Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address: 7310 Piney Branch Avenue, Takoma Park  
Meeting Date: 4/22/2020

Resource: Non-Contributing Resource  
Takoma Park Historic District  
Report Date: 4/15/2020

Applicant: John and Lindsey Simpson  
(Paul Trederer, Architect)  
Public Notice: 4/8/2020

Review: Preliminary Consultation  
Tax Credit: No

Staff: Dan Bruechert

PROPOSAL: Building addition and porch alterations

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the applicants make any revisions based upon the HPC’s comments and return with a HAWP application.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Non-Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Traditional
DATE: c. 1990

Fig. 1: 7310 Piney Branch is a pre-fab house with a parking area in front of the house.
PROPOSAL

The applicants propose to add a second story to the existing house and to modify the existing front porch.

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 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 historic 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-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 ensure 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
(c) 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 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.

**STAFF DISCUSSION**

The applicant proposes to add a second floor to the existing, one-story house; remove the existing side entrance and install new siding on the first floor; and to modify the front porch to create a new access.

**Second Story Addition and Siding Alterations**

The existing house is a prefab one-story, front gable house with vinyl siding and a concrete foundation. The principal entrance to the house is through a side entrance on the left side of the house covered by a shed-roof porch. The applicant proposes to remove the existing side entrance, add a second story addition set back from the front, and install new fiber cement siding to the existing house.

While the house has a ‘front’ door on the front porch, it is not accessible except from inside the house. The principal entrance to the house is through the left-side entrance. The applicant proposes eliminating the side entrance, removing the porch and doors and installing new sash windows in their place. On the right elevation, the applicant proposes removing a pair of French Doors with a Juilette balcony and installing a single casement window. The applicant also proposes removing the existing vinyl siding and installing fiber cement board and batten siding. Staff finds that this proposal won’t have a significant impact on the massing of the house or a visual impact on the surrounding district. Staff would support the approval of removing the side entrance and replacing the siding under the Design Guidelines as a HAWP.

The larger change to the house is the proposed second story addition. The new second story will have a front gable roof with side-facing shed dormers on the left and right roof slopes. The roof will have exposed rafter tails and be covered in asphalt architectural shingles. The second story will be clad in fiber cement clapboard siding. Windows installed in the new second story will be multi-lite wood-clad casements. Instead of aligning with the front wall plane, the second story addition is set back two bays from the front.

Staff finds that the materials and design are appropriate for the existing non-contributing resource and are consistent with previous approvals for new construction in the Takoma Park Historic District. The larger question has to do with the appropriateness of adding a story to this house and the placement of the new construction.

Staff finds that a second story addition on this house is an acceptable modification. The Design Guidelines for non-contributing resources are vague as to what constitutes “impairing the character of the district as a whole,” however, for Contributing resources second-story additions which are allowed in certain circumstances, “should be appropriate to the surrounding streetscape in terms of scale and massing.” Staff’s brief survey of the surrounding area reveals that the subject property is the only one-story building for more than half a block. Staff finds that adding a second story to the subject property is appropriate to the surrounding streetscape.

Evaluating the massing of the proposed addition presents its own set of challenges. The Design Guidelines state: “Most alterations and additions to Non-Contributing/Out-of-Period Resources should be
APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: paul.tresseder@verizon.net Contact Person: Paul Tresseder

Tax Account No: ___________________________ Daytime Phone No: 301-367-2190

Name of Property Owner: John & Lindsey Simpson Daytime Phone No: ___________________________

Address: 7310 Piney Branch Rd. Takoma Park, MD 20912

Contractor: ___________________________ Phone No: ___________________________

Contractor Registration No. ___________________________

Agent for Owner: Paul Tresseder Daytime Phone No: 301-367-2190

LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE

House Number: 7310 Street: Piney Branch Rd.

Town/City: Takoma Park Nearest Cross Street: Takoma Ave

Lot: __________ Block: __________ Subdivision: B.F. Gilbert

Parcel: ___________________________

PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMIT, ACTION, AND USE

1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE: CHECK ALL APPLICABLE

☐ Construct ☐ Extend ☐ Alter, Renovate ☐ Add ☐ A/C ☐ Sub ☐ Room Addition ☐ Porch ☐ Deck ☐ Shed

☐ Move ☐ Install ☐ Wreck, Raze ☐ Solar ☐ Fireplace ☐ Wood-burning Stove ☐ Single Family

☐ Revision ☐ Repair ☐ Additions ☐ Fence/ Wall (complete Section 4) ☐ Other: ___________________________

1B. Construction cost estimate: ___________________________ $200,000

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

PART TWO: COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTENSIONS/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 WHEN REPAIRS OR ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING WALL

3A. Height:____ feet____ inches ___________________________

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/assessment ___________________________

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: March 6, 2023

Approved: ___________________________ For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission ___________________________

Disapproved: ___________________________ Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Applications/Permit No: ___________________________ Data Filed: ___________________________ Data 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:

   See Attached Letter

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

   See Attached Letter

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 resources 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 5" 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.
HAWP application for 7310 Piney Branch Road, Takoma Park, Maryland

1. Description of the resource and its environmental setting

The existing house is a non-contributing resource in the Takoma Park historic district. It sits in the middle of its 10,359 SF, 50' wide lot. It is a plain rectangle, 27.6' wide and 56.6' long. It is a "prefab" single story house on a concrete foundation, assembled in 1990. The roof is a simple gable, 6:12 pitch, running from front to back. The siding is vinyl, except for the gable of the front porch, which is Hardie-shingle. There are no major trees in the vicinity of the house. The front yard has parking for 2 cars, as well as a turn around area, since Piney Branch is such a busy road.

2. Proposed work

No changes are proposed for the footprint of the building. The owner proposes to add a second floor over the rear 2/3 of the house. The roof pitch of the existing house will be replicated, but generous overhangs are proposed, both on the new structure and the existing roof areas to remain. We believe the proposed addition will help break up the long, uninterrupted sides of the house. Dormers in the middle third of the addition will further break up the side elevations.

The existing house currently has a front porch, but no steps from the outside. The entry to the house is along the side. As part of this work, it is proposed to return the porch to its proper function, adding a front door and steps and abandoning the current side porch and entrance. The existing deck in the rear is to remain.

Proposed exterior materials for the house, both new and old, are vertical "board and batten" siding for the lower 10' and horizontal "Hardieplank" siding above that, separated by a water table. Trim will also be a Hardie material. The new windows will be clad wood, with simulated divided light grilles. The shutters on the existing house will not be reinstalled. Roofing will be composition shingles, which is also the current roofing material.
# 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>JOHN &amp; LINDSEY SIMPSON</td>
<td>PAUL TRESEVER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7310 PINHEY BRANCH RD.</td>
<td>Q320 WISCASET RD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAKOMA PARK, MD. 20912</td>
<td>BETHESPA, MD. 20816</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjacent and Confronting Property Owners Mailing Addresses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NELSON &amp; AMANDA WAGNER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7301 TAKOMA AVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAKOMA PARK, MD. 20912</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| RICHARD HEINRICH                                          | CASSANDRA BARNUM &               |
| 7305 TAKOMA AVE                                           | REBECCA WATSON                    |
| TAKOMA PARK, MD. 20912                                    | 7312 PINHEY BRANCH RD.           |
|                                                           | TAKOMA PARK, MD. 20912           |

| CONSTANCE MEYER                                           | HAPPY FULTON                     |
| 7311 PINHEY BRANCH RD.                                    | 7315 PINHEY BRANCH RD.           |
| TAKOMA PARK, MD. 20912                                    | TAKOMA PARK, MD. 20912           |
EXISTING RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION
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 the character of the district as a whole.” Staff concludes the proposal is compatible with the guidance and constructing a second floor in the location proposed does not detract from the streetscape or impair the character of the district as a whole. The house is the only one-story house in the immediate area and is near the edge of the Historic District.

From a purely aesthetic perspective, Staff would recommend the front wall of the second floor align with the front wall of the first floor. Aligning the front wall planes would create a more traditional form that is consistent with the houses at 7314 and 7316 Piney Branch Rd.

Staff asks the HPC for their feedback and recommendations regarding:

- The appropriateness of adding a second floor to the subject property;
- The appropriateness of setting the addition back from the front wall plane; and
- The appropriateness of any materials or other design configurations/modification proposed.

**Porch Alterations**

The existing front porch has a front gable roof supported by columns and a full-width PVC railing. The only access to the front porch is from inside the house. The applicant proposes installing a set of stairs and railing, new wrapped porch columns, and relocating the front door.

As a non-contributing resource, most alterations should be approved as a matter of course. Staff finds that introducing front-loading stairs to this porch will better integrate the front porch to the streetscape, as front porches with front-loading stairs are a common element in this section of the Historic District. Additionally, re-locating the front door so that it is at the top of the stair run is an appropriate design solution.

The new stairs will be wood with a PVC railing. Typically, building elements that are touched, such as railings and porches have to be constructed using traditional building materials. Staff finds in this instance, a PVC railing is appropriate, because the original railing material is also PVC. This railing, for the most part, is being replaced in kind and should be approved as a matter of course.

The last proposed change to the front of the porch is a new four-lite window in the porch gable. Staff finds this is an appropriate feature and will not detract from the streetscape or surrounding district.

The supplicant has not provided a new front door proposal for the house. As this is a non-contributing resource, a wide variety of designs and materials are acceptable. Staff recommends, at a minimum, the HPC requires a new front door that can be painted and recommends wood.

Staff request HPC feedback and recommendations on the proposed alterations to the front porch and for the new front door.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the applicants make any revisions based upon the HPC’s comments and return with a HAWP application.