

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	7202 Holly Ave., Takoma Park	Meeting Date:	9/11/2019
Resource:	Contributing Resource Takoma Park Historic District	Report Date:	9/4/2019
Applicant:	Peter Hardin and Karen MacPherson	Public Notice:	8/28/2019
Review:	HAWP	Tax Credit:	n/a
Case Number:	37/03-19NN	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
PROPOSAL:	Fence Installation and Retaining Wall		

RECOMMENDATION

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

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Craftsman
DATE: c.1910s



Figure 1: 7202 Holly Ave.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to remove a failing retaining wall and fencing and replace them with new materials.

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 (*Guidelines*) and Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A), and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (*Standards*).

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

Some non-original building materials may be acceptable on a case-by-case basis; artificial siding on areas visible to the public right-of-way is discouraged where such materials would replace or damage original building materials that are in good condition

Alterations to features that are not visible 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
- (4) The proposal is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied.
- (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

There are two work elements proposed under this HAWP. First, the applicant proposes removing the existing CMU retaining wall and replacing it with a timber retaining wall. Second, the applicant proposes removing a section of chain link fencing and installing a picket fence in its place. Both of these elements are appropriate, and Staff supports approval of this HAWP.

Retaining Wall

Due to the significant rise in grade, there are retaining walls to the north and south of the subject property. The retaining wall on the south is a concrete block wall that is failing structurally. The applicant proposes removing this wall before it collapses. Staff agrees with the applicants' assessment that the wall is failing and needs to be removed (per 24A-8(b)(4)). There are two challenges in replacing this retaining wall. First, the retaining wall is less than 7' (seven feet) from the chimney and 8' (eight feet) from an exterior wall, and excavation this close to the house could cause structural damage; and second, the wall is within the critical root zone of five large trees. In order to minimize excavation and preserve the trees, the applicants propose to construct a wood 'soldier and lagging' wall in its place. This construction method allows the demolition and construction to occur at the same time (details of the construction technique is included in the application materials). The result is a wall that has vertical I-beams spaced at 6' (six foot) intervals with horizontal timbers filling in the gaps. The finished wall will have the same dimensions as the existing retaining wall.

While Staff cannot identify a retaining wall in the Takoma Park Historic District that has employed this specific construction method, timber retaining walls have been utilized extensively throughout the district. Staff supports the materials as consistent with the historic character of the house and surrounding district. Additionally, Staff supports the use of this construction method, because it minimizes excavation that could potentially damage the house and because it will aid in the preservation of the district's mature tree canopy. Staff recommends approval of the proposed retaining wall.



Figure 2: Failing retaining wall on the south property boundary of 7202 Holly Ave.

Replacement Fence

Because the drop from the retaining wall is so high, a fence is required along the south property line above the retaining wall to meet current code. The existing fence is a 3' (three foot) tall chain link fence. The applicant proposes to remove this fence and install a new 3' (three feet) tall, 2" (two inch) picket fence in its place. The proposed picket fence will have posts spaced at 6' (six foot) intervals to match the steel I-beams in the retaining wall below.

Staff finds the existing chain link fence does not contribute to the historic character of the house or surrounding district and its removal should be allowed. The proposed wood fence meets the generally-accepted criteria for fences in Takoma Park; i.e., it is wood, less than 4' (four feet) tall, with an open character. Staff finds that the proposed fence is consistent with the character of the historic house and the surrounding district and recommends approval under 24A-8(b)(2), the *Guidelines*, and Standards 2, 9, and 10.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve** the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in *Chapter 24A-8(b)(1), (2), and (4)*, having found that the proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in character with the district, the *Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines*, and the purposes of *Chapter 24A*; and with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #2, #9, and #10*,

and with the general condition that the applicant shall present the **3 permit sets of drawings, if applicable, to Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) staff for review and stamping** prior to submission for the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) building permits;

and with the general condition that final project design details, not specifically delineated by the Commission, shall be approved by HPC staff or brought back to the Commission as a revised HAWP application at staff's discretion;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall notify the Historic Preservation Staff if they propose to make **any alterations** to the approved plans. Once the work is completed the applicant will contact the staff person assigned to this application at 301-563-3400 or dan.bruechert@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301/563-3400

