

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**STAFF REPORT**

<b>Address:</b>	15708 Sycamore Grove Court, Rockville	<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10/28/2020
<b>Resource:</b>	Master Plan Site #23/112 ( <i>Sycamores</i> )	<b>Report Date:</b>	10/21/2020
<b>Applicant:</b>	David Brady and Birte Wistinghausen	<b>Public Notice:</b>	10/14/2020
<b>Review:</b>	HAWP	<b>Tax Credit:</b>	N/A
<b>Case Number:</b>	23/112-20A	<b>Staff:</b>	Michael Kyne
<b>PROPOSAL:</b> New pool construction, fence installation, accessory building construction			

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

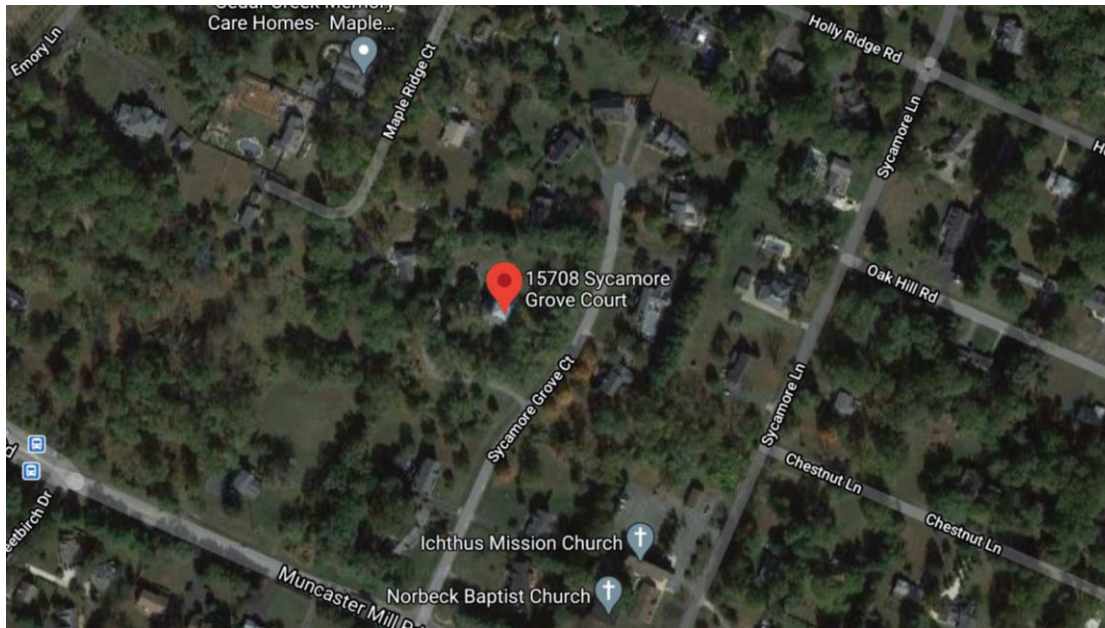
Staff recommends that the HPC **approve** the HAWP application.

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:**

SIGNIFICANCE: Individually Listed Master Plan Site #23/112, *Sycamores*  
 DATE: 1854

Excerpt from *Places from the Past*:

Adrian Rowe Wadsworth, a Connecticut lawyer, built this dignified stone residence on a 240-acre farm. According to historian Roger Farquhar, the house was completed in 1854. Wadsworth was among the first property owners in the county to assist in establishing a public school for African American children, selling a lot for this purpose to the school board in 1873. Freed slaves who had worked at Sycamores lived on land Wadsworth sold and donated, in a community known as Mount Pleasant, later Norbeck, at the intersection of Muncaster Mill Road and Georgia Avenue. In an inventory taken at Sycamores in 1888, livestock included horses, steers, oxen, cows, sheep, chickens, hogs, and bees. That year, Edward B. and Mary R. Prescott, of Illinois, purchased the farm. The dwelling has a doublepile plan with center hall passage. The cubical house is 65 feet on each side. When the original flat roof was damaged in an 1896 storm, the Prescotts replaced it with the Second Empire style mansard roof. Queen Anne details typical of this era are seen in the dormers: windows have small border panes and walls are sided with fishscale wood shingles. A porch wraps around all four sides of the residence.



**Fig. 1: Subject property.**

### **PROPOSAL:**

The applicants propose new pool construction, fence installation, accessory building construction at the subject property.

