

Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	6801 Westmoreland Ave.	Meeting Date:	02/22/17
Resource:	Contributing Resource Takoma Park Historic District	Report Date:	02/15/17
Applicant:	Mauricio Mateos	Public Notice:	02/08/17
Review:	Preliminary Review	Tax Credit:	n/a
Case Number:	n/a	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
Proposal:	Rear addition, windows, siding, and other changes		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the applicants make any revisions based on the HPC's recommendations and return for a second preliminary consultation.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing to the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Colonial Revival
DATE: c.1915-25

The subject property is a wood-frame aluminum-sided one-and-a-half story Craftsman bungalow with a gable-front roof and gabled front porch supported by two battered wood columns. There are three Craftsman-style wood brackets supporting the roof overhang. The front windows are replacement vinyl one-over-one sash windows. The front door also appears to be a replacement.

BACKGROUND

This building was the subject of case 37/03-17A which was denied by the HPC at the January 11, 2016 meeting. The proposal before us is significantly revised design submitted for preliminary review.

PROPOSAL

The current proposal calls for:

- The construction of a large side gable rear addition
- Replacement windows
- Siding replacement

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A Historic Resources Preservation

(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

(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.

(d) In the case of an application for work on an historic resource located within an historic district, the commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historical or design significance or for plans involving new construction, unless such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding historic resources or would impair the character of the historic district. (Ord. No. 9-4, § 1; Ord. No. 11-59.)

Takoma Park Historic District 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:

All exterior alterations, including those to architectural features and details, should be generally consistent with the predominant architectural style and period of the resource and should preserve the predominant architectural features of the resource; exact replication of existing details and features is, however, not required

Minor alterations to areas that do not directly front on a public right-of-way such as vents, metal stovepipes, 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

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

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

Second story additions or expansions should be generally consistent with the predominant architectural style and period of the resource (although structures that have been historically single story can be expanded) and should be appropriate to the surrounding streetscape in terms of scale and massing

Alterations to features that are not visible from the public right-of-way should be allowed as a matter of course

All changes and additions should respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space.

STAFF DISCUSSION

Staff finds that the current proposal is a significant revision from the proposal submitted for the HPC meeting on January 11, 2017. The design revision goes a long way toward reinforcing and “continu[ing] existing streetscape, landscape, and building patterns rather than to impair the character of the district,” however, Staff request input from the HPC regarding several elements.

The applicant has provided what amounts to a conceptual illustration, with a minimal amount of detail, which limits Staff’s ability to offer detailed analysis of the project. Staff’s discussion of specific elements of the proposal follows.

Building Addition and Form

The applicant's proposal will largely retain the historic form of 6801 Westmoreland Ave. The proposal calls for the construction of a side-gable addition to the rear with a sunroom topped by a shed roof off the back of side gable addition. This general form is not uncommon. However, the proposal would have the effect of more than doubling the building footprint (this historic core of the house is 31' deep × 24' wide, and the addition is 30' deep × 24' wide with an additional 10' of depth for the porch).

- In this instance does the HPC prefer a one-story addition with a larger footprint or does it feel that a two-story addition with a smaller footprint would be more appropriate for the surrounding district?

The side gable roof on the addition appears to have a taller ridgeline than the historic building. As the Design Guidelines address the potential of second floor additions, the Commission could find that it would be acceptable to have a taller addition at the rear is the proposed side gable addition is otherwise compatible with the criteria for approval ("Second story additions or expansions should be generally consistent with the predominant architectural style and period of the resource...").

- What additional information does the HPC need to determine if the roof pitch and height covering the addition are appropriate?

The renderings also show a reconfigured front porch. The porch entrance has been moved from a side-loading to a front-loading porch. This change will not have a significant impact on how the building interacts with the streetscape and generally respects the setting of the house. Additionally, many of the porches in neighboring houses have front steps. The renderings provided do show a change in the pitch of the roof and the coverage of the front porch. If accurate, the renderings show that the historic wood brackets – one of the few remaining historic elements – would be removed to accommodate the new porch roof. While reviewing changes to 'contributing' resources are to focus on the impact to the streetscape and surrounding district, this proposal would alter one of the few historic features and would contravene 24A-8(b)(1). Staff recommends that, consistent with this criterion for approval, the form and historic materials found in the porch should be retained in a revised design and seeks the Commission's guidance on the front step reorientation and alterations to the wood brackets and porch roof.