OPB - #8

APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: Holt@jordanhansen.com Contact Person: Holt Jordan
Daytime Phone No.: (202) 986-0711
Tax Account No.: _____
Name of Property Owner: Peter Hardin; Karen Lee Pherson Daytime Phone No.: (301) 587-8325
Address: 7202 Holly Ave. Takoma Park MD 20912
Street Number City State Zip Code
Contractor: TBD Phone No.: 202 841 9405 cell
Contractor Registration No.: _____
Agent for Owner: Holt Jordan Daytime Phone No.: (202) 986-0711
(202) 439-4001 cell

LOCATION OF PROPERTY

House Number: 7202 Street: Holly Avenue
Town/City: Takoma Park Nearest Cross Street: Tulip Avenue
Lot: 9 Block: 12 Subdivision: _____
Liber: _____ Folio: _____ Parcel: _____

PART ONE: TYPE OF REPAIR/CONSTRUCTION

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: _____

1B. Construction cost estimate:

\$40,000

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

N/A

PART TWO: COMPLETE EXISTING UTILITIES AND DISSEMINATION

- 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 FENCE OR RETAINING WALL

3A. Height 7 feet 4 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.

Kyle [Signature]
Signature of owner or authorized agent

8/16/2019
Date

Approved: _____ For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission

Disapproved: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

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

**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:

The property is considered a contributing resource within the Takoma Park Historic District.

The house is a 1-story bungalow.

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

See Project Description page.

2. SITE PLAN

Site and environmental setting, drawn to scale. You may use your plot. 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) or parcel(s) which lie directly across the street/highway from the parcel in question.

Project Description

We are requesting the commission to approve a soldier and lagging constructed timber retaining wall to replace the failing concrete block wall.

One of our biggest challenges in rebuilding this wall are several large trees in close proximity to the existing and proposed new wall and their preservation. We are within the critical root zones of several large trees:

- 37" diameter at breast height (DBH) White Oak 3' from the wall. This tree is above the wall.
- 28" DBH White Oak is 4'-8" away from the wall below the wall
- 17" DBH Southern Magnolia is across the driveway from the wall 13'-3"
- 41" DBH White Oak is 27' from the wall
- 45" DBH White Oak is 36' from the wall corner

There are other trees that are in in the vicinity of the wall but outside their critical root zones.

The City of Takoma Park has stringent tree protection measures and we have met with the City's arborist and will comply with all of their requirements. Our client's goal is to protect these well-loved trees.

Equally challenging, and possibly more important to the commission, is the protection and preservation of the existing home. During our preliminary Structural Engineering consultation with Chris Cobb of 1200 Architectural Engineers PLLC, a big concern arose about excavation so close to the house foundation and basement. The front corner of the house is about 8' from the face of the wall and even closer at the chimney at 6'6". Given the height of the existing wall at 6'-6" at that location excavation for a 5' footing would bring this corner within 3' of the house corner and within 18" of the chimney.

A Soldier and Lagging construction technique is the best approach for this retaining wall.

This pile driven support (soldier) allows us to keep and retain the 37" DBH White Oak as well as having the least impact on the other existing trees, the house foundation and walkways, and the neighbor's shed and driveway. Minimal soil disturbance is achieved since digging in front of or behind the wall to pour spread concrete footings is not needed. This technique allows demolition and construction to occur at the same time. About 18" vertical sections are removed to allow the soldiers to be piled into place. Once two of these I or H shaped steel soldiers are in place, the existing wall between these two soldiers are removed and the timbers (lagging) are locked into place.

