MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address: 7418 Maple Ave., Takoma Park  Meeting Date: 5/23/18
Resource: Non-Contributing Resource  Report Date: 5/18/18
Takoma Park Historic District
Applicant: Jeff and Amber Bell  Public Notice: 5/11/18
Review: HAWP  Tax Credit: N/A
Case Number: 37/03-1800  Staff: Dan Bruechert
Proposal: Tree House Construction

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that the HPC approve the HAWP application.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION
SIGNIFICANCE: Non-Contributing Resource to the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Cape Cod
DATE: c. 1930-40

The house at 7418 Maple Ave., Takoma Park is a one-and-a-half story, side-gable, asphalt-shingled, Cape Cod, with gable dormers. The house is three bays wide with six-over-six windows at either side of the central entrance. To the rear there is a later, non-historic, addition with a shed roof, sided in Hardi clapboards. The gravel driveway is placed to the right of the house, which, because of the significant slope of Maple Ave. is one floor below grade. A large concrete retaining wall, capped by a single row of bricks, separates the front yard from the driveway.

Figure 1: 7418 Maple Ave.
PROPOSAL
The applicant is proposing to construct a tree house and playground in the rear of the property.

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 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.

Non-Contributing/Out-of-Period Resources should receive the most lenient level of design review. Most alterations and additions to Non-Contributing/Out-of-Period Resources should be approved as a matter of course. The only exceptions would be major additions and alterations to the scale and massing of Non-Contributing/Out-of-Period Resources which affect the surrounding streetscape and/or landscape and could impair character of the district as a whole.

Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A
(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;

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation
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
In the rear of the property there are two tree stumps, approximately 7' (seven feet) and 5' (five feet) tall. The applicant proposes to construct a playground and treehouse in two platforms using the tree stumps as a base.

On top of the taller, rear, stump the applicant proposes to construct an enclosed treehouse. The treehouse will be 8' 9" (eight feet, nine inches) tall; and 8' (eight feet) wide by 11' (eleven feet) deep. The treehouse section will have a low-pitched roof and a combination of wood clapboard siding and wood shingle siding. The treehouse section will be supported by 2" × 8" (two by eight inch) diagonal braces. The treehouse will be more than 25' (twenty-five) feet to the rear of the house and will be several feet below ridge line of the house.

In front of the treehouse section will be a platform section built on top of the lower tree stump. The platform will have a wood guardrail. The platform will be 7' 6" (seven feet, six inches) deep and 8' (eight feet) wide. To provide access to the platform the applicant proposes to construct a ladder on the left side and a climbing rope to the right side.

The drawings also show a circular slide and note that it is an optional component. Staff encourages the HPC to evaluate this slide as part of the proposal as its approval will eliminate the need for a post-approval revision to the design. The proposed slide is a totally enclosed slide consistent with the drawing shown on A102 of the application.

Staff finds that the proposal will not alter the scale and massing of the non-contributing resource or the surrounding streetscape. The treehouse and playground will set largely behind the house and will only be minimally visible from the public right-of-way. Additionally, the step slope and retaining wall to the right of the lot, further limit the view of the proposed construction from the right-of-way.

Staff additionally finds that the treehouse is of a form and materials that are consistent with an accessory structure in the Takoma Park Historic District and supports approval.
Figure 2: Street view of 7418 Maple Ave., showing limited view of tree stumps.

Figure 3: Closer view showing right side of house with stumps minimally visible.
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.
APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: bp.davis@att.net  Contact Person: Ben DAVIS
Tax Account No.:  
Name of Property Owner: JEFFREY BELL  Daytime Phone No.: (202) 744-8794
Address: 7918 MAPLE AVE  TAKOMA PARK, MD 20912  Zip Code:
City: Takoma Park  State:
Contractor: CONSTRUCTION AND SAFETY SERVICES  No.: (202) 744-8794
Contractor Registration No.: 58932  Agent for Owner: BENJAMIN DAVIS  Daytime Phone No.: (202) 744-8794

