

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

<b>Address:</b>	7818 Overhill Rd., Bethesda	<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10/13/2021
<b>Resource:</b>	Contributing Resource (Greenwich Forest Historic District)	<b>Report Date:</b>	10/6/2021
<b>Applicant:</b>	William and Allison Trunk	<b>Public Notice:</b>	9/29/2021
<b>Review:</b>	HAWP	<b>Staff:</b>	Dan Bruechert
<b>Case Number:</b>	966376	<b>Tax Credit:</b>	N/A
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Fence Installation		

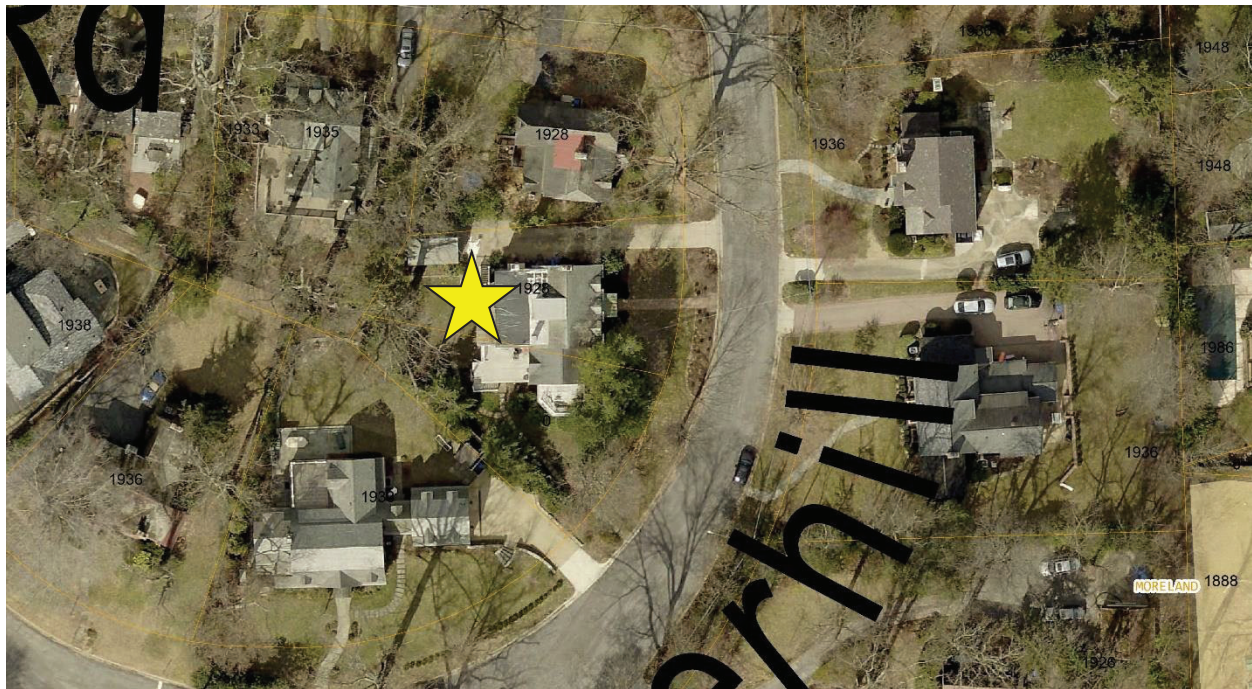
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

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

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:**

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Contributing Resource within the Greenwich Forest Historic District  
**STYLE:** Colonial Revival  
**DATE:** 1928



*Figure 1: 7818 Overhill Rd., Bethesda*

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicants propose to install a fence in the rear of the property.

## **APPLICABLE GUIDELINES:**

When reviewing alterations and new construction within the Greenwich Forest 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 *Greenwich Forest 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.

### ***Greenwich Forest Historic District Guidelines***

#### **A. PRINCIPLES**

The preservation of the following essential elements of Greenwich Forest is the highest priority in making decisions concerning applications for work permits. These Principles are not meant to stop or create unreasonable obstacles to normal maintenance, reasonable modifications, and the evolving needs of residents.

