

Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	5419 Mohican Rd., Bethesda	Meeting Date:	5/21/2019
Resource:	Master Plan Site 35/29-2 R.A. Charles Castle	Report Date:	5/14/2019
Applicant:	J. Ross McNair	Public Notice:	5/7/2019
Review:	Preliminary Consultation	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
Proposal:	New Construction		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the applicant make any revisions based on the HPC's recommendations and return for a HAWP application.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Individual Master Plan Site (35/29-2)
 STYLE: Vacant
 DATE: N/A

From *Places from the Past*:

“This residence was built the same years as the more elaborate and larger scale Baltzley Castle, yet was also built of locally quarried stone, continuing the theme envisioned Rhineland on the Potomac. Both residences were built to take advantage of a dramatic view of the Potomac River. With its multi and diamond pane windows, hipped roof and polygonal wing, and turned porch posts, the Charles Castle is essentially a Queen Anne style house sheathed in stone. R.A. Charles, an employee of the Treasury Department, bought land from Edward Baltzley in February 1890 and built the house soon thereafter. The *Manufacture's Record* of 1891 stated that Mindeleff designed a Glen Echo Heights house for Edwin Baltzley for \$7,000.”

In 2015, the applicant proposed to resubdivide the subject lot and to shrink the environmental setting of the R.A. Charles Castle, so it excluded the subject property. The HPC recommended that the Planning Board not reduce the size of the property and not to shrink the environmental setting. The proposed new construction will take place on this undeveloped lot to the southeast of the historic house. This lot has been platted since the late 19th century.



Figure 1: The proposed house will be constructed on the lot to the southeast of the R.A. Charles Castle.

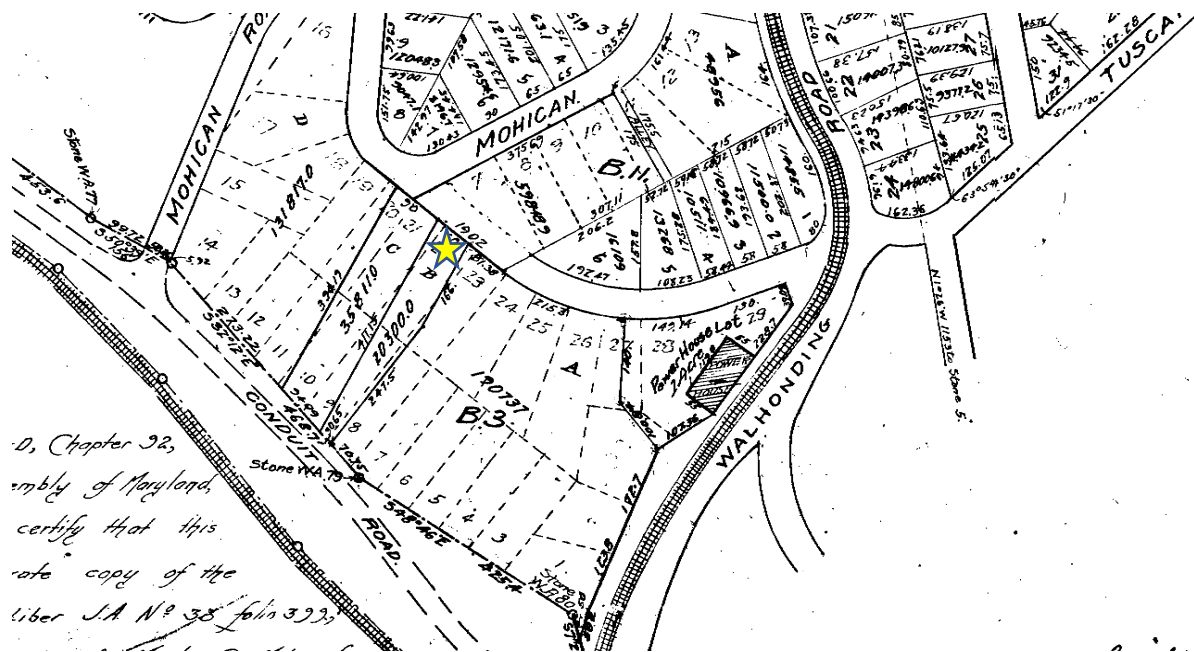


Figure 2: 1892 plat map showing the platted lots for the R.A. Charles Castle and the subject property (starred). Note: the dashed road to the north of the subject property was never constructed.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to construct a new house with a detached garage on the undeveloped Lot B shown in Figure 2 above.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

Proposed alterations to individual Master Plan Sites are reviewed under Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A) and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (*the Standards*). Rehabilitation is defined 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 pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

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

(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.)

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 constructing a new house on the existing, narrow, wooded, steeply-sloped lot to the southeast of the R.A. Charles Castle. The subject lot and the Baltzley and Charles Castles are positioned high on a bluff overlooking the Potomac River. The three lots are heavily wooded which creates limited visibility of the houses, however, areas near the houses are cleared to provide vistas of the Potomac River. This viewshed is a significant feature of the environmental setting and should be preserved. All of the houses are accessed from Mohican Rd. and do not have direct access to Macarthur Blvd., however, the more elaborate facades face toward the river. Where the Baltzley Castle and Charles Castle are visually aligned, the

proposed construction will be setback significantly from the front wall plane of the Charles Castle. The Mohican Swimming Pool is located to the southeast and down the hill from the subject property and is accessed via Macarthur Blvd.

Just like the Baltzley Castle and the Charles Castle, the proposed house is oriented to take advantage of the view of the Potomac from the heights above Macarthur Blvd. Unlike the adjacent two historic houses, one Queen Anne the other Romanesque, the applicant has selected a contemporary Craftsman house design. The house has a complex form and will have clapboard siding on the first floor and shingle siding on the second floor. The roof is a complex hipped roof with overhangs and gables supported with Craftsman brackets. The windows throughout the house will be a mix of sash, casement, and picture windows.

With the house placed to the north of the Charles Castle, the proposed house will not interfere with the vista of the Potomac River. Additionally, by placing the house further to the northeast, the proposed construction will be less prominent than the Charles Castle when viewed from Macarthur Blvd. Staff finds that the placement of the proposed house will not detract from the historic character of the historic Charles Castle.

Staff further supports the proposed materials, finding that a new stone house could create a false sense of history, per Standard 9. Had the applicant proposed a house clad in exterior stone, even one in a different style, Staff finds that it could easily be mistaken as contemporary with the Baltzley and Charles Castles. Because the houses are nearly 200' (two hundred feet) from Macarthur Blvd (see Figure 3 below) the architectural details are somewhat obscured; however, the materiality and presence of these grand houses are readily apparent. Staff finds that the proposed construction will be placed in a location that is secondary and deferential to the Charles Castle. The lower pitched hip roof and horizontal orientation of the proposed construction also stand in contrast to the more vertical orientation of the Charles Castle and the Baltzley Castle.



Figure 3: View from Macarthur Blvd. to the Baltzley and Charles Castle. The proposed construction will be built to the right of the two buildings (Note: this image was taken in December 2015).

Material specifications were not provided with the submitted documentation and Staff request the HPC provide insight into preferred materials. Additionally, details for the proposed detached

garage were not included with this submission. Staff request the HPC provide some the applicant with any limitations as to size, scale, massing, or materials for this proposed construction. Please note that the two renderings submitted do not show the proposed construction butfa are illustrative of the appearance and design vocabulary the applicant is proposing.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the applicant make any revisions based on the HPC's recommendations and return for a HAWP application.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301/563-3400

DPS - #8

APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: ROSSMCMANIS1@GMAIL.COM Contact Person: ROSS MCMANIS
Daytime Phone No.: 301-219-0380
Tax Account No.: 00508312
Name of Property Owner: J. ROSS MCMANIS Daytime Phone No.: 301-219-0380
Address: 5415 MOLLICAN RD Bethesda MD 2086
Street Number City State Zip Code
Contractor: MANAGE BUILDERS Phone No.: 301-228-8343
Contractor Registration No.: 426545
Agent for Owner: _____ Daytime Phone No.: _____

LOCATION OF BUILDING PREMISE

House Number: 5417 Street: MOLLICAN RD
Town/City: Bethesda Nearest Cross Street: MACARTHUR BLVD
Lot: PART C Block: 3 Subdivision: 9100 ECHO HEIGHTS
Liber: 40953 Folio: 265 Parcel: _____

PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMIT ACTION AND USE

1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

- ☒ Construct ☐ Extend ☐ Alter/Renovate
☐ Move ☐ Install ☐ Wreck/Raze
☐ Revision ☐ Repair ☐ Revocable

CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

- ☐ A/C ☐ Slab ☐ Room Addition ☐ Porch ☐ Deck ☐ Shed
☐ Solar ☐ Fireplace ☐ Woodburning Stove ☐ Single Family
☒ Fence/Wall (complete Section 4) ☐ Other: GARAGE + FENCE

1B. Construction cost estimate: \$ 28,000

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 6' feet 0 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/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.

J. Ross McManis
Signature of owner or authorized agent

10-26-15
Date

Approved: _____ For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission

Disapproved: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

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

Edit 6/21/99

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR INSTRUCTIONS

735175

HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFYING

OWNER'S MAILING ADDRESS

J. Ross McNair
5415 Mohican Rd
Bethesda Md 20816

HISTORIC SITE ADDRESS

5417 Mohican Rd
Bethesda Md 20816

ADJACENT AND CONFRONTING PROPERTY OWNERS MAILING ADDRESSES

Miguel Otero
5301 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

Chris White
5409 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

Maureen Jeffreys and Michael Bergsman
5303 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

Miklos Gaal
5407 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

Matthew Byrne
5405 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

Stephen Seeber
5309 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

William Barlow
5311 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

Patrick Gates
5421 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

Ned Miltenberg
5410 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

John Lentz
5424 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

Joy Brown
5408 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

Whittington Lewis
5404 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

Nathaniel Kendall
5420 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

William Coolidge
5423 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

James Ross
5425 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

Philip Warker
5428 Mohican Rd
Bethesda MD 20816

5303

5421

5415

5417

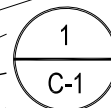
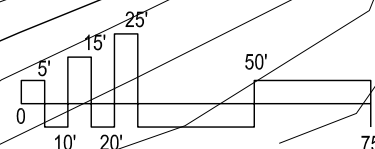
5419

2 Stories
w/ Bsmt
2,615 SF

Constructed
Detached
Garage

Approved
Detached
Garage

Proposed
Detached
Garage



Site plan
Scale:

50'

Zoning and Building Data

Project address:

5419 Mohican Road, Bethesda, MD

Location:

Lot B Glen Echo Heights PBBP44

Plat data:

Liber 40953 Folio 265

Zoning: R-90

Lot area:

20,853 Square Feet +/- (.48 Acres)

Allowable lot coverage

30% = 6,256 Square Feet +/-

First Floor Square Feet:

2,615 SF

8