LOCATION OF BUILDING/STRUCTURE
House Number: 7918  Street: MAPLE AVE
Town/City: Takoma Park  Nearest Cross Street: Philadelphia
Lot: 7C  Block: 86  Subdivision: "PETTY ESTATE"

PART I: TYPE OF OR INJURY AND USE
1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:
☐ Construct  ☐ Extend  ☐ Alter/Remodel  ☐ A/C
☐ Move  ☐ Install  ☐ Wreck/Raze  ☐ Slab  ☐ Room Addition  ☐ Porch
☐ Revision  ☐ Repair  ☐ Revocable  ☐ Deck  ☐ Shed  ☐ Single Family
☐ Fence/Wall (complete Section 4)  ☐ Other: TREE HOUSE
1B. Construction Cost Estimate: $7,500

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

PART II: COMPLIANCE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTENSIONS/ADDITIONS
2A. Type of sewage disposal: 01 ☐ WSSC  02 ☐ Septic  03 ☐ Other: N/A
2B. Type of water supply: 01 ☐ WSSC  02 ☐ Well  03 ☐ Other: N/A

PART III: COMPLIANCE FOR FENCING/RETAINING WALL
3A. Height ______ feet ______ inches
3B. Indicate whether the fence or retaining wall is to be constructed on the following locations:
☐ On property line/property line  ☐ Entirely on land of owner  ☐ On public right of way/ easement

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  5/2/2018

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:

      Build a tree house with slide on existing tree truck

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

      Play ground set for kids to include a tree house, slide, climbing net, etc.

2. SITE PLAN
   Site and environmental setting, drawn to scale. You may use your plan. Your site plan must include:
   a. the scale, north arrow, and date;
   b. dimensions of all existing and proposed structures; and
   c. site features such as walkways, driveways, fences, ponds, streams, trash dumpsters, mechanical equipment, and landscaping.

3. PLANS AND ELEVATIONS
   You must submit 2 copies of plans and elevations in a format no larger than 11" x 17". Plans on 8-1/2" x 11" paper are preferred.
   a. Schematic construction plans, with marked dimensions, indicating location, size and general type of walls, window and door openings, and other fixed features of both the existing resource(s) and the proposed work.
   b. Elevations (facades), with marked dimensions, clearly indicating proposed work in relation to existing construction and, when appropriate, context. All materials and fixtures proposed for the exterior must be noted on the elevations drawings. An existing and a proposed elevation drawing of each facade affected by the proposed work is required.

4. MATERIALS SPECIFICATIONS
   General description of materials and manufactured items proposed for incorporation in the work of the project. This information may be included on your design drawings.

5. PHOTOGRAPHS
   a. Clearly labeled photographic prints of each facade of existing resource, including details of the affected portions. All labels should be placed on the front of photographs.
   b. Clearly label photographic prints of the resource as viewed from the public right-of-way and of the adjoining properties. All labels should be placed on the front of photographs.

6. TREE SURVEY
   If you are proposing construction adjacent to or within the dripline of any tree 6" or larger in diameter (at approximately 4 feet above the ground), you must file an accurate tree survey identifying the size, location, and species of each tree of at least that dimension.

7. ADDRESSES OF ADJACENT AND CONFRONTING PROPERTY OWNERS
   For all projects, provide an accurate list of adjacent and confronting property owners (not tenants), including names, addresses, and zip codes. This list should include the owners of all lots or parcels which adjoin the parcel in question, as well as the owner(s) of lot(s) of 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.
# HAWP Application: Mailing Addresses for Notifying

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner's mailing address</th>
<th>Owner's Agent's mailing address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JEFF &amp; AMBER BELL</td>
<td>BEN DAVIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7418 MAPLE AVE</td>
<td>212 T ST NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAKOMA PARK, MD 20912</td>
<td>WASHINGTON, DC 20001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7416 MAPLE AVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7417 MAPLE AVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7411 MAPLE AVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7420 MAPLE AVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7419 MAPLE AVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7421 MAPLE AVE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)

Detail: View From Deck

Detail: View From Deck

Applicant: ____________________________