A1. Greenwich Forest was conceived of, built, and to a great degree preserved as a park-like canopied forest with gentle topographic contours, in which the presence of houses and hardscape are understated relative to the natural setting. The removal of mature trees and the significant alteration of topographic contours on private property, the *Greenwich Forest Triangle*, and the public right-of-way in Greenwich Forest should be avoided whenever possible. The Greenwich Forest Citizens Association (GFCA) will continue to support the replacement of trees. In order to protect mature trees and the natural setting of Greenwich Forest, and to limit runoff into the Chesapeake Bay, the creation of extensive new impermeable hardscape surfaces should be avoided whenever possible.

A2. The houses in Greenwich Forest create an integrated fabric well-suited to its forest setting. These Guidelines are intended to preserve this environment by ensuring that approved *work permits* include appropriate safeguards that protect the following three essential elements of this fabric.

- a. An array of revival American *architectural styles* that, taken together, make a significant statement on the evolution of suburban building styles (see Appendix 2).
- b. The *scale and spacing* of houses and their *placement* relative to adjacent houses and the public right-of-way. The original developers made decisions on these three elements to understate the presence of structures relative to the forest. For example, minimum side setbacks at the time were 7' but placement and spacing produced distances between houses that far exceeded the minimum 14'. Additions and new houses have, in almost all cases, preserved generous space between houses and minimized visual crowding with plantings.
- c. High quality building materials and high level of craftsmanship.

#### **B. BALANCING PRESERVATION AND FLEXIBILITY**

Greenwich Forest represents a period in the evolution of Montgomery County worthy of preservation, but it has also changed in response to the needs of residents since it was created in the 1930s. These Guidelines seek a reasonable compromise between preservation and the needs of residents in several ways.

B1. Most of the houses in the Greenwich Forest Historic District are designated “contributing” because they contribute to the architectural and historic nature of the district. Contributing structures are shown in the map of the districts. These Guidelines are more specific for contributing structures.

B2. Other houses in the district are designated non-contributing either because (1) they were built more recently than contributing houses with other architectural styles (see Appendix 3) or (2) their original features have been significantly altered by subsequent modifications. Non-contributing structures are shown on the map of the District. The Guidelines provide greater flexibility for owners of non-contributing houses.

B3. These Guidelines reflect the reality that nearly all houses in Greenwich Forest have been modified since their construction. Owners are not expected to return their houses to their original configurations. The modifications they are permitted to make under these Guidelines are based on the current reality in the neighborhood, provided that those modifications are consistent with the Principles in these Guidelines.

B4. Property owners have additional flexibility under these Guidelines to make more extensive changes to the parts of their houses that are less visible from the public rights-of-way in front of their houses. The Guidelines accomplish this by stipulating different levels of review for specific elements on different parts of houses.

The *Guidelines* that pertain to this project are as follows:

D9. Fences and walls: Fences were not part of the original Greenwich Forest streetscape. No front yard fences have been added since then, though some homeowners have added backyard fences and/or fences along side yard property lines. To preserve the uninterrupted green space adjacent to the public right-of-way, front fences are not allowed. To enable the creation of enclosed yards for residents, fences up to 6’6” tall are permitted in back and side yards. In the case of side yards, fences may extend up to just behind the front plane of the house, preserving at least a 3’ setback from the facade. Fence style and material should be in keeping with the architectural style of the house and the forest surroundings. Properties confronting Wilson Lane merit special consideration due to heavy traffic volumes. Construction of fences or walls is permitted on these properties, with review, in order to help ensure the safety and privacy of residents and the safety of drivers and neighbors. The decision-making body is directed to show flexibility in reviewing applications for work permits for such fences and walls.

***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

- (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 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.

**STAFF DISCUSSION**

The applicants propose to install approximately 29' (twenty-nine linear feet) of 48" (forty-eight inch tall) aluminum fence. The proposed fence will include an arched top gate, though the location of the gate was not identified on the site plan. The proposed fence will project from the enclosed side porch and run parallel to the street to the property boundary to the south.

