

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	7127 Sycamore Ave., Takoma Park	Meeting Date:	5/23/18
Resource:	Contributing Resource Takoma Park Historic District	Report Date:	5/16/18
Applicant:	Lyssia Merriman	Public Notice:	5/9/18
Review:	HAWP	Tax Credit:	n/a
Case Number:	37/03-18NN	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
Proposal:	Site Wall Construction		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the HPC **approve** the HAWP application.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing to the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Colonial Revival
DATE: c.1920

The subject property is a two-story foursquare with substitute siding, and a pyramidal roof with a hipped dormer in the front. The front yard gently slopes up from the public right-of-way to the house.

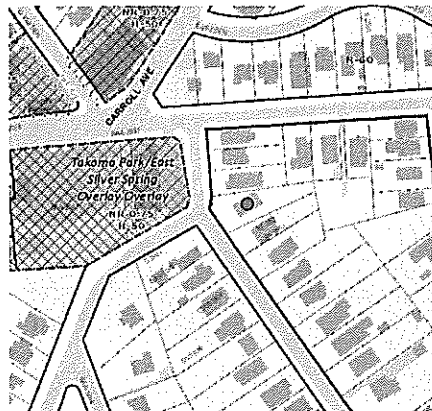


Figure 1: 7127 Sycamore Ave.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes construct a stone site wall at the front edge of the front yard for approximately 50' (fifty linear feet).

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

When reviewing alterations and new construction within the Takoma Park Historic District several documents are to be utilized as guidelines to assist the Commission in developing their decision. These documents include the historic preservation review guidelines in the approved and adopted amendment for the Takoma Park Historic District (*Guidelines*), Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (*Chapter 24A*), and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (*Standards*). The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

Takoma Park Historic District Design Guidelines

There are two very general, broad planning and design concepts which apply to all categories. These are:

The design review emphasis will be restricted to changes that are at all visible from the public right-of-way, irrespective of landscaping or vegetation (it is expected that the majority of new additions will be reviewed for their impact on the overall district), and,

The importance of assuring that additions and other changes to existing structures act to reinforce and continue existing streetscape, landscape, and building patterns rather than to impair the character of the district.

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:

Alterations to features that are not visible at all 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.

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

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, space and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportions, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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 proposes to construct an 18" (eighteen inch) tall stone site wall at the sidewalk edge of the front yard. Staff finds that this is consistent with the surrounding district and supports its approval.

Currently, the lot at 7127 Sycamore Ave. slopes gently down toward the sidewalk. This had led to some erosion of the front yard and encroachment onto the sidewalk. In order to address this issue, the applicant proposes to construct an 18" (eighteen inch) tall site wall from the front concrete steps to the left (north) property boundary. The wall will be constructed out of Western Maryland stone and will have a 2" flagstone cap. The wall will be constructed one foot below grade and be backfilled with gravel to allow for proper drainage. The proposed wall will match the design of Fig. 2 but will be substantially lower at the subject property.



Figure 2: 7112 Holly Ave. retaining wall in the materials and design proposed for the subject property (Image provided by applicant).

Staff finds that this site wall is consistent with what has been approved throughout the district as there are several other site walls on this block of Sycamore Ave. in varying designs that have been approved by the HPC. This proposal is appropriate for the environmental setting of the surrounding district (per the *Guidelines*) and does not significantly alter the features or the historic character of the historic resources. Staff supports approval of this HAWP.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the HPC **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.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

301/563-3400

APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: lyssia7@gmail.com Contact Person: Lyssia Merriman Daytime Phone No.: 617-680-7448

Tax Account No.:

Name of Property Owner: Lyssia Merriman Daytime Phone No.:

Address: 7127 Sycamore Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912

Contractor: Phone No.:

Contractor Registration No.:

Agent for Owner: Daytime Phone No.:

LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE

House Number: 7127 Street: Sycamore Ave Town/City: Takoma Park Nearest Cross Street: Columbia

PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMIT ACTION AND USE

- 1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE: Construct, Extend, Alter/Renovate, Move, Install, Wreck/Raze, Revision, Repair, Reversible, A/C, Slab, Room Addition, Porch, Deck, Shed, Solar, Fireplace, Woodburning Stove, Single Family, Fence/Wall, Other.