### **APPLICABLE GUIDELINES:**

When reviewing alterations and new construction at individually listed Master Plan Sites, several documents are to be utilized as guidelines to assist the Commission in developing their decision. These documents include *Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A-8 (Chapter 24A-8)* and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards)*. The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

#### ***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
  - (3) The proposal would enhance or aid in the protection, preservation and public or private utilization of the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district in a

manner compatible with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural value of the historic site or historic district in which an historic resource is located; or

- (4) The proposal is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied; or
  - (5) The proposal is necessary in order that the owner of the subject property not be deprived of reasonable use of the property or suffer undue hardship; or
  - (6) In balancing the interests of the public in preserving the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district, with the interests of the public from the use and benefit of the alternative proposal, the general public welfare is better served by granting the permit.
- (c) It is not the intent of this chapter to limit new construction, alteration or repairs to any 1 period or architectural style.

### ***Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation***

The Secretary of the Interior defines rehabilitation 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 *Standards* are as follows:

- 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 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 proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

### **PROPOSAL:**

The applicants propose the following work items at the subject property:

- Construction of a 6' high deer fence at the southwest (rear/left, as viewed from the public right-of-way of Sycamore Grove Court) corner of the subject property.
  - The proposed deer fence will be a black aluminum picket fence to match the proposed swimming pool safety fence (see below).
  - ***Staff notes that the front of the house actually faces south, where it is in excess of 660' from Muncaster Mill Road, with intervening new construction.***
- Installation of a prefabricated chicken coop and run at the southwest (rear/left) corner of the subject property (inside the proposed deer fence).
  - The proposed chicken coop will be 6' x 7' with a 6' x 7' run.
  - At its highest point, the proposed chicken coop will be 101" (8.4') high.
  - The proposed materials include metal wire mesh fencing, wood board and batten siding, and a metal roof.
- Construction of a 20' x 40' inground swimming pool at the northwest (rear/right) side of the subject property.

- A 6' high black aluminum picket swimming pool safety fence is proposed around the pool.
- Aside from the proposed safety fence, the only above grade feature will be the simple coping stone at the border of the pool.

The proposed work items are all at the rear and/or rear/sides of the subject property, as viewed from the public right-of-way of Sycamore Grove Court. Due to the property's grade and the house's setback from the public rights-of-way (approximately 145' from Sycamore Grove Court to the east, and, as previously noted, in excess of 660' from Muncaster Mill Road to the south), the proposed alterations will be negligibly visible, at best. Additionally, staff finds the proposed features and materials to be compatible with the character of the subject property. Therefore, staff finds that the proposal will not remove or alter character-defining features of the subject property, in accordance with *Standards #2 and #9*.

After full and fair consideration of the applicant's submission staff finds the proposal as being consistent with the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b) 1 and 2, having found the proposal is consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #2 and #9* outlined above.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b) 1 and 2, having found that the proposal will not substantially impact the historic resource and is consistent with the purposes of Chapter 24A;

and with *the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #2 and #9*;

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 michael.kyne@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.





FOR STAFF ONLY:  
HAWP# 927892  
DATE ASSIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

# APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
301.563.3400

## APPLICANT:

Name: David Brady and Birte Wistinghausen

E-mail: birtewistinghausen@gmail.com

Address: 15708 Sycamore Grove Ct

City: Rockville Zip: 20853

Daytime Phone: 917-9913804

Tax Account No.: \_\_\_\_\_

## AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):

Name: N/A

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contractor Registration No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE:** MIHP # of Historic Property M 23-112

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

x No/Individual Site Name Sycamores

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: 15708 Street: Sycamore Grove Ct

Town/City: Rockville Nearest Cross Street: Muncaster Mill Road

Lot: 40 Block: D Subdivision: \_\_\_\_\_ Parcel: NA

**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:**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction   | <input type="checkbox"/> Deck/Porch          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addition           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fence    | <input type="checkbox"/> Solar                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition         | <input type="checkbox"/> Hardscape/Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree removal/planting                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grading/Excavation | <input type="checkbox"/> Roof                | <input type="checkbox"/> Window/Door                                |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> 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.

09/23/2020

Signature of owner or authorized agent

Date

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

<b>Owner's mailing address</b>  15708 Sycamore Grove Ct Rockville, MD 20853	<b>Owner's Agent's mailing address</b>  NA
<b>Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses</b>	
Magdalena and Daniel Stanislauk 15905 MAPLE RIDGE CT ROCKVILLE, 20853	Joseph P and DM May 15712 SYCAMORE GROVE CT ROCKVILLE, 20853
William J and PR Collins 15713 SYCAMORE GROVE CT ROCKVILLE, 20853	Mark E Chorvinsky and Laurel A. Chiat 15709 SYCAMORE GROVE CT ROCKVILLE, 20853
Geraldine R FLOWERS 15704 SYCAMORE GROVE CT ROCKVILLE, 20853	Janet Louise Limmer 4641 MUNCASTER MILL RD ROCKVILLE, 20853

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

This two story plus mansard stone house sits on a hill facing south. A shed roof, supported by square posts, extends around all four sides of the house. A raised wooden porch floor, supported from below by brick posts, starts at the northwest corner of the west elevation and continues around the south elevation to the center of the east elevation. A simple wooden railing with narrowly spaced square balusters is interrupted only where stairs climb up to the porch on the south, east, and west elevations. On the north elevation and northeast half of the east elevation the porch has ground level brick flooring. The front door is located on the south and centered between two windows. On the west elevation a wooden stairway leads up to the porch. A second stairway at the northwest corner leads up to the porch. On the east elevation a wooden stairway leads from the northeast corner. There is a narrow panelled wooden door on this elevation which is surmounted by a three-light transom. On the north elevation the door is centered and panelled. A wooden run of east and west ascending steps lead to a small central landing in front of this door.

There are large six-over-six double-hung windows throughout the house. On the west elevation at the northwest corner there is a six-over-nine light window. On the south and north elevations there are three shingled gabled dormer windows of one-over-one double windows. On the east and west elevations there are two shingled, gabled dormer windows of one-over one double-hung windows. The upper section of all these dormer windows is set into an interior frame of smaller square panes of glass. The house has a mansard roof and is covered by wooden shingles. There are four interior end chimneys constructed of brick. Two are on the east elevation and two on the west elevation.

The house is flanked by Sycamore Grove Ct on the East and set on a hill surrounded by beautiful large trees (mostly sycamores and maples) and lawn without any significant landscaping. The southwest corner of the property was completely overgrown with invasive multiflora, wineberries, porcelainberries and bittersweet vines. Upon cleaning the area from the invasive vines and remnants of fencing, a man made small pond and perennials including beebalm, hibiscus, lillies, and amsonia were discovered. According to neighbors previous owners had a fenced in butterfly garden in that corner of the property. Indeed, a previous review of the property by the historical trust from 1976 states:"The house is set in from the road on a hill overlooking a beautifully landscaped area." Efforts of reviving and regrowing the butterfly garden have been significantly hampered by ongoing deer damage.

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

1. Placement of an inground pool in the Northwest corner of the property surrounded by a 6 foot fence. Because of the slope of the property on a hill, the fence will not be visible from the street. It will be hidden from the surrounded neighbors by shrubs and plantings.
2. Placement of a 6 foot deer fence in the Southwest corner of the property to protect the existing and additional butterfly attracting annuals and perennials as well as fence in the existing pond. This fence will also not be visible from the street because of the slope of the property and existing treed and shrubs.
3. Addition of a chicken coop and run in the Southwest corner of the property which will also not be visible from the street because of the slope of the property and existing shrubs.

**Work Item 1:** Placing Fence around butterfly garden

**Description of Current Condition:**

When we moved in in July 2019, the area was overgrown by vines and brambles. Upon cleaning the area, a small pond, perennials and remnants of a fence were discovered (see attached photos). Neighbors reported previous owners had a butterfly garden protected by a fence in that area. Over the summer, the existing and newly planted perennials have sustained repeated and significant deer damage

**Proposed Work:**

Protect the butterfly garden from deer damage and surround pond with 6 foot deer fence (see attached sample).

**Work Item 2:** Placement of chicken coop in southwest corner

**Description of Current Condition:**

Currently the area is lawn

**Proposed Work:**

Placement of chicken coop with outdoor run for 4-6 chicken. The property used to be a working farm and this is within the character of the property. See attached proposed structure.

**Work Item 3:** Placement of pool with 6 foot surrounding fence

**Description of Current Condition:**

The pool will be placed in the backyard in an area that is currently covered by lawn.

**Proposed Work:**

Placement of a 20x40 foot pool with simple coping stone border surrounding by 6 foot fence. no tree removal is necessary. The pool will be a simple country pool without any surrounding patio and any other elevated structure except for surrounding fence (see attached sample)

PER PLAT 1





## *7x12 Combination*

- With board and batten siding
- 6' x 7' run area
- 6' x 7' chicken coop area
- 101" high
- 6 nesting boxes
- Rustic cedar stain
- Shown with optional green metal roof

























