Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address: 4807 Dorset Ave., Chevy Chase  
Meeting Date: 5/23/2018

Resource: Contributing Resource, (Secondary/Post-1915)  
(Somerset Historic District)  
Report Date: 5/16/2018

Applicant: Maya Weil  
(Adam Greene, Agent)  
Public Notice: 5/9/2018

Review: Preliminary Consultation  
Tax Credit: No

Staff: Michael Kyne

Case Number: N/A

PROPOSAL: Pedestrian access construction

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

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION
SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing Resource within the Somerset District, (Secondary/Post-1915)
STYLE: Eclectic-Craftsman
DATE: c. 1918

The subject property is a c. 1918 Contributing Resource within the Somerset Historic District. The historic house was originally constructed as a “Siberian cedar log home,” and, while it has experienced additions and alterations throughout the years, it retains a high level of integrity and an eclectic architectural vocabulary that contributes to the significance of the Somerset Historic District. The front elevation of the house faces Dorset Avenue, which is more than 200' from the house, with two side-by-side platted lots between the house and Dorset Avenue. The house is currently accessed via a long, shared driveway off of Surrey Street. According to the 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (see image in Staff Discussion), the subject property has always had a Dorset Avenue address.
PROPOSAL

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

- Construction of a pedestrian access gate with stone and concrete entry walls adjacent to the public sidewalk at Dorset Avenue.

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), the Somerset Historic District Guidelines (Guidelines), 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

(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.

Somerset Historic District Guidelines

- Other important features which create and enhance the historic character of the Somerset community include: the spacing and rhythm of buildings, the uniform scale of existing houses, the relationship of houses to the street, the ample size lots and patterns of open space in the neighborhood, the mature trees and landscaping, and the grid system of streets with clearly defined streetscapes. These elements should be retained and preserved as the area continues to grow and develop.

Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior defines rehabilitation as “the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.” The Standards are as follows:

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.

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.
The proposed pedestrian access will be 10'-4" W x 12'-6" L and will consist of bluestone pavers set on concrete, with a 3'-2" H concrete wall at its left side and a 3'-3" H stacked stone wall at its right side. There will be a pivoting gate constructed from horizontal steel rods and wood slats between the two walls. A backlit address plate will be installed on the concrete wall facing Dorset Avenue. The pedestrian access is designed to take cues from the historic house and a 2014 left-side addition, which was approved by the HPC. The historic house is more than 200’ from Dorset Avenue, with two side-by-side platted lots between the historic house and Dorset Avenue, and, at 12'-6" in length, the proposed pedestrian access will terminate a great distance from the historic house.

Currently, there is a temporary aluminum arbor with gate and a small walkway consisting of widely spaced flagstone pavers set on dirt in the location of the proposed pedestrian access. The existing walkway is of average width (approximately 3’) and only extends a short distance from the sidewalk. There are also temporary address signs for the subject property staked in the ground in the same location. At staff’s request, the applicant has provided photographic examples of similar features located within the historic district; however, the submitted photographs depict stone retaining walls and/or masonry piers that flank traditional walkways or driveways that extend from the sidewalk or street to the front of the house. The applicant has not provided any examples of similar features to demonstrate compatibility with the streetscape, and staff could not locate any similar features within the historic district.

As proposed, the pedestrian access is more characteristic of a parking entrance than walkway, due to its prominent location and the size of the proposed hardscape, the gate, and the tall, flanking entry walls. A
parking pad or driveway in this location would require a new curb cut, and the applicant has not demonstrated that a curb cut would be or has been approved by the Town or County. Although many of the other properties on Dorset Avenue have short driveways and or walkways at the front, those features are generally consistent in their proximity to the house, material, and respective dimensions.

Staff finds that proposed pedestrian access is incompatible with the streetscape of the historic district in design, location, and material. The proposed pedestrian access will be located adjacent to the public sidewalk not far removed from Dorset Avenue, which serves as the primary entrance to the historic district, and it has the potential to detract from the character-defining features of the streetscape and historic district as a whole. Staff recommends that the proposed pedestrian access not be approved; however, staff does find that a new pedestrian access that is compatible with the streetscape in design and dimensions would be appropriate in this location. Staff recommends that the applicant explore compatible and appropriate alternatives and return with a revised HAWP application.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

- Staff recommends that the proposed pedestrian access not be approved.