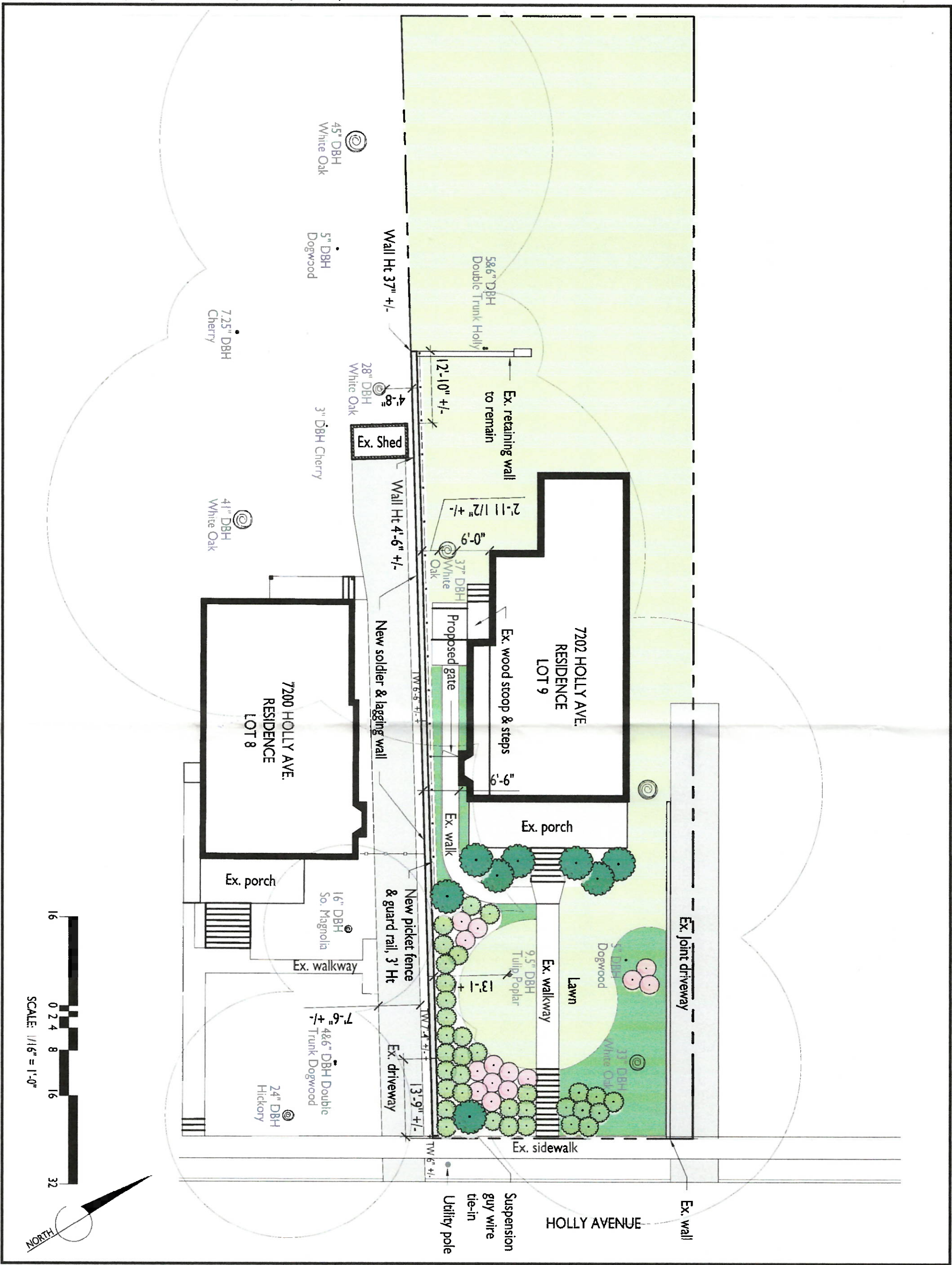
I believe that the new wall is sympathetic to the historic character of the home and surrounding neighborhood. We are proposing a horizontal timber wall with vertical soldiers every 6 feet. The structural engineer will determine the final spacing. The horizontal timber lagging wall construction was chosen to respond to the horizontal siding that can be seen at the Hardin-MacPherson residence as well as that of the neighboring houses. The retaining wall will closely follow and step with the existing upper

grade. There are several timber retaining walls within the historic district and one is only a few doors down at 7110 Holly Ave. Another example is at 7128 Willow Avenue.

We plan to replace the existing chain link fence on the side yard with a 2" x 2" picket fence at a minimum 3' height. This fence is a needed guard rail code requirement and will extend forward of the existing chain-link fence toward Holly Avenue. It's similar to the existing porch guard rails. This fence will extend approximately 6'+/- from the front porch face. Beyond this 6' we should be able to achieve a 4' horizontal minimum planting barrier eliminating the need for the guard rail.

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

<p>Owner's mailing address Peter Hardin & Karen Macpherson 7202 Holly Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912</p>	<p>Owner's Agent's mailing address Holt Jordan 711 Florida Ave, NW Washington, D.C. 20001</p>
<p align="center">Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses</p>	
<p>Jonna Hamilton & Lindsay Harrison 7200 Holly Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912</p>	<p>Jeff MacMillan & Lucinda Leach 7203 Holly Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912</p>
<p>Constance Marie Mayer 7311 Piney Branch Road Takoma Park, MD 20912</p>	<p>Harry & Kathleen Fulton 7315 Piney Branch Road Takoma Park, MD 20912</p>
<p>Ann Miles 7204 Holly Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912</p>	



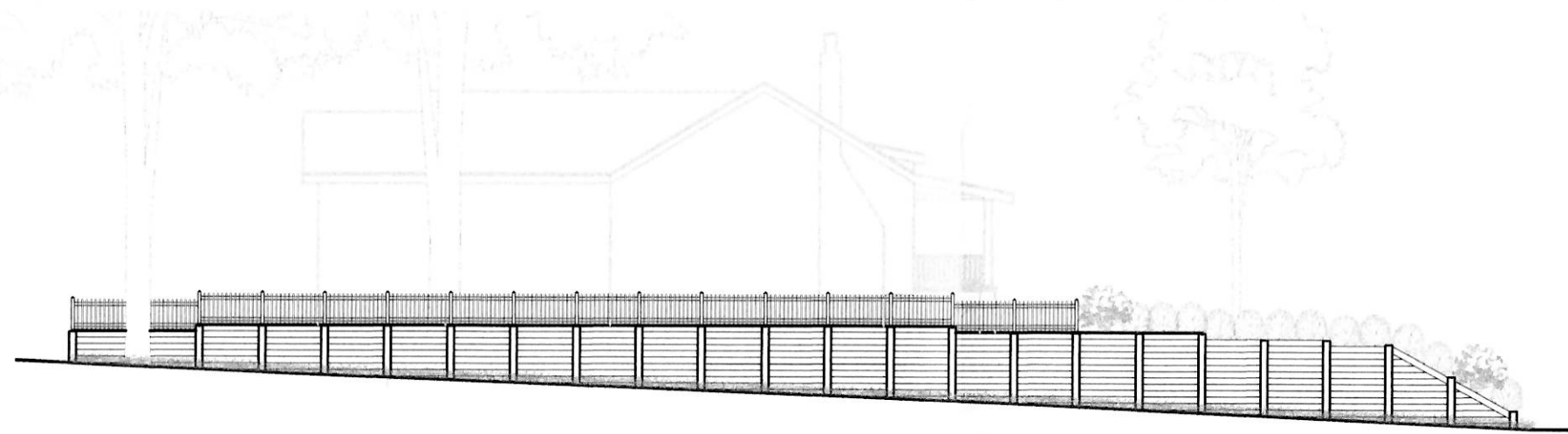
Timber Wall Plan

**Hardin-MacPherson
Residence**
7202 Holly Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Scale: 1/16" = 1'-0"
Date: 08.19.19
Revisions:

