

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	16101 Oak Hill Road, Sandy Spring	Meeting Date:	5/18/2022
Resource:	Master Plan Site #15/52 (<i>Edgewood II</i>)	Report Date:	5/11/2022
Applicant:	Steven Gudelsky	Public Notice:	5/4/2022
		Tax Credit:	N/A
Review:	HAWP	Staff:	Michael Kyne
Permit Number: 990754			
PROPOSAL: Request to replace wood porch with AZEK			

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

SIGNIFICANCE: Master Plan Site #15/52, *Edgewood II*
DATE: c. 1858 with later additions

Excerpt from *Places from the Past*:

Originally built c1858, Edgewood has strong historical associations with the Stablers, a prominent Quaker family associated with the settlement and agricultural development of Eastern Montgomery County in the 1800s. Robert Stabler built Edgewood about 1858 when he married. His father, Caleb, of Drayton, gave him the land. Robert was a prosperous farmer active in the Grange and one of the incorporators of the Sandy Spring Bank. The original dwelling was the 2½-story block, two rooms wide with a rear kitchen ell. Later, probably in the late 1800s, a new kitchen wing was added and the old kitchen converted into a dining room. About 1903, another rear wing was built, giving the house a roughly U-shaped plan. The dwelling is set within a grove of hardwood trees from which the property obtained its name.



Fig. 1: Subject property.

PROPOSAL:

The applicant proposes to replace the existing wood porch flooring with Azek porch flooring at the subject property.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES:

When reviewing alterations and new construction at 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 (Chapter 24A)* 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

- (a) The commission shall instruct the director to deny a permit if it finds, based on the evidence and information presented to or before the commission that the alteration for which the permit is sought would be inappropriate, inconsistent with or detrimental to the preservation, enhancement or ultimate protection of the historic site or historic resource within an historic district, and to the purposes of this chapter.
- (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 the 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 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.

STAFF DISCUSSION:

The subject property is the *Edgewood II* Master Plan Site. The historic house consists of the original c. 1858 2 ½-story dwelling to the south and a later rear wing addition, c. 1903, to the north. The original dwelling fronts on Spencerville Road to the south, while the north wing is accessed via Oak Hill Road from the west (now experienced as the front).

The applicant proposes to replace the existing wood porch flooring on both the south (original dwelling) and west (north addition) porches with Azek porch flooring. The application states that the work is being proposed due to continuing rot and deterioration, requiring several previous replacements.

Staff does not support the applicant's proposal. Both porches that are proposed to be altered are significant, with the south porch located on the original primary elevation, and the west porch being experienced as the current front of the building. Accordingly, staff finds that both porches are character-defining features of the property, in terms of design and material. Although the application indicates that the existing porch flooring is not original material, having been previously replaced, it is traditional material, which is appropriate and in-keeping with the character and date(s) of construction of the historic

house.

In the past, the Commission has found that Azek does not accurately reflect the characteristics or appearance of wood, and they have found it an inappropriate and incompatible material, especially where it would replace traditional materials on features at the front of an individually significant historic building. Per preservation best practices, original and/or traditional materials on historic features should only be replaced with substitute materials in cases where the original/traditional materials are no longer available. Otherwise, the historic character and material integrity of the property will be impaired.

Regarding appropriate replacement that will address the issues of continuing rot and deterioration, the Department of the Interior's Technical Preservation Services' *Preservation Brief 45: Preserving Historic Wood Porches (Brief)*¹ provides a great deal of information regarding repair, replacement, and maintenance to extend the life of a porch. In discussing replacement, the *Brief* states that “[b]efore replacing a deteriorated historic porch component, it is important to understand how it was constructed and installed, and what lead to its deterioration. If the replacement part does not sufficiently match the historic part, the character of the porch may be diminished, or even lost. If the cause of material failure is not addressed, the replacement will also fail.” The *Brief* also discusses the importance of considering species, grade, grain, and environmental impacts, when selecting wood for replacement or repair work, as “[d]imensional stability, decay resistance and paint holding ability are wood characteristics that effect durability.”

The *Brief* includes the following table, comparing different wood species, in term of their decay resistance, stability, and ability to hold paint, all of which contribute to the lifespan of wood porch components, including flooring:

¹ Link to *Preservation Brief 45: Preserving Historic Wood Porches*: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/45-wooden-porches.htm#replacement>

