

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

<b>Address:</b>	7 Hickory Avenue, Takoma Park	<b>Meeting Date:</b>	4/26/2023
<b>Resource:</b>	Contributing Resource <b>Takoma Park Historic District</b>	<b>Report Date:</b>	4/19/2023
<b>Applicant:</b>	Teresa Marie Smith	<b>Public Notice:</b>	4/12/2023
<b>Review:</b>	HAWP	<b>Tax Credit:</b>	No
<b>Permit Number:</b>	1026793	<b>Staff:</b>	John Liebertz
<b>PROPOSAL:</b> After-the-fact rear stair construction.			

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) **approve** the HAWP application.

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District  
**STYLE:** Craftsman-styled Bungalow  
**DATE:** 1910s



**Figure 1:** The subject property at 7 Hickory Avenue is located on the west side of the street.  
**Source:** Montgomery Planning.

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicant demolished the existing wood stair and installed a new wood stair, railing, and landing that accesses the enclosed rear porch.

## **APPLICABLE GUIDELINES**

The Historic Preservation Office and Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) consult several documents when reviewing alterations and new construction within the Takoma Park Historic District. These documents include the historic preservation review guidelines in the approved and adopted amendment for the *Takoma Park 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 three documents is outlined below.

### ***Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines***

There are two broad planning and design concepts which apply to all categories. These are:

- The design review emphasis will be restricted to changes that are 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 historic district.

A majority of the buildings in the Takoma Park Historic District have been assessed as being “Contributing Resources.” While these buildings may not have the same level of architectural or historical significance as Outstanding Resources or may have lost some degree of integrity, collectively, they are the basic building blocks of the Takoma Park district. They are important to the overall character of the district and the streetscape due to their size, scale, and architectural qualities, rather than for their particular architectural features.

Contributing Resources should receive a more lenient level of design review than those structures that have been classified as Outstanding. This design review should emphasize the importance of the resource to the overall streetscape and its compatibility with existing patterns rather than focusing on a close scrutiny of architectural detailing. In general, however, changes to Contributing Resources should respect the predominant architectural style of the resource.

The following guidance which pertains to this project are as follows:

- All exterior alterations, including those to architectural features and details, should be generally consistent with the predominant architectural style and period of the resource and should preserve the predominant architectural features of the resource; exact replication of existing details and features is, however, not required.
- All changes and additions should respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space.

**Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A-8**

The following guidance which pertains to this project are as follows:

- (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
  - (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
- (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 applicable *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.
- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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 Contributing Resource to the Takoma Park Historic District and features a one-and-a-half story, Craftsman-styled Bungalow constructed between 1910 and 1920 (*Figure 2*). Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show that the building's overall form remains intact. In the late twentieth century, the former property owners enclosed the rear porch (*Figure 2*). There are no relevant Historic Area Work Permits (HAWP) associated with the rear porch or subject stair.





**Figure 2: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1927 (left) and 1927-1963 (center), and view of the façade looking northwest from Hickory Avenue, 2023 (right).**

**Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Company and Montgomery Planning.**

Staff finds that the constructed wood stair, railing, and landing are compatible with the applicable guidelines. According to the property owners, the demolished stair failed to meet modern code requirements and created unsafe conditions. The installed wood stair, handrail, and landing (*Figure 3*) does not adversely affect the design, materials, or fenestration of the house and is compatible with the overall character of the historic district. These elements are located on the rear of the building and are not visible from the public rights-of-way. In the future, the stair could be removed with no impact to the historic property or its environment.



**Figure 3: View of the new wood stair, railing, and landing, 2023 (left), and aerial view of the house, 2021 (right). The red arrow points to the location of the installed stair.**

**Source: ConnexExplore and Montgomery Planning.**

After full and fair consideration of the applicant's submission, staff finds the proposal, as modified by the conditions, consistent with the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(1), (2), and (5) having found the proposal is consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* #2, #9, and #10, and *Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines* outlined above.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) **approve** the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b), (1), (2), and (5), having found that the proposal is consistent with the *Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines*, 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 [john.liebertz@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:john.liebertz@montgomeryplanning.org) to schedule a follow-up site visit.



APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301.563.3400

FOR STAFF ONLY:
HAWP#
DATE ASSIGNED

APPLICANT:

Name:
Address:
Daytime Phone:
E-mail:
City:
Zip:
Tax Account No.:

AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):

Name:
Address:
Daytime Phone:
E-mail:
City:
Zip:
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:

- Checklist of work types: New Construction, Addition, Demolition, Grading/Excavation, Deck/Porch, Fence, Hardscape/Landscape, Roof, Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure, Solar, Tree removal/planting, 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]

<b>Owner's mailing address</b>	<b>Owner's Agent's mailing address</b>
<b>Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses</b>	



**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	*	*	*	*	*		*





DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING SERVICES

Marc Elrich  
*County Executive*

Rabbiah Sabbakhan  
*Director*

# HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT APPLICATION

Application Date: 4/4/2023

Application No: 1026793  
AP Type: HISTORIC  
Customer No: 1461382

## Comments

The steps are not visible from the street.

## Affidavit Acknowledgement

The Homeowner is the Primary applicant  
This application does not violate any covenants and deed restrictions

## Primary Applicant Information

Location 7 Hickory Avenue ST Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Homeowner Smith (Primary)

## Historic Area Work Permit Details

Work Type ALTER

Scope of Work I had the back steps replaced. After previous foundation work, they were no longer up to code. Also when you arrived at the top step, you opened the door towards you risking falling backwards. A stoop was added.





BEWARE  
OF THE DOG





BEWARE  
OF THE DOG