- Is it appropriate to reorient the front steps and replace a concrete element with wood construction?

Construction Materials

The building is currently clad in vinyl siding. The condition of any historic wood siding below has not been documented or identified. Staff's assessment of the vinyl siding is that it will need to be removed and replaced. Based on the information submitted for this preliminary review, Staff cannot identify the replacement proposed, however, the previous application called for the installation of Hardi siding throughout. It may be permissible to replace the siding per 28A-8(b)(1) - (3) and in the Takoma Park Historic District Design Guidelines ("Some non-original building materials may be acceptable on a case-by-case basis"), but more information is

necessary for staff to make a recommendation.

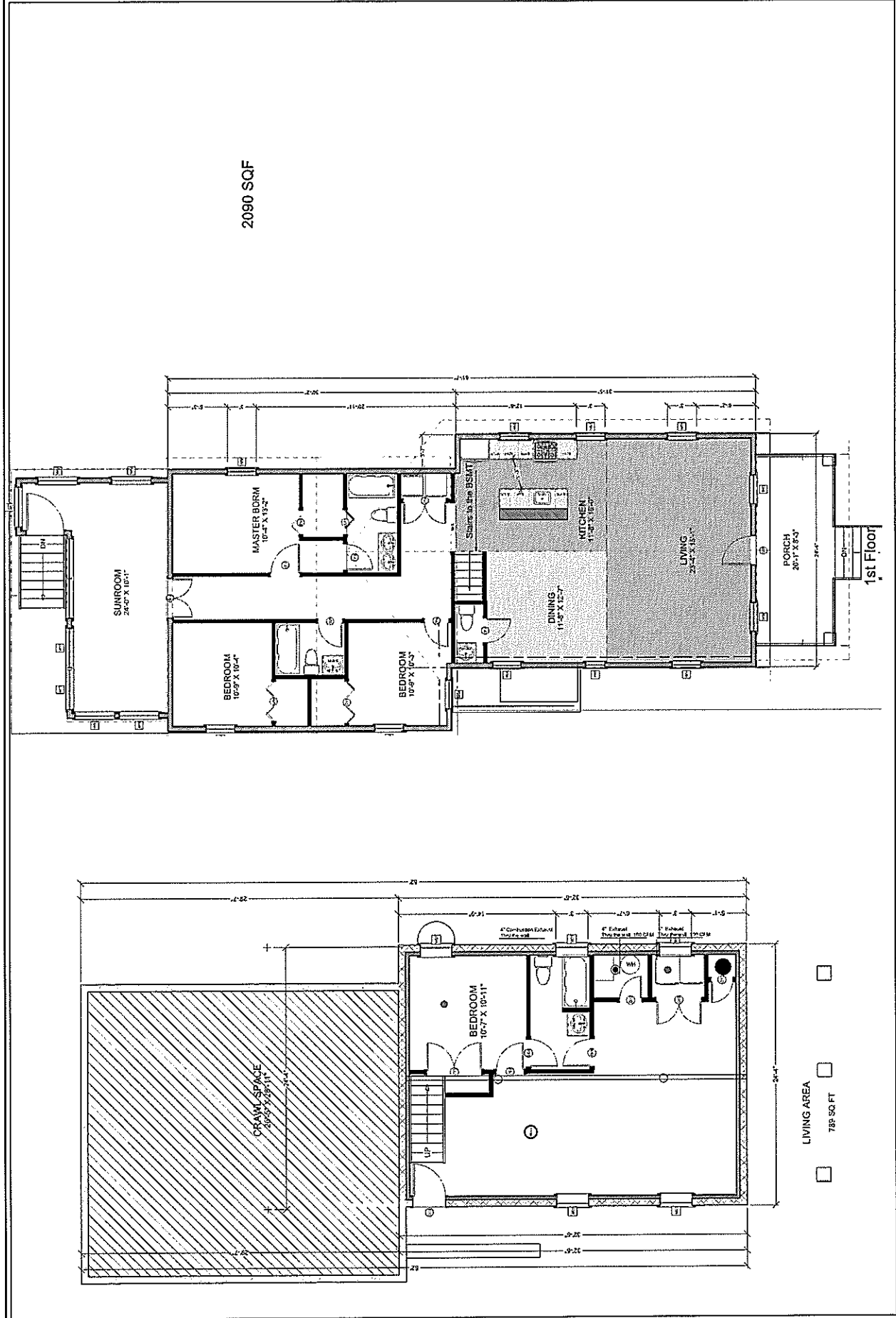
- What level of documentation does the HPC require to determine that the historic wood siding may be removed from the historic core of the house?
- Can the HPC provide guidance on the appropriate materials for both the historic core of the house and the associated additions?

There are no historic windows remaining at 6801 Westmoreland Ave. The images provided in the attached rendering show one-over-one sash windows. The simple details found on the house suggest that this is an appropriate configuration for the windows. Staff does recommend that the proposal does maintain the pattern and size of the historic window openings when installing replacement windows.

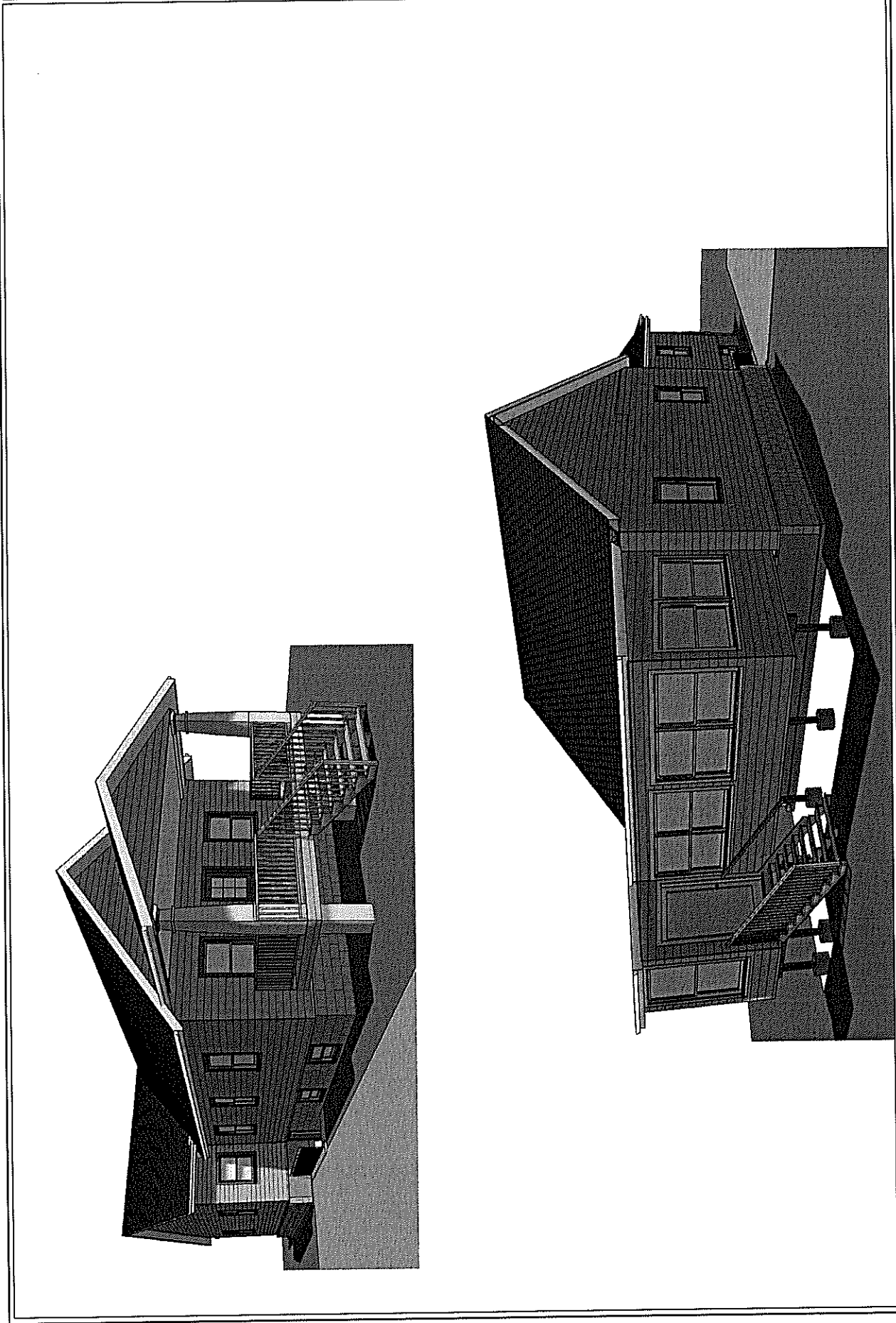
- What is the preferred material and configuration for replacement windows on the historic core of the building?
- What is the preferred material and configuration for windows in the addition?