Wood Characteristics						
Species	Cut or Grade	Cost	Workability	Resistance to Decay	Resistance to Cupping	Paint Holding Ability
Redwood	Clear, Vertical-grain, all-heart	\$\$\$	Fair	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
	"B" Select, flat-grain	\$\$	Fair	Excellent	Good	Good
Cedar	Clear	\$\$	Fair	Excellent	Good	Fair
Cypress	Clear	\$\$	Fair	Excellent	Fair	Good
Douglas Fir	"C" & better, Vertical grain	\$\$	Fair to Poor	Good to Fair	Excellent	Fair
Southern Yellow Pine	"D" Select, flat-grain	\$	Fair	Fair	Good	Fair
	Vertical-grain	\$\$\$	Fair	Fair	Excellent	Fair to Good
Eastern White Pine	"D" Select, flat-grain	\$	Excellent	Fair	Excellent	Good
	Vertical-grain	\$\$\$	Excellent	Fair	Good	Excellent
Poplar	Firsts and Seconds	\$	Good	Poor	Good	Fair
American Mahogany	Clear	\$\$\$	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good

Fig. 2: Preservation Brief 45: Preserving Historic Wood Porches; wood characteristics table.

Per this table, there are several species of wood, including redwood, cedar, cypress, and American mahogany, which would be appropriate options for the proposed porch flooring replacement. The *Brief* specifically states that vertical grain Douglas fir "...is a very good choice for the replacement of porch floorboards in most climates."

Staff recommends that the applicant consult this table and explore alternatives in selecting an appropriate and compatible replacement material. Staff also recommends that, despite wood selection, all six surfaces (front, back, both sides, and both ends) of the replacement floorboards should be primed prior to installation, to protect against moisture-related rot and prolong the life of the flooring. This recommended approach would also qualify for the County's historic rehabilitation tax credit.

After full and fair consideration of the applicant's submission, staff finds that the proposal would remove character-defining materials and alter character-defining features of the subject property, which is inconsistent with *Standards* #2 and #9. Accordingly, staff recommends that the Commission deny the application, per Chapter 24A-8(a).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission **deny** the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(a), having found that the proposal would be inappropriate, inconsistent with, and detrimental to the preservation, enhancement, and ultimate protection of the historic resource and is incompatible in character with the historic resource and the purposes of Chapter 24A;

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



APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301.563.3400

FOR STAFF ONLY:
HAWP# _____
DATE ASSIGNED _____

APPLICANT:

Name: Steven Gudelsky
Address: 16101 Oak Hill Road
Daytime Phone: 301-622-5272

E-mail: Sgudelsky@comcast.net
City: Silver Spring Zip: 20905
Tax Account No.: 51-0561930

AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):

Name: _____
Address: _____
Daytime Phone: _____

E-mail: _____
City: _____ Zip: _____
Contractor Registration No.: _____

LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE: MIHP # of Historic Property 16101 Oak Hill Road

Is the Property Located within an Historic District? Yes/District Name Site #15/52 Edgewood II
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deck/Porch | <input type="checkbox"/> Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addition | <input 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.

Signature of owner or authorized agent

April 21, 2022

Date

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

Owner's mailing address 16101 Oak Hill Road Silver Spring, MD 20905	Owner's Agent's mailing address
Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses	
Virginia & Bradford Behr 16000 Oak Hill Rd. Silver Spring, MD 20905	Antone & Hollie Taylor 16101 Drayton Farm Drive Spencerville, MD 20868
Robert & Melanie Stone Everett 16100 Drayton Farm Drive Spencerville, MD 20868	Mark Oberfield & Shinrong Lin 16102 Oak Hill Rd. Spencerville, MD 20868
Freeman & Jean Greene 16104 Oak Hill Road Spencerville, MD 20868	William & Jessica Rodriguez 16107 Oak Hill Road Silver Spring, MD 20905

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 original dwelling was 2 1/2 story block, two rooms wide with a rear kitchen ell. Later, probably in the late 1800's, a new kitchen wing was added and the old kitchen converted into a dining room. About 1904, another rear wing was built, giving the house a roughly U-shaped plan. The dwelling is set within a grove of hardwood trees from which the property obtained its name.

There was a double barn with two haymows, with a driveway in the center, basement in the ground floor with several stalls. Only the stones from the barn walls exist today. Other buildings existing today include an ice house with root cellar, a blacksmith shop, a tenant house, a corn crib and a carriage house with loft.

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

The main house on the property which has been restored interior and exterior including entire exterior painting now needs porch flooring repairs. The porch floors on the exterior of the main house have been replaced several times in the past. They continue to rot and we have not found a solution to stop the rotting. We are proposing to replace them with a product such as AZEK PVC Porch Flooring as described in the following website link: <https://www.vintagewoodworks.com/azekporchboards.html>. We feel this is the best solution for keeping the historic character of the exterior of the house but also eliminating the necessity of having to replace the porch flooring every few years.

Work Item 1: <u>Replace porch flooring on main house.</u>	
Description of Current Condition: Porch flooring is rotting on the main house.	Proposed Work: Replace flooring with a product such as AZEK PVC Porch Flooring to prevent rotting.
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	*	*	*	*	*		*











