

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	7105 Poplar Avenue, Takoma Park	Meeting Date:	7/15/2020
Resource:	Outstanding Resource Takoma Park Historic District	Report Date:	7/8/2020
Applicant:	Tilmon Smith Advanced Contracting, Agent	Public Notice:	7/1/2020
Review:	HAWP	Tax Credit:	n/a
Case Number:	37/03-20YREVISION	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
PROPOSAL:	Tree removal and site wall construction		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

SIGNIFICANCE: Outstanding Resource to the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Vernacular Victorian
DATE: 1898



Figure 1: 7105 Poplar Avenue is located in the middle of the block.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to remove the existing rubble stone retaining wall and replace it with a textured concrete block wall. The applicant additionally proposes to remove two trees at the rear of the property.

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*). As this project is also in one of the two commercial districts in Takoma Park review of the project shall be guided by the *Design Guidelines for Commercial Buildings in the City of Takoma Park, Maryland*.

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.

Outstanding Resources have the highest level of architectural and/or historical significance. While they will receive the most detailed level of design review, it is permissible to make sympathetic alterations, changes and additions. The guiding principles to be utilized by the Historic Preservation Commission are the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*

Specifically, some of the factors to be considered in reviewing HAWPs on Outstanding Resources:

Plans for all alterations should be compatible with the resource's original design; additions, specifically, should be sympathetic to existing architectural character, including massing, height, setback, and materials

Emphasize placement of major additions to the rear of existing structures so that they are less visible from the public right-of-way

While additions should be compatible, they are not required to be replicative of earlier architectural styles

Preservation of original and distinctive architectural features, such as porches, dormers, decorative details, shutters, etc..is encouraged

Preservation of original windows and doors, particularly those with specific architectural importance, and of original size and shape of openings is encouraged

Preservation of original building materials and use of appropriate, compatible new materials is encourages

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; 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.

STAFF DISCUSSION

The subject is a Vernacular Victorian house that has suffered from extensive deferred maintenance. The *Guidelines* classify the property as an Outstanding Resource; however, there are no additional notes or references explaining that definition. The house is currently undergoing a full-house rehabilitation including a new roof; repairing and repainting the front and rear porch; repairing the majority of windows and doors, and clearing the overgrown landscape. The HPC approved a HAWP for hardscape alterations, new garage doors, and window replacement at the May 27, 2020 HPC meeting (though the applicant has elected to repair many of those features rather than install the approved replacements).

This HAWP revision is for work in two areas: the construction of a site wall and tree removal.

Site Wall

The existing site wall is constructed out of stone rubble and is overgrown with vegetation and has substantially degraded. The applicant proposes to remove the existing stone and install a new textured concrete block (specs attached) wall in its place. The height of the new wall will match the existing.

Staff finds that the existing wall has failed and needs to be removed. The mortar is gone, the wall has been taken down in select locations, and it is largely overgrown with ground cover. Staff recommends the HPC approve removing the existing wall.

In order to maintain the existing grade on the site, the applicant proposes installing a new concrete block wall that will match the approximate height of the existing. Staff finds that the height of the proposed wall is appropriate for the site, as it matches a historic feature. Staff additionally finds that the proposed concrete block is an appropriate material. Staff finds the rough texture and mottled color of the block is in keeping with the visual character of natural stone. Staff additionally finds the proposed concrete block is consistent with the wide variety of materials used for site walls on this block (which includes parged

Description of Property: Please describe the building and surrounding environment. Include information on significant structures, landscape features, or other significant features of the property:

Description of Work Proposed: Please give an overview of the work to be undertaken:



FOR STAFF ONLY:
HAWP# 912600
DATE ASSIGNED _____

**APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301.563.3400

APPLICANT:

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Tax Account No.: _____

AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Contractor Registration No.: _____

LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE: MIHP # of Historic Property _____

Is the Property Located within an Historic District? Yes/District Name _____

No/Individual Site Name _____

Is there an Historic Preservation/Land Trust/Environmental Easement on the Property? If YES, include a map of the easement, and documentation from the Easement Holder supporting this application.

Are other Planning and/or Hearing Examiner Approvals /Reviews Required as part of this Application? (Conditional Use, Variance, Record Plat, etc.?) If YES, include information on these reviews as supplemental information.

Building Number: _____ Street: _____

Town/City: _____ Nearest Cross Street: _____

Lot: _____ Block: _____ Subdivision: _____ Parcel: _____

TYPE OF WORK PROPOSED: See the checklist on Page 4 to verify that all supporting items for proposed work are submitted with this application. Incomplete Applications will not be accepted for review. Check all that apply:

☐ New Construction

☐ Deck/Porch

☐ Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure

☐ Addition

☐ Fence

☐ Solar

☐ Demolition

☐ Hardscape/Landscape

☐ Tree removal/planting

☐ Grading/Excavation

☐ Roof

☐ Window/Door

☐ Other: _____

I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the foregoing application, that the application is correct and accurate and that the construction will comply with plans reviewed and approved by all necessary agencies and hereby acknowledge and accept this to be a condition for the issuance of this permit.

John Little, Jr.

6/15/20

Signature of owner or authorized agent

Date

Work Item 1: _____

Description of Current Condition:

Proposed Work:

Work Item 2: _____

Description of Current Condition:

Proposed Work:

Work Item 3: _____

Description of Current Condition:

Proposed Work:

The retaining wall will be replaced with concrete retaining wall concrete block on the side and front of the house.

Here is the existing wall.



Here is the existing wall with a close view.



We will replace the wall with the bricks below and it will be a similar look to the picture except it will border the driveway and sidewalk in the same height and width as we have it today.

THE HOME DEPOT You're shopping **Columbia, MD** **OPEN until 8 pm**

What can we help you find today?

Store Finder Truck & Tool Rental For the Pro Gift Cards Credit Services Favorites Track Order

My Account Cart | 0 items

All Departments Home Decor & Furniture DIY Projects & Ideas Project Calculators Installation & Services Specials & Offers Local Ad

Home / Outdoors / Garden Center / Landscaping / Hardscapes / Wall Blocks / Retaining Wall Blocks

Internet #204565219 Model # 87590 Store SKU #1000026537




RockWall Small 4 in. x 11.63 in. x 6.75 in. Marine Concrete Retaining Wall Block

★★★★★ (13) Write a Review Questions & Answers (4)

- Self-aligning rear lip makes retaining wall setback automatic
- Split face technology creates the look of weathered stone
- Works with other Rockwall blocks to form appealing stone patterns

Color/Finish: **Marine**

How to Get It

 Store Pickup Unavailable at Columbia, MD Check Nearby Stores	 Ship to Home Not available for this item	 Scheduled Delivery Not available for this item
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concrete, brick, natural stone, and concrete block) and throughout the Takoma Park Historic District. Staff recommends approval of the proposed retaining wall.

Tree Removal

The applicant proposes to remove a total of three trees at the rear. One tree was identified as dying and was approved administratively. The other trees are a box alder (21" d.b.h.) and a black cherry tree (17" d.b.h.). The City of Takoma Park considers box alders to be an undesirable species and encourages its removal. Both of these trees are at the rear of the property, so their removal will not have an impact on the surrounding streetscape. The City of Takoma Park offered the applicant the ability to re-plant two trees on the site or to pay a fee in lieu. In this case, the applicant has elected to pay the fee in lieu.

While Staff recognizes that it is possible that removing too many trees may damage the character of the surrounding district, the two trees subject to this HAWP are at the rear of the property which has several trees in both the front and back yard. Staff finds this alteration will not have a substantial negative impact on the character of the site or district and recommends approval of the HAWP.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve** the HAWP application:

Under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(1), (2) and (d), having found that the proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in character with the district and the purposes of Chapter 24A;

and with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* #2;

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.

Bruechert, Dan

From: Tilmon Smith <tsmith@tdspropertiesllc.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2020 9:16 PM
To: Ballo, Rebecca; Bruechert, Dan
Subject: Fw: Tree Removal Request :: W004932-060320

Here is a request for the second tree.

Thanks,

Tilmon Smith
TDS Properties, LLC
P.O. Box 272
Fulton, MD 20759
(703) 402-2494
www.tdspropertiesllc.com

From: Online Customer Service Center <TakomaParkMD@mycusthelp.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2020 2:54 PM
To: Tilmon Smith <tsmith@tdspropertiesllc.com>
Subject: Tree Removal Request :: W004932-060320



06/10/2020

TDS Properties, LLC
PO BOX 272, Fulton, MD 20759

7105 POPLAR
TAKOMA PARK MD 20912

Dear Tilmon Smith:

The City of Takoma Park has granted preliminary permit approval for you to remove the 21" d.b.h. BOXELDER (ACNE) (2 replants) from the BACK LEFT side of your property.

Because your tree is considered an undesirable species, the usual 15 day posting period is not required. You will be granted a permit to remove the tree(s) pending the City's receipt of your signed agreement to adhere to the City's tree replacement requirements. The replacement agreement is enclosed, the terms of which require you to replant (4) 1 ½ inch caliper category 3 Evergreen tree(s), or make a contribution of \$700 to the City's tree fund. For reference the tree

type list is maintained online here –

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/publicworks-takomapark/public/arborist/tree-selection-guide.pdf>

TREE WORK DONE FOR HIRE IN THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK MUST BE CARRIED OUT BY A MARYLAND STATE LICENSED TREE EXPERT, OR LTE. HIRING SOMEONE WHO IS NOT LICENSED IS A VIOLATION OF CITY AND STATE LAW. MAKE SURE YOUR CONTRACTOR HAS A LTE NUMBER BEFORE YOU HIRE THEM.

If you have any questions, please contact the Urban Forest Manager at:

UrbanForestManager@TakomaParkMD.gov

To monitor the progress or update this request please log into the [\[NAMEOFSYSTEM\]](#)



Bruechert, Dan

From: Tilmon Smith <tsmith@tdspropertiesllc.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2020 9:16 PM
To: Ballo, Rebecca; Bruechert, Dan
Subject: Fw: Tree Removal Request :: W004933-060320

This is the request for one tree.

Thanks,

Tilmon Smith
TDS Properties, LLC
P.O. Box 272
Fulton, MD 20759
(703) 402-2494
www.tdspropertiesllc.com

From: Online Customer Service Center <TakomaParkMD@mycusthelp.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2020 2:57 PM
To: Tilmon Smith <tsmith@tdspropertiesllc.com>
Subject: Tree Removal Request :: W004933-060320



06/10/2020

TDS Properties, LLC
PO BOX 272, Fulton, MD 20759

7105 POPLAR
TAKOMA PARK MD 20912

Dear Tilmon Smith:

The City of Takoma Park has granted preliminary permit approval for you to remove the 21" d.b.h. BLACK CHERRY (PRSE) (4 replants) from the BACK LEFT side of your property.

Preliminary approval means that the City will post your property for a 15 day period beginning 06/10/2020 and ending 6/24/2020 1:45:33 PM for public comment. A permit to remove the tree(s) will be granted pending the City's receipt of the signed agreement to adhere to the City's tree replacement requirements. **Additionally, since your property is located within the Historic District, you are required to receive a HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT.** To apply

for a HAWP, contact Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services by phone 301-563-3400, by email MCP-Historic@mncppc-mc.org or online at:
<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/historic/historic-area-work-permits/>

Please submit both the signed replanting agreement and a copy of your HAWP to Takoma Park Public Works, in order to be issued a tree removal permit.

The replacement agreement is enclosed, the terms of which require you to replant 4 1 ½" caliper category trees or make a contribution of \$700 to the City's Tree Fund. For reference the tree type list is maintained online here:
<https://s3.amazonaws.com/publicworks-takomapark/public/arborist/tree-selection-guide.pdf>

TREE WORK DONE FOR HIRE IN THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK MUST BE CARRIED OUT BY A MARYLAND STATE LICENSED TREE EXPERT, OR LTE. HIRING SOMEONE WHO IS NOT LICENSED IS A VIOLATION OF CITY AND STATE LAW. MAKE SURE YOUR CONTRACTOR HAS A LTE NUMBER BEFORE YOU HIRE THEM.

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