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that applicant makes revisions based on the recommendations of the HPC and returns for a second preliminary review.



SHEET TITLE			PROJECT DESCRIPTION			DRAWINGS PROVIDED BY:		DATE:	T/30/11	SCALE:	SHEET:
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6801 West moreland			CDC			GDC					A-2



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Address:	6801 Westmoreland Ave., Takoma Park	Meeting Date:	01/11/17
Applicant:	MDS Investments, LLC	Report Date:	01/04/17
Resource:	Contributing Resource Takoma Park Historic District	Public Notice:	12/28/16
Review:	HAWP	Tax Credit:	n/a
Case Number:	37/03-17A	Staff:	Dan Bruechert

PROPOSAL: Addition and other alterations

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends HPC **deny** the HA WP application.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Staff has reached out to the applicant via e-mail and voice mail on 12/22/16 and again 01/03/17 to discuss this application and proposed revisions and to date has not received a response. Several elements in the application do not provide sufficient information for staff to fully evaluate the proposal. However, on the whole the proposal appears to fail to meet the guidance in both County Code and the Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing to the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Craftsman
DATE: c. 1915-25

The subject property is a wood-frame aluminum-sided one-and-a-half story Craftsman bungalow with a gable-front roof and gabled front porch supported by two battered wood columns. There are three Craftsman-style wood brackets supporting the roof overhang. The front windows are replacement vinyl one-over-one sash windows. The front door also appears to be a replacement.

PROPOSAL

The current proposal calls for:

- Removing the aluminum siding and replacing with Hardiplank,
- Removing the vinyl windows and replacing with wood clad in a variety of configurations,
- Changing the configuration on the first story by moving the door and window arrangement,
- Constructing a two-story addition at the rear (24'3" x 23'2"), and
- Removing the roof and constructing a second story addition above the historic walls.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

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(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

(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.

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

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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

Second story additions or expansions should be generally consistent with the predominant architectural style and period of the resource (although structures that have been historically single story can be expanded) and should be appropriate to the surrounding streetscape in terms of scale and massing

Alterations to features that are not visible from the public right-of-way should be allowed as a matter of course

All changes and additions should respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space.

STAFF DISCUSSION

Staff finds that in regard to the elements of this project that are visible from the right-of-way, this project will have a significant detrimental impact on the existing streetscape and building patterns, thereby impairing the character of the district contrary to the guideline's charge that projects "act to reinforce and continue existing streetscape, landscape, and building patterns rather than to impair the character of the district."

Staff's discussion of specific elements of the proposal follows.

Replacement Siding

The applicant's proposal to remove the non-historic aluminum siding and replace it with Hardiplank siding may be consistent with the guidelines in both 28A(b)(1)-(3) and in the Takoma Park Historic District Design Guidelines. However, the applicant has not provided information to document the condition of any historic siding behind the aluminum to demonstrate that it has deteriorated. Design Guidelines discourage replacing original building materials that are in good condition with artificial siding. Because the applicant has not provided sufficient information to adequately evaluate this proposal Staff cannot make a recommendation regarding the proposal to remove the aluminum and replace it with Hardiplank. Given the information in the record, the Commission may find that this work item is incompatible with guidance on replacement materials and inconsistent with the criteria for approval.

Replacement Windows

The applicant's proposal to remove the non-historic vinyl windows and replace them with wood clad windows does not provide enough information to adequately make a determination on the appropriateness of this proposal. The information provided only shows that the windows on the first floor and the side will be six-over-six sash windows. Many of the windows on the second floor and right-side elevation will be one-over-one sash. The application does not include any information regarding the window frame construction or the muntin pattern.

While Staff is able to support the removal of the non-historic vinyl windows, because the

applicant has not been responsive to repeated request for additional information, Staff cannot evaluate replacement windows and cannot provide further details on this feature. Given the information in the record, the Commission may find that this work item is incompatible with guidance on replacement materials and inconsistent with the criteria for approval.

Front Elevation Re-Configuration

The proposal for the front elevation includes reconfiguring the front elevation from a single door with windows to either side to paired French doors with a set of paired windows (please note that the “existing elevation” does not adequately show the existing conditions, see the photographs accompanying the application). Additionally, the proposal calls for removing the two battered porch column and replacing them with three square columns.

6801 Westmoreland Ave. has few remaining historic features. In addition to the building form, the building appears to retain its historic openings in both size and location. Reconfiguring the front elevation will substantially alter the exterior features of the building contra Chapter 28A(b)(1). As the specific details for the doors and windows was not included, it is not possible to tell if the proposed replacement doors and windows are consistent with the predominant style of the house or if they create an incongruent appearance which runs counter to the Design Guidelines.

Staff does not believe that the reconfiguration of the front elevation is appropriate under the guidance provided by County Code and Design guidelines, but additionally, cannot fully evaluate the proposal without full information regarding the proposed replacement windows and doors. Staff recommends that the Commission find that this work element is inconsistent with the criteria for approval.

Rear Two-Story Addition

Additions to the rear of historic houses within the District is generally the preferred location. When additions are added to the rear often attempts are made to ensure that the visibility of the new construction is minimized in some way. This proposal makes the proposed addition more visible from the public right-of-way by offsetting the new construction to the left by several feet, so it will be more visible from the street.

As this new rear addition is not possible without the construction at the front of the house, this proposal should be evaluated as part of the larger second story addition.

Second Story Addition

The proposal calls for removing the roof and adding a second story from the front wall plane to the rear of the house and installing a new front-gable roof. The height of the house will from its historic 19’ (nineteen feet) to 29’8” (twenty-nine feet, eight inches). In addition to the height, the massing of the building will change as the second story overhangs the historic wall on the left (northwest) side of the house.

Adding a second story, 6801 Westmoreland will be able to go from a small one or two-bedroom space (plans are incomplete on the existing condition of the second floor) to a three bedroom, three bathroom full second story. This second story will dramatically change the appearance of the house and change its historic character which contravenes 28A(b)(2). By placing the addition at the front wall plane, the addition will also change how the house interacts with the surrounding district. The majority of houses on this block of Westmoreland are one or one-and-a-half stories in height and adding ten feet to this building will change the patterns of open space on the block and in the surrounding district. This does not respect the Design Guideline requirement that, “second story additions or expansions should be... appropriate to the surrounding streetscape in terms of scale and massing.” The proposed construction is not in keeping with either the scale or massing.

This proposal does not attempt to minimize its appearance and is contrary to the Design Guidelines which state, “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...” The applicant has not attempted to

make the new construction less visible from the surrounding district. By creating a second-story overhang on the left side the proposed addition is actually *more* visible and appears more massive than if the addition was limited to the historic wall planes of the house.

Finally, this proposal seems to run counter to one of the guiding principles for all work in the District for failing to assure “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.” Staff finds that this element of the scope of work is inconsistent with the criteria for approval.

