

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	8822 Hawkins Lane, Chevy Chase	Meeting Date:	6/8/2022
Resource:	Non-Contributing Resource Hawkins Lane Historic District	Report Date:	6/1/2022
Applicant:	Mara Giorgio	Public Notice:	5/25/2022
Review:	HAWP	Tax Credit:	n/a
Permit No.:	993275	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
Proposal:	Hardscaping, Fence Construction, and Pergola Construction		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the HPC **approve with one condition** the HAWP:

1. The rear wood fence needs to be constructed with vertical boards. Final approval authority to ensure the proposed fence is compatible with the character of the district is delegated to Staff.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Non-Contributing Resource within the Hawkins Lane Historic District
STYLE: Eclectic
DATE: c. 1928 with major addition and rehabilitation completed in 2015



Figure 1: The subject property is at the northern end of Hawkins Lane.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to pave a large section of the rear of the property, construct a small section of fence, and install a wood pergola.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

When reviewing alterations and new construction within the Hawkins Lane 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 Hawkins Lane Historic District Development Guidelines Handbook (*Design 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.

Design Guidelines

Landscaping:

- Landscaping around new construction or existing buildings should be informal, in keeping with existing landscaping.

Fences and Other Property Markers:

- Property owners should be encouraged to use shrubs and trees to mark boundary lines, where such marking is desired.
- Where fences are erected, they should be low and inconspicuous, and preferably wood picket or rail.

Sec. 24A-8. Same-Criteria for Issuance

(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 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

(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 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.

#10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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 subject property is a stucco one-story bungalow, with a full-width front porch and detached garage. In 2013, the house had fallen into significant disrepair; the HPC approved a HAWP for a whole house rehabilitation and large rear addition. In the northwest corner of the lot, the applicant proposes to install a patio constructed of Belgium block, a wood pergola, and a wood fence along a portion of the western and north property boundaries. Changes within the Hawkins Lane Historic District are generally evaluated for their impact on the character of the historic kindship community, rather than strictly preserving historic materials. Staff finds the work will largely not be visible from Hawkins Lane and recommends the HPC approve the HAWP.



Figure 2: The subject property looking northwest.

Staff finds that most of the proposed work will not have an impact on the character of the district, because most of the work will not be visible from the public right-of-way. The house will obscure many of the proposed changes and the lot's rearward slope will help to minimize the visual impact other changes make.

The applicants indicate their desire to construct a patio in the rear of their yard is because the lot is so heavily shaded from trees on adjacent properties that grass does not grow. Staff notes that one of the

identified characteristics of Hawkins Lane is the large number of mature trees that contribute to its rural appearance and the preservation of the trees is a “sine qua non” of the district’s ambiance.” No trees will be impacted by the proposed patio. Staff recommends the HPC approve the block patio under 24A-8(b)(1), (2), and (d).



Figure 3: The subject property looking southwest.

Staff next considers the pergola and fencing together. The proposal is to construct a wood pergola (approximately 12 ft²) and 46 ft (forty-six linear feet – thirty-two feet on the long side, and fourteen feet on the north property boundary) of vertical board fencing, consistent with the image below, that will run adjacent to the existing chain link fence.



Figure 4: Proposed fencing design, the military facility to the west requires some opening in the fence design.

Staff finds that while fences are generally disfavored in the Hawkins Lane HD, a fence is appropriate in this instance. First, there already is a fence along the western property boundary to separate the subject property from the adjacent military installation. So the decision to install a fence here is driven by aesthetics because the applicant would prefer to look at a wood fence rather than a chain link fence. The *Design Guidelines* state “fences should be low and inconspicuous, and preferably wood picket or rail.” The existing chain link fence is not low but is inconspicuous because its location makes it only minimally visible from Hawkins Lane. Staff finds the goal of the fence guideline is to preserve the rural character of the district. This guideline is mostly applicable to fences at the front and side yards of properties and is less important at the rear of properties.

Staff finds that a wood fence is preferable to the chain link under the *Design Guidelines* but does not find the horizontal board fence to be appropriate, because it has a more formal design than the Guideline-recommended split rail or picket designs. Staff recommends the HPC add a condition for approval that the approved fence needs to have vertical boards and delegate final approval authority to Staff to ensure the design is compatible with the character of the district.



Figure 5: Aerial photograph of the site with the fence location drawn to scale.

Finally, Staff finds the proposed pergola is not a ‘formal’ landscape feature as described in the *Design Guidelines*, and that its design and materials are appropriate for the subject property and surrounding district. Additionally, it could be removed without any permanent impact to the district. Again, due to the lot’s rearward slope, the pergola will only be minimally visible from the right-of-way. Staff recommends the HPC approve the fence and pergola with the identified condition under the *Design Guidelines*, 24A-8(b)(2) and (d) and Standards 2 and 10.