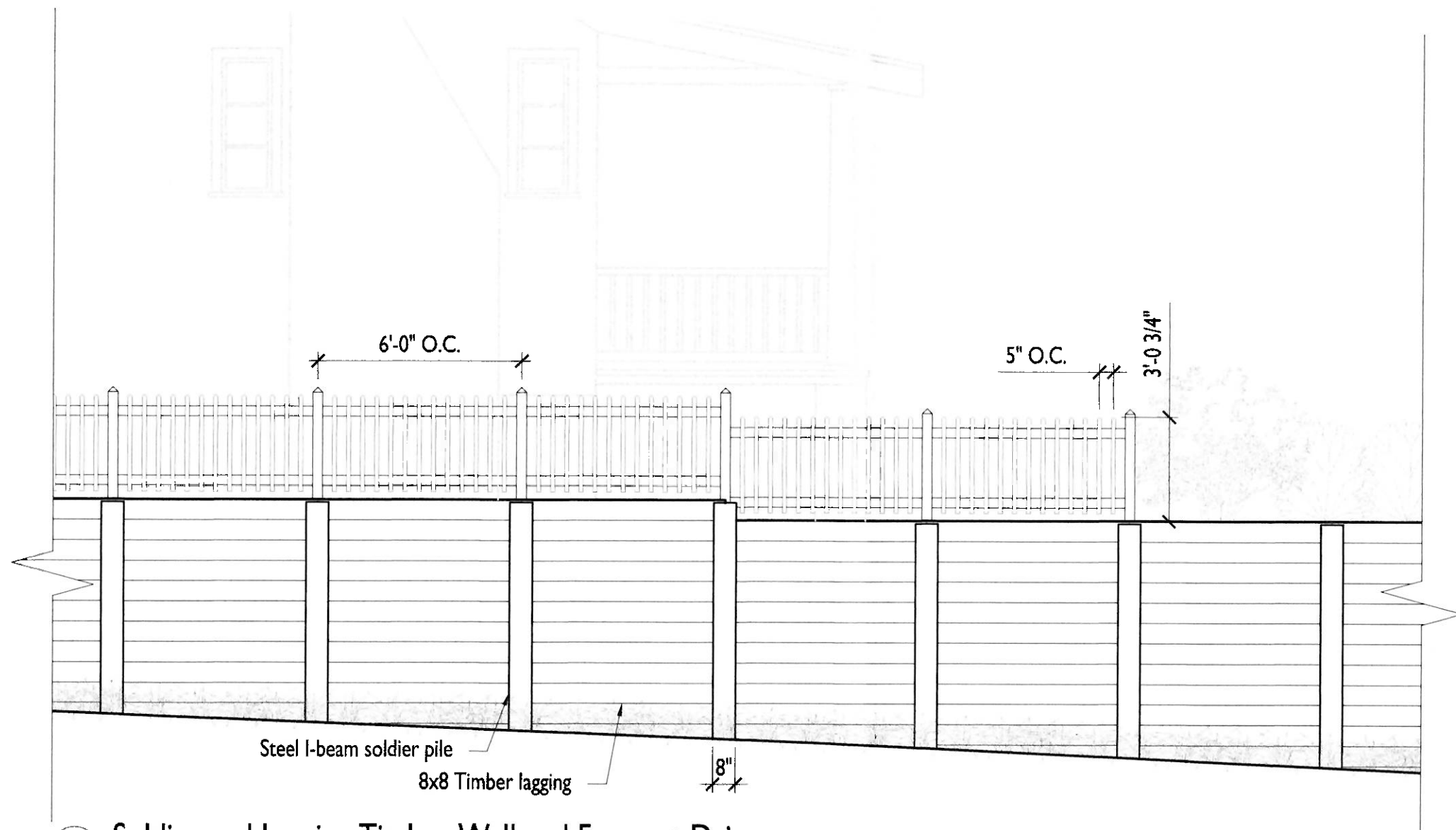


**JORDAN
HONEYMAN**
Landscape Architecture, LLC
711 Florida Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001
202.986.0711
202.986.0712 FAX