In evaluating this project based on the information provided by the applicant and having determined that this project is incompatible with the Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines as outlined above, Staff recommends that the Commission make findings of facts establishing the project’s incompatibility with the Guidelines, and as a result, find that the project is inappropriate, inconsistent with or detrimental to the preservation, enhancement or ultimate protection of this resource located within the Takoma Park Historic District and to the purpose of the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

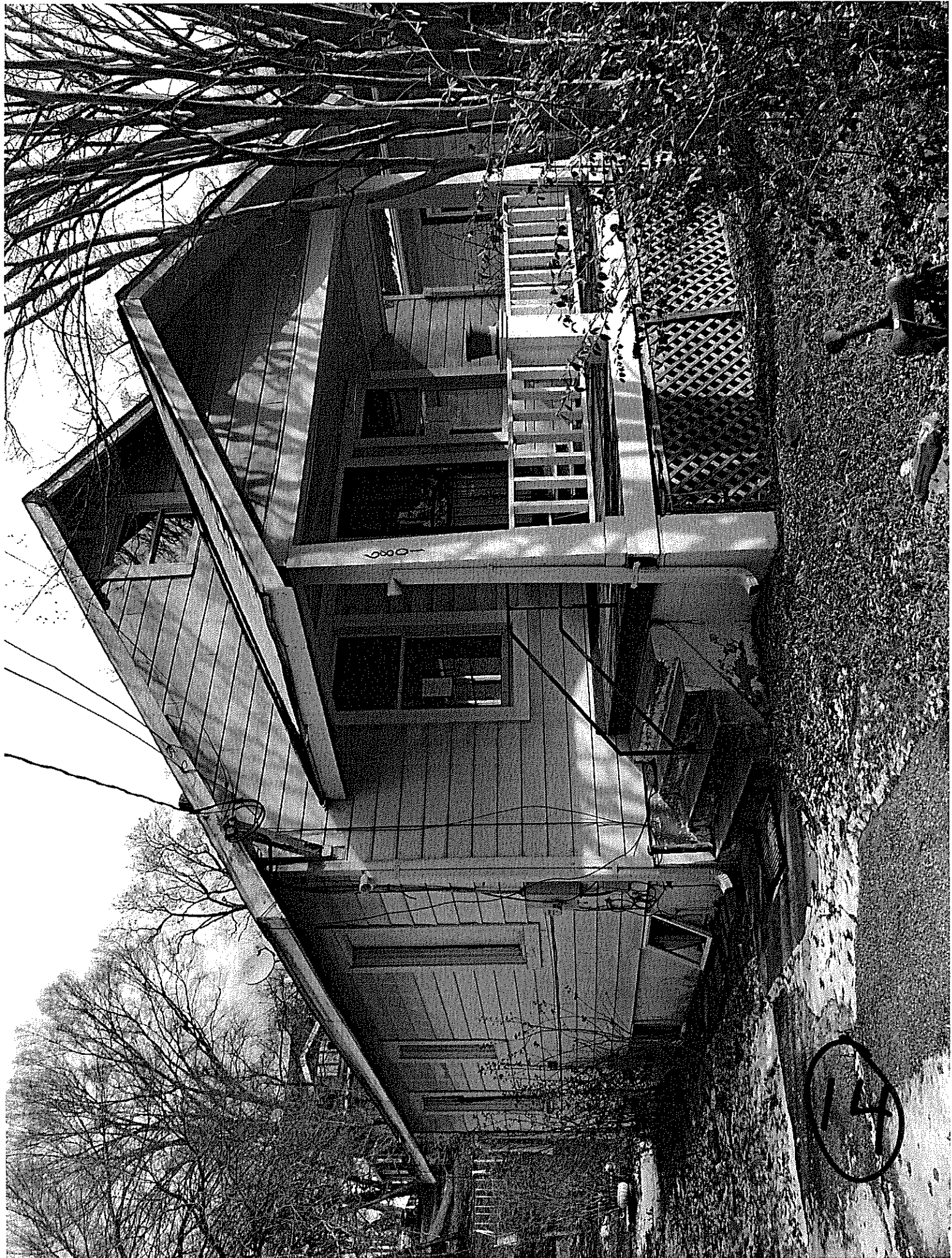
STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Commission **deny** the HAWP application finding that the HAWP application meets the requirements of Chapter 24A-8(a),

(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.



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