Figure 6: Looking along the north property boundary at the existing wood fence.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve with one condition** the HAWP application:

1. The rear wood fence needs to be constructed with vertical boards. Final approval authority to ensure the proposed fence is compatible with the character of the district is delegated to Staff; under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(1), (2), and (d), and the *Hawkins Lane Historic District Development Guidelines Handbook*, having found that the proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in character with the surrounding district and the purposes of Chapter 24A;

and Standards 2 and 10;

and with the general condition that the applicant will obtain all other applicable Montgomery County or local government agency permits. After the issuance of these permits, the applicant must contact this Historic Preservation Office if any changes to the approved plan are made;

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.



FOR STAFF ONLY:
HAWP# 993275
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.

Signature of owner or authorized agent

Date

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

Owner's mailing address	Owner's Agent's mailing address
Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses	
	8826 Hawkins Lane Chevy Chase, NMD 20815
	8825 Hawkins Lane Chevy Chase, MD 20815
4301 Jones Bridge Road Bethesda, MD 20814	

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:

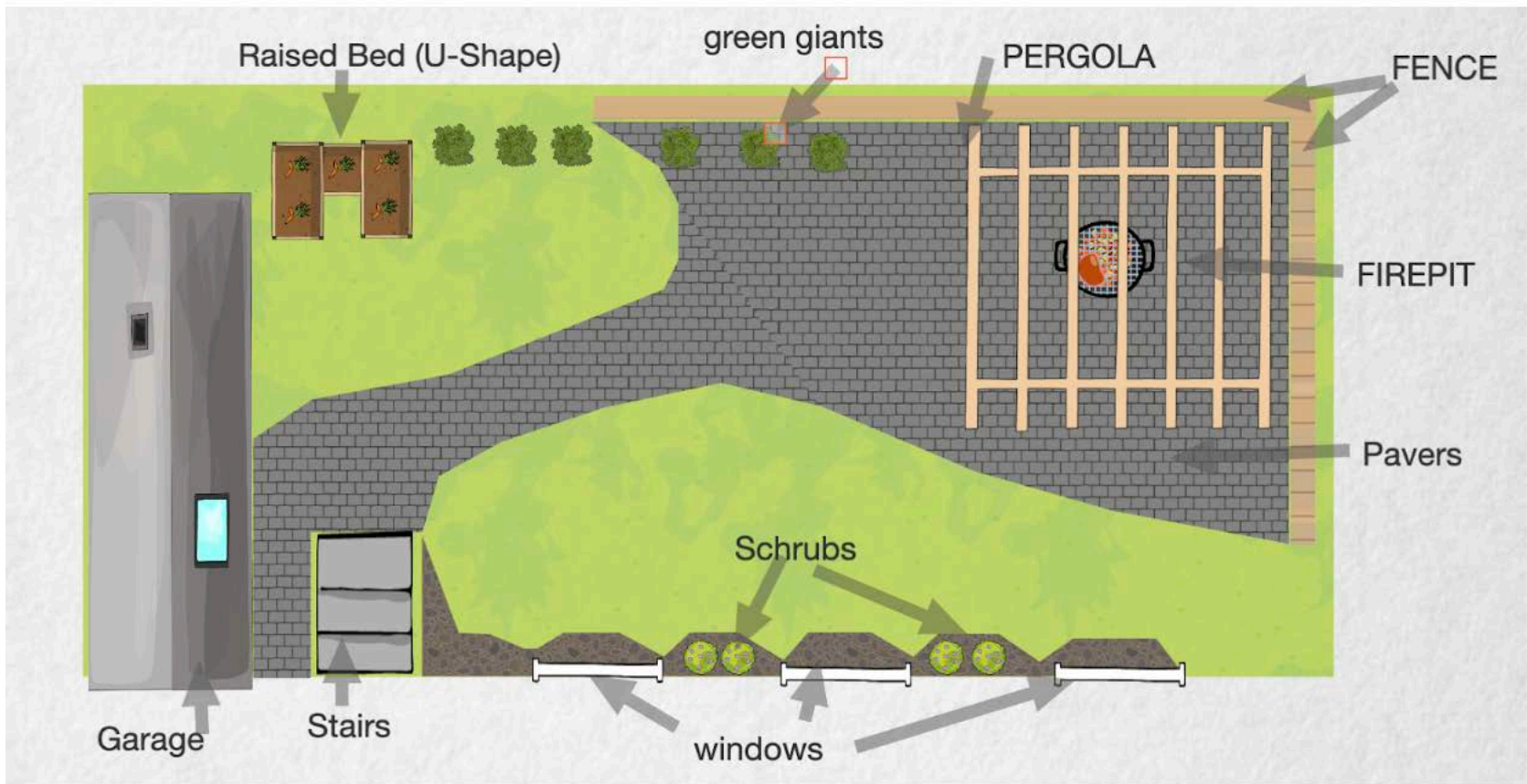
Work Item 1: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

Work Item 2: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

Work Item 3: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

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	*	*	*	*	*		*



The garage, stairs, windows, and grass are what's already there. The backyard also already has a fence (it belongs to the University, not us).