1B. Construction cost estimate: \$

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

PART TWO: COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTEND/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: COMPLETE ONLY FOR FENCE/RETAINING WALL

3A. Height: 12-18 inches. 3B. Indicate whether the fence or retaining wall is to be constructed on one of the following locations: On party line/property line, Entirely on land of owner, On public right of way/assessment.

I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the foregoing application, that the application is correct, and that the construction will comply with plans approved by all agencies listed and I hereby acknowledge and accept this to be a condition for the issuance of this permit.

Signature of owner or authorized agent: [Signature] Date: [Date]

Approved: For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission

Disapproved: Signature: Date:

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

236018

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**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:

front soil slope into sidewalk. Currently filled with weeds.

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

Add a short stone wall along the property to define the sidewalk and keep plants from growing into sidewalk. Materials will be tan slate, or field stone of solid capstone that is flat. Plant front with perennials.

12-18"

2. **SITE PLAN**

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

- the scale, north arrow, and date;
- dimensions of all existing and proposed structures; and
- 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.

- 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.
- 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**

- 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.
- 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**

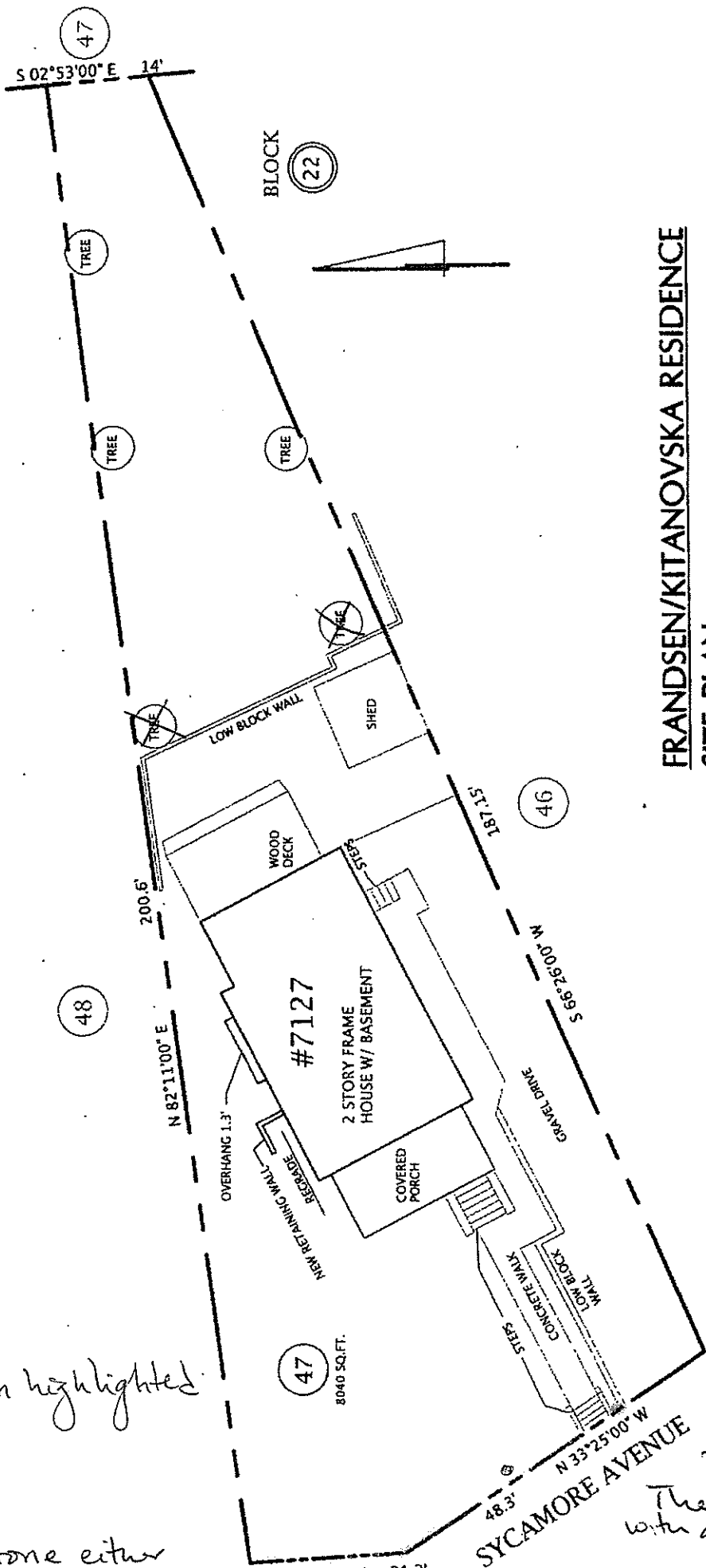
For ALL projects, provide an accurate list of adjacent and confronting property owners (not tenants), including names, addresses, and zip codes. This list should include the owners of all lots or parcels which adjoin the parcel in question, as well as the owner(s) of lot(s) or parcel(s) which lie directly across the street/highway from the parcel in question.