1 Soldier and Lagging Timber Wall and Fence at Driveway
Elevation

SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"

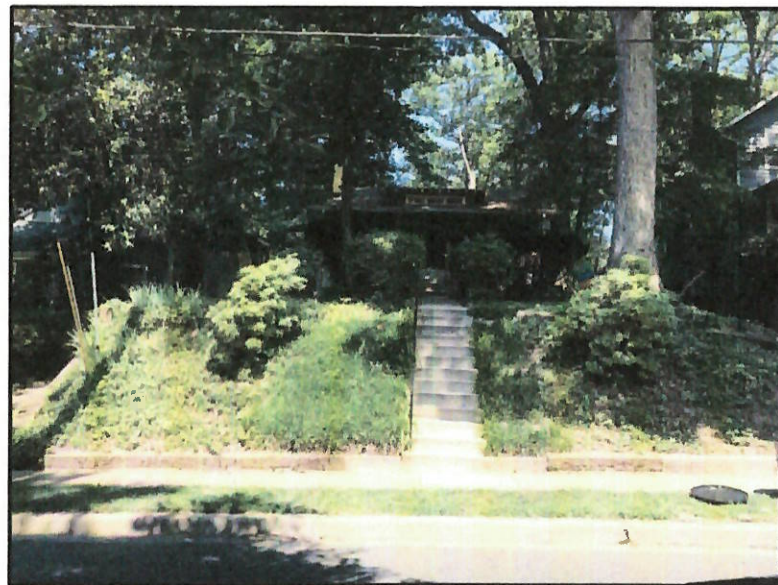


2 Soldier and Lagging Timber Wall and Fence at Driveway
Elevation

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

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<p>JORDAN HONEYMAN Landscape Architecture, LLC</p> <p>711 Florida Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20001 202.966.0711 202.966.0712 FAX</p>		<p>Scale: As Shown Date: 08.19.19 Revisions:</p>	<p>Hardin-MacPherson Residence 7202 Holly Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912</p>	<p>Timber Wall Details</p>	<p>2</p>
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Residence Street View (July 2019)



Residence Rear View (July 2019)



Existing Failing Block Retaining Wall



Residence Front View (July 2019)



Residence South View (July 2019)



Tilting and Failing Existing Retaining Wall



Residence North View (July 2019)



7200 Holly Avenue Front View (July 2019)



Existing Block Wall Character

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Scale: _____
Date: 08.21.19
Revisions: _____

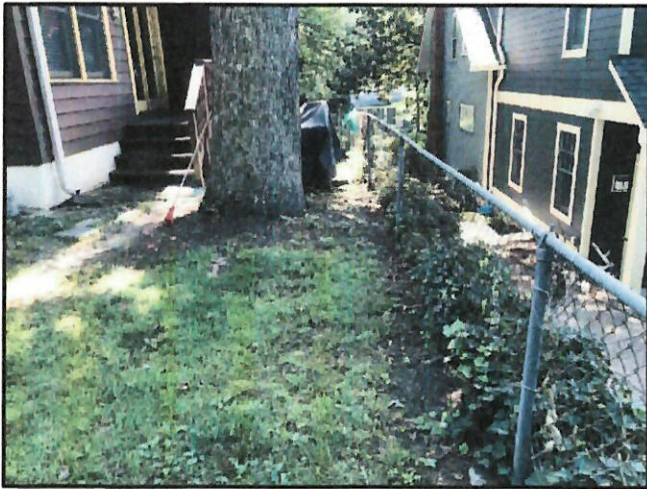
Hardin-MacPherson
Residence
7202 Holly Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912