- Staff recommends that the applicant explore compatible and appropriate alternatives and return with a revised HAWP application.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301/563-3400

APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Name: AGREE@BONSTRA.COM
Contact Person: ADAM GREENE

Tax Account No.: 00537256
Daytime Phone No.: 202-328-5715

Name of Property Owner: MAYA WEIL
Daytime Phone No.: 703-409-3832

Address: 4807 DORSET AVE. CHEVY CHASE MD 20815
Street Number: City: Street: Zip Code:

Contractor: TBD
Contractor Registration No.:
Agent for Owner:
Daytime Phone No.:

LOCATION OF PROPOSED WORK

House Number: 4807 Street: DORSET AVENUE
Town/City: SOMERSET/CHEVY CHASE Nearest Cross Street: SURREY STREET
Lot: 36 Block: 2 Subdivision: 0044
Liber: 15135 Foler: 0061 Parcel: N/A

PART ONE: INFORMATION FOR CONTRACTOR AND EMPLOYEES

1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE
☐ Construct ☐ Extend ☐ Alter/Renovate ☐ A/C ☐ Slab ☐ Room Addition ☐ Piers ☐ Deck ☐ Shed
☐ Move ☐ Install ☐ Wreck/Remove ☐ Solar ☐ Fireplace ☐ Woodburning Stove ☐ Single Family
☐ Revision ☐ Repair ☐ Replace, ☐ Fence/Wall (complete Section 4) ☐ Other:

1B. Construction cost estimate: $50,000

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

PART TWO: PERMIT FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXISTING 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 FENCES/RETAINING WALL

3A. Height: feet, inches

FRONT WALL: 36" FROM GRADE TO T.O. WALL
WALL AT TOP OF DRIVEWAY: 48" FROM GRADE TO T.O. WALL

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

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

Date: 4/18/2018

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:
      RECENTLY COMPLETED RENOVATION AND ADDITION TO HISTORIC HOME BUILT IN 1919. PROPERTY INCLUDES A LARGE LAWN FRONTING DORSET AVENUE WITH EXISTING STONE WALL FEATURES AT THE SHARED DRIVEWAY ENTRANCE AND THE SIDE YARD TO THE WEST OF THE HOUSE.

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

2. SITE PLAN
   Site and environmental setting, drawn to scale. You may use your plat. Your site plan must include:
   a. the scale, north arrow, and data;
   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 a 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 drip line of any tree 8" or larger in diameter (at approximately 4 feet above the ground), you must file an accurate tree survey identifying the size, location, and species of each tree of at least that dimension.

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

PLEASE PRINT (IN BLUE OR BLACK INK) OR TYPE THIS INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.
PLEASE STAY WITHIN THE GUIDES OF THE TEMPLATE, AS THIS WILL BE PHOTOCOPIED DIRECTLY ONTO MAILING LABELS.
4807 DORSET AVE. - FRONT ENTRYWAY
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

DRAWING INDEX

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<td>TREE REMOVAL PLAN</td>
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HAWP APPROVAL
APRIL 29, 2018

COVER SHEET

4807 DORSET AVE.
Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)

Detail: EXISTING SHARED DRIVEWAY ENTRY @ SURREY STREET

Detail: FRONT PARKING COURT, LANDSCAPING & HOME ADDITION/ RENOVATION

Applicant: ____________________________
Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)

Detail: REAR PORCH AND BACK YARD

Detail: SIDE YARD RETAINING WALL

Applicant: ________________________________

Page: __
Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)

Detail: ORIGINAL SIDE YARD RETAINING WALL

Detail: FRONT PARKING COURT AND LANDSCAPING

Applicant: ______________________________

Page: __
Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)

Detail: REAR DECK AND STAIR

Detail:

Applicant:__________________________________________
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<tr>
<th>Owner’s mailing address</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maya Weil 4807 Dorset Ave</td>
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<td>Jody and Rodd Macklin 4817 Dorset Ave Chevy Chase MD 20815</td>
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<td>David Brown 4814 Cumberland Ave Chevy Chase MD 20815</td>
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