addition to the side. And I think by looking at something much simpler with the side addition, you might be able to achieve many of your goals. If you want to look at a rear addition, I'm not opposed to it, but I think taking a fresh look to it would be either in addition to a side addition, or replacing the side addition. I think you should take another look at that option. Thank you.

MR. KIRWAN: Okay. Well, I think you heard fairly consistent comments from all of the Commissioners this evening. So, we do look forward to seeing you come back. I probably would recommend another preliminary just so we can make sure all the comments we've made have been addressed and before you come in for a HAWP. But I'll leave that for you and Staff to discuss, and decide how best to proceed. And, thank you for coming in tonight.

MS. SHARE: Thank you.