The Greenwich Forest Design Guidelines recognize that when the development was constructed there were no fences, but that many have been installed in the intervening years to enclose properties' side and rear yards. The proposed fence is setback approximately 30' (thirty feet) from the right of way and more than 15' (fifteen feet) from the front wall plane. Staff finds this location exceeds the guideline-required 3' (three-foot) setback. The *Guidelines* further state that the fence style and material should be in keeping with the architectural style of the house and forest surrounding. Staff finds that an open fence design is best to preserve the open character of the surrounding district and that the proposed fence design is more transparent than a wood picket fence. Staff finds that while most of the fences in the district are wood, the proposed aluminum fence is consistent with the fence installed in the rear yard of 5615 Midwood Rd. in the Greenwich Forest Historic District. Finally, Staff notes that Greenwich Forest is the one district in Montgomery County that allows the HPC to consider the impact vegetative screening will have on proposed alterations. Staff observes that the side yard has a significant number of trees and shrubs which will make the proposed fence virtually invisible for most of the year. For these reasons, Staff recommends the HPC approve the HAWP under the *Design Guidelines*, 24A-8(b)(1) and (d).

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve** the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(1) and (d), having found that the proposal, as modified by the condition, is consistent with the *Greenwich Forest Historic District Guidelines* identified above, and therefore 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, #9, and #10;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall present an electronic set 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](mailto:dan.bruechert@montgomeryplanning.org) to schedule a follow-up site visit.





FOR STAFF ONLY:  
HAWP# 966376  
DATE ASSIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

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

**APPLICANT:**

Name: William & Allison Trunk

E-mail: allisoncdavis@gmail.com

Address: 7818 Overhill Road

City: Bethesda Zip: 20814

Daytime Phone: 410-703-3768

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 Greenwich Forest  
☐ 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:**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction   | <input type="checkbox"/> Deck/Porch          | <input 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.

Allison C. Trunk

September 8, 2021

Signature of owner or authorized agent

Date

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

<b>Owner's mailing address</b> 7818 Overhill Road, Bethesda 20814	<b>Owner's Agent's mailing address</b>
<b>Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses</b>	
Sheila Cheston & Graham Dower 7817 Hampden Lane, Bethesda 20814	

Adjacent and Confronting Properties:

Bethesda, MD 20814

7817 Hampden Lane

7820 Overhill Road

5602 Midwood Road

7819 Overhill Road

7815 Overhill Road

7805 Overhill Road



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

The house is circa 1929 and is in the colonial revival style.

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

We would like to add a fence at the side/rear of the house in order to enclose the backyard.

Work Item 1: Add a black aluminum fence to the rear left of the house

Description of Current Condition:

See attached photos

Proposed Work:

Add an OnGuard Ornamental Aluminum fence. Fence would be approximately 29 feet wide and would connect to the house on one side and existing wood fence on the other (see attached photos). Fence would be the "starling" style and would include an arched gate (see attached photos). A similar gate (same brand, materials, and fence installer) was recently approved and installed across the street.

Work Item 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Current Condition:

Proposed Work:

Work Item 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Current Condition:

Proposed Work:

# HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT CHECKLIST OF APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

	Required Attachments						
Proposed Work	I. Written Description	2. Site Plan	3. Plans/ Elevations	4. Material Specifications	5. Photographs	6. Tree Survey	7. Property Owner Addresses
New Construction	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Additions/ Alterations	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Demolition	*	*	*		*		*
Deck/Porch	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Fence/Wall	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Driveway/ Parking Area	*	*		*	*	*	*
Grading/Excavation/ Landscaping	*	*		*	*	*	*
Tree Removal	*	*		*	*	*	*
Siding/ Roof Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Window/ Door Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Masonry Repair/ Repoint	*	*	*	*	*		*
Signs	*	*	*	*	*		*



View from street



View of proposed location (fence would connect to brick on one side)





View of proposed location (fence would connect to existing wood fence on other side)





Proposed Fence: OnGuard Aluminum Fence in style "Starling" with arched gate