**Existing
Condition
Images**

3

13

Existing Conditions & Site Context



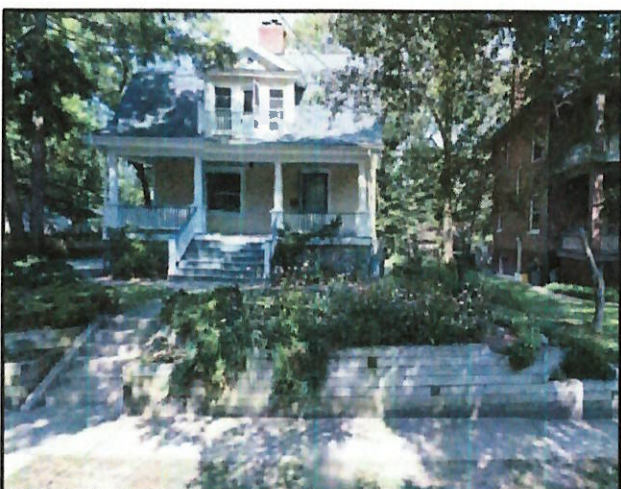
37" DBH White Oak 3' off of ex. wall



28" DBH White Oak 4'-8" off of ex. wall

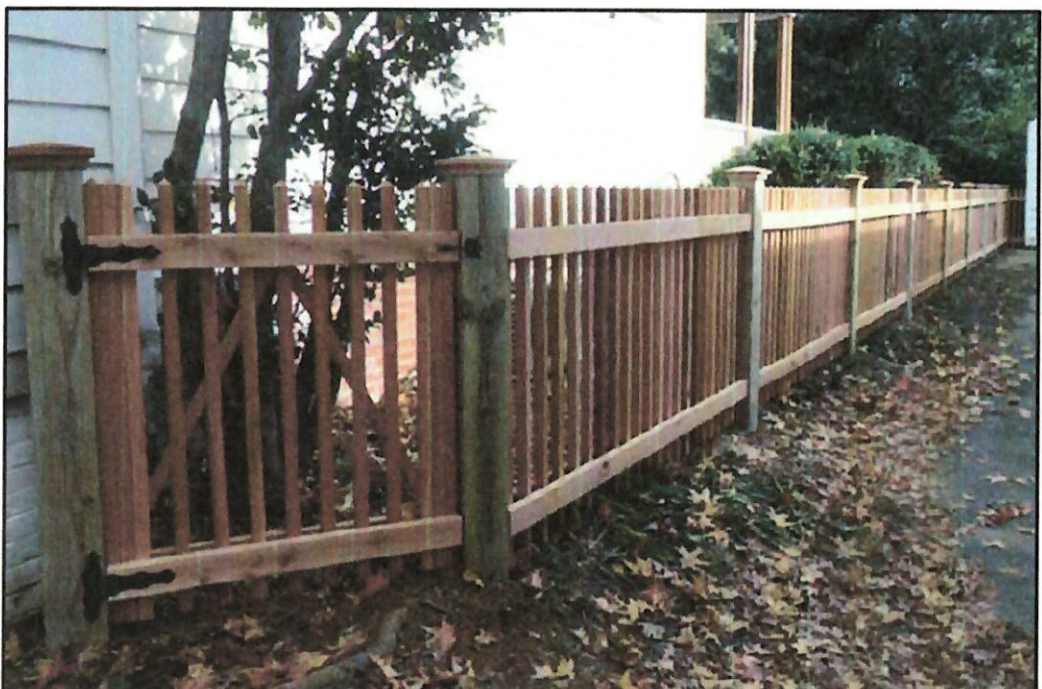


16" DBH Magnolia 13'-3" off of ex. wall



7128 Willow Ave. Timber Wall

Precedent Images: Soldier Pile and Timber Retaining Wall & 2"x2" Picket Fence