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HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFYING
[Owner, Owner's Agent, Adjacent and Confronting Property Owners]

Owner's mailing address	Owner's Agent's mailing address
7127 Sycamore Ave. Takoma Park MD 20912	Same
Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses	
Christine Ruf. 7125 Sycamore Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912	Batt Peterson 7129 Sycamore Ave.
Stina Oakes 7124 Sycamore Ave	

418290



FRANSEN/KITANOVSKA RESIDENCE
SITE PLAN
 SCALE 1" = 20'

APPROVED
 Montgomery County
 Historic Preservation Commission
Michelle Clark
 5/11/06

INFORMATION BASED ON LOT LOCATION SURVEY BY
 LANDTECH ASSOCIATES, INC., 1999

Wall on highlighted area
 h = 18"
 w = 12"
 Material: stone either
 PA Fieldstone or slate

Note: there is a WSSC water cap on property near sidewalk. The wall would go across with ample room

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Bruechert, Dan

From: Lyssia <lyssia7@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 10, 2018 10:47 AM
To: Bruechert, Dan
Subject: Re: 7127 Sycamore Ave. - Historic Area Work Permit

Hi Dan,

Here are some photos of a much larger wall but done by the same person and with similar stone. Western Maryland stone. We would use a darker gray with some lighter stones mixed in because our house is blue with darker blue shutters. It will have a 2" thermal flagstone cap. The wall will go a foot down with gravel filled in the back and weeping holes.

Please let me know if you need any more information. Again the wall would go along the entire front yard of the property and be 18" tall and 12" wide. This is to be done to stop erosion - deer currently run up and push the dirt down into the sidewalk and to retain nicely planted perennials. Our goal is to make it easier for our neighbors to walk on the sidewalk and keep things safer.

I put this in my application but also want to reiterate that there is a WSSC water cap which I had located because the previous owner planted over it. I marked it and the wall will go around that to make it clear and accessible.

Lyssia





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On May 8, 2018, at 4:39 PM, Bruechert, Dan <Dan.Bruechert@montgomeryplanning.org> wrote:

Great! Thanks for the update and please keep me posted.

Dan

From: Lyssia <lyssia7@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, May 08, 2018 4:35 PM

To: Bruechert, Dan <Dan.Bruechert@montgomeryplanning.org>

Subject: Re: 7127 Sycamore Ave. - Historic Area Work Permit

Hi Dan, I am meeting with a contractor tomorrow morning and will email you those details. I am trying to weigh what I like and want and what we can afford.

Thank you,
Lyssia

Sent from my iPhone

On May 8, 2018, at 4:20 PM, Bruechert, Dan <Dan.Bruechert@montgomeryplanning.org> wrote: