

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	220 Park Ave., Takoma Park	Meeting Date:	10/24/18
Resource:	Contributing Resource Takoma Park Historic District	Report Date:	10/17/18
Applicant:	Rebecca and David Williamson	Public Notice:	10/10/18
Review:	HAWP	Tax Credit:	n/a
Case Number:	37/03-18QQQ	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
Proposal:	Chimney Removal		

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission **approve** the HAWP application.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

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

The subject house is a one-story, stuccoed, hipped-roof bungalow with Craftsman and Colonial Revival elements. It has a full-width front porch supported by wood columns and a centrally-located front gable dormer



Figure 1: 220 Park Ave. is located near the intersection of Park Ave., Spruce Ave., and Crescent Pl.

PROPOSAL

The applicant is proposing to remove a chimney from the left rear of the house and fill in the opening to match the existing roof slope and material.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

When reviewing alterations and additions for new construction to Contributing Resources within the Takoma Park Historic District, decisions are guided by the Takoma Park Historic District Design Guidelines (Design Guidelines) and Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A).

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.

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 right-of-way which involve the replacement of or damage to original ornamental or architectural features are discouraged but may be considered and approved on a case-by-case basis.

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 shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

STAFF DISCUSSION

The applicant proposes to remove the chimney from the left rear of the house. Staff supports its removal.

The house at 220 Park Ave. has two chimneys on the left elevation, a larger exterior chimney to the front and a smaller interior chimney to the rear. Both chimneys are covered in the same rough stucco and are visible from the public right-of-way. Internally, the chimney to the rear is not associated with a fireplace and the applicant suspects that the chimney was associated with a woodstove. Staff has been unable to determine if the rear of the house is an addition or original construction. Because most of the houses in the surrounding district only have one chimney, Staff reasons that there is a high likelihood that this rear chimney is a later, non-historic modification to the house.

Staff finds that the removal of the rear chimney will not have a significant impact on the visual and character of the house for several reasons. First, this chimney is partially obscured by the larger, front chimney on the same side of the house, and is therefore not a character defining feature of the house. Second, the rear chimney is set back from the street front to the extent that it's removal will have less impact on the building patterns in the surrounding district, per the *Guidelines*. Third, Staff finds that the removal of the rear chimney will not have a significant impact on the historic character of the house, per Standard 2, as the decorative elements (i.e. columns, full-width front porch, front gable dormer) will all remain expressed from the public right-of-way. Finally, consistent with Staff's reasoning that this feature is not historic, its removal is compatible with the architectural features of the house (see 24A-8(b)(2)).

Staff supports approval of this HAWP.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve condition** 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.