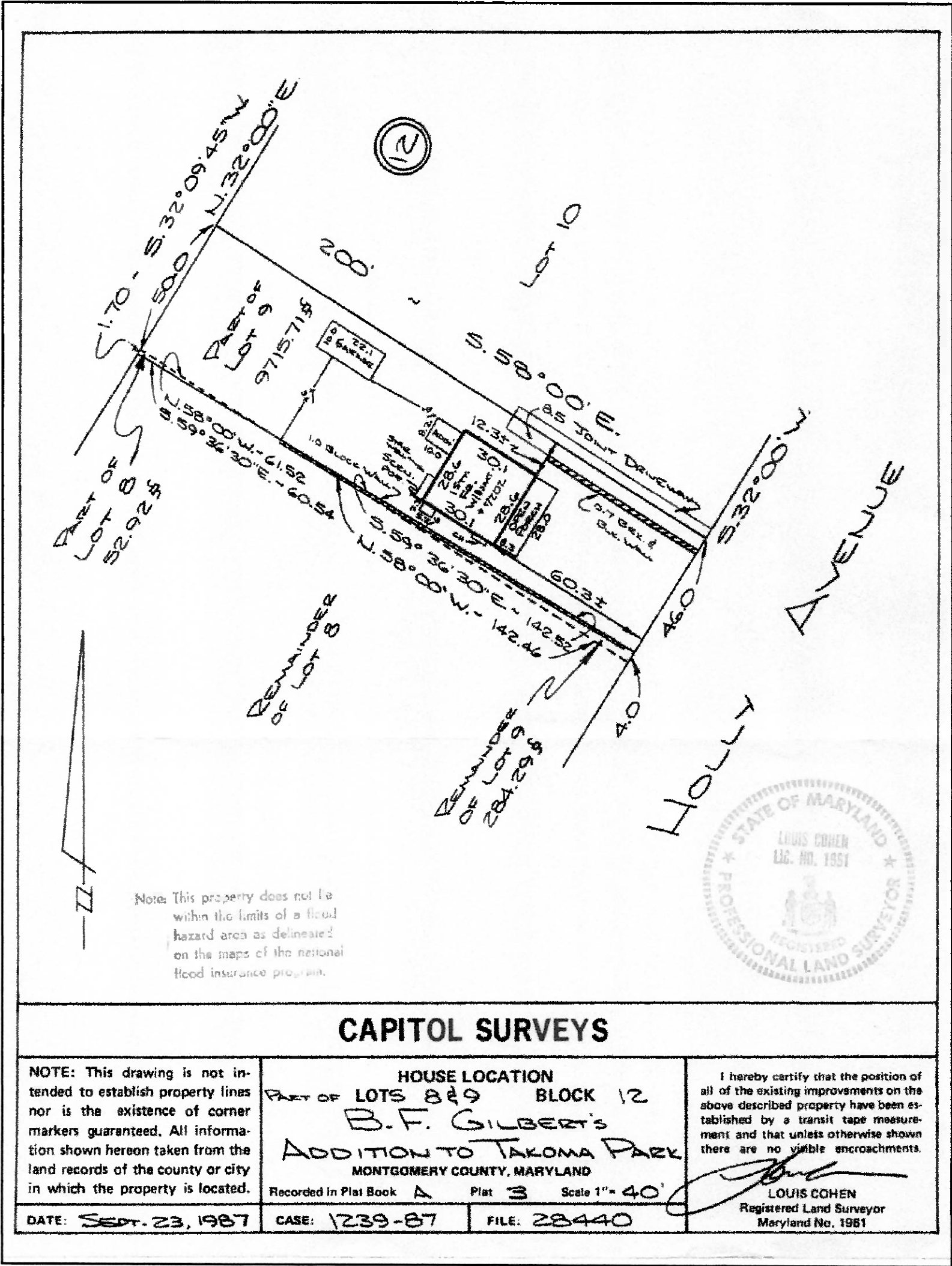
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Date: 08.21.19
Revisions:

Hardin-MacPherson
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Existing Conditions,
Site Context &
Precedent Images



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5

Additional
Materials

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