

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address: 7000 Westmoreland Ave., Takoma Park **Meeting Date:** 3/20/2024
Resource: Contributing Resource **Report Date:** 3/13/2024
 Takoma Park Historic District
Applicant: George Kohl **Public Notice:** 3/6/2024
 (Jesse Karpas, Agent)
Review: HAWP **Tax Credit:** no
Case Number: 1060596 **Staff:** Dan Bruechert
Proposal: Front Stair Demolition and New Stair Construction

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission **approve with one (1) condition** the HAWP application:

1. The front stairs shall be painted. Photographs showing the painted front porch steps shall be submitted to Staff six months after construction to verify the condition has been satisfied.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing Resource to the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Craftsman
DATE: 1920



Figure 1: The subject property is located near the edge of the Takoma Park Historic District.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing concrete stairs and install new wood stairs in the same location.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

When reviewing alterations and additions for new construction to Contributing Resources within the Takoma Park Historic District, decisions are guided by the Takoma Park Historic District Design Guidelines (*Design Guidelines*) and Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (*Chapter 24A*) and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (*The Standards*).

Takoma Park Historic District Design Guidelines

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

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

Contributing Resources should receive a more lenient 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. As stated above, the design review emphasis will be restricted to changes that are *at all visible from the public right-of-way*, irrespective of landscaping or vegetation.

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

While additions should be compatible, they are not required to be replicative of earlier architectural styles

Some non-original building materials may be acceptable on a case-by-case basis; artificial siding on areas visible to the public right-of-way is discouraged where such materials would replace or damage original building materials that are in good condition

Alterations to features that are not visible from the public right-of-way should be allowed as a matter of course

All changes and additions should respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space.

Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A Historic Resources Preservation

(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

(4) The proposal is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied; 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 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.

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

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 one-story Craftsman bungalow with a partial-width front gable front porch. The front porch has a wood railing and concrete steps with a metal pipe stair railing anchored into the ground and one of the porch columns. The existing concrete steps have settled and no longer provide even footing. The applicant proposes to demolish the existing concrete steps and install wood stairs in the same location in a matching width. Because the metal railing is independent of the steps, the applicant proposes to retain it in its current location.

Staff concurs with the applicant's assessment that the existing stairs have settled and are no longer even and likely present a potential hazard. Staff supports the removal of the existing stairs under 24A-8(b)(4) and (d).



Figure 2: The subject property (date unknown) showing the front porch and existing railing.

The next question for the HPC is the appropriateness of the replacement steps. The applicant proposes to install pressure-treated wood stairs, 5' (five feet) wide, that match the width of the existing stairs. In considering the appropriateness of installing wood stairs, staff surveyed the area immediately adjacent to the subject property.

Address	Porch Stair Material
6906 Westmoreland Ave.	Stone and Concrete
6908 Westmoreland Ave.	Wood (painted)
6912 Westmoreland Ave.	Wood (painted)
6914 Westmoreland Ave.	Stone
6916 Westmoreland Ave.	Wood (painted)
7002 Westmoreland Ave.	Wood (painted)
7004 Westmoreland Ave.	Stone and Concrete

Based on the survey, it becomes apparent that wood is a common material for front stairs in this portion of the Takoma Park Historic District. Staff additionally notes, that the *Design Guidelines* do not require exact replication of details and instead aim to reinforce the architectural style and period of construction. Staff finds that painted wood stairs are compatible with the character of the site and surrounding district.

The application materials only indicate that the wood proposed will be pressure-treated pine, but does not identify a finish. Staff does not find unfinished wood front steps are consistent with the level of finish or character in the surrounding district and recommends the HPC add a condition for approval that the front porch be painted. Because pressure-treated wood needs to weather for at least four months before the

paint will effectively adhere to the surface, Staff recommends the condition includes the requirement that the applicant be required to submit photographs to Staff showing the finished steps painted six months after installation. Staff recommends the HPC approve the HAWP with this condition under 24A-8(b)(2), (4), (d); the *Design Guidelines*, and Standard 2.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve with one (1) condition** the HAWP application:

1. The front stairs shall be painted. Photographs showing the painted front porch steps shall be submitted to Staff six months after construction to verify the condition has been satisfied; under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(2), (4), and (d), having found that the proposal 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*;

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 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: _____ 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:

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

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	

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:

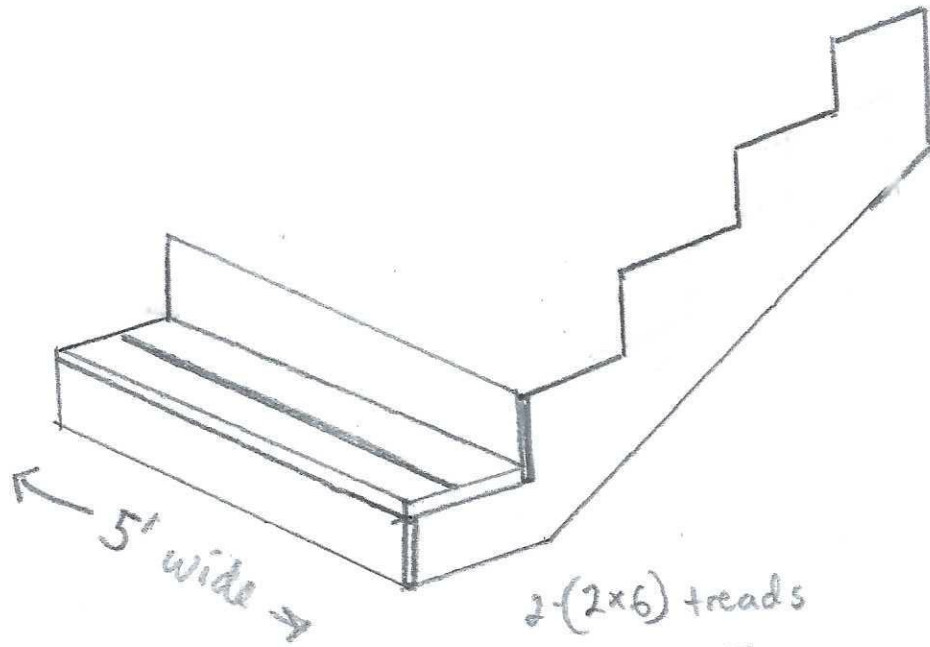
Work Item 3: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

**HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT
CHECKLIST OF
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

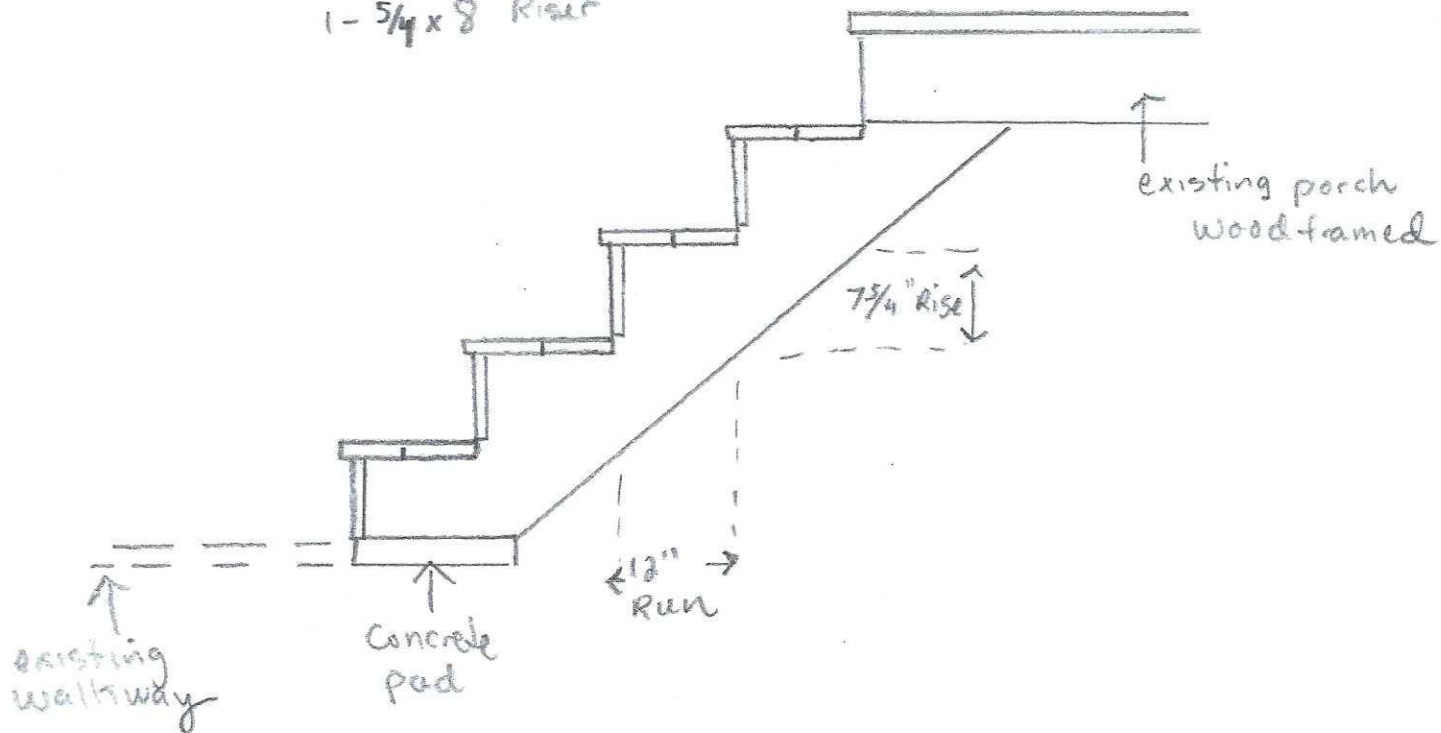
	Required Attachments						
Proposed Work	I. Written Description	2. Site Plan	3. Plans/ Elevations	4. Material Specifications	5. Photographs	6. Tree Survey	7. Property Owner Addresses
New Construction	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Additions/ Alterations	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Demolition	*	*	*		*		*
Deck/Porch	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Fence/Wall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

1060596

leave
existing pipe Railing



2-(2x6) treads
1- 5/4 x 8 Riser



Materials specs.

Historic Area Work Permit **1060596**

New wood framed front porch steps

For:

George Kohl

7000 Westmoreland ave

Takoma Park MD 20912

New wood framed porch steps

Pressure treated pine.

Stringers attached to existing porch ledger board

7 3/4 Risers and 12" Treads

Two 2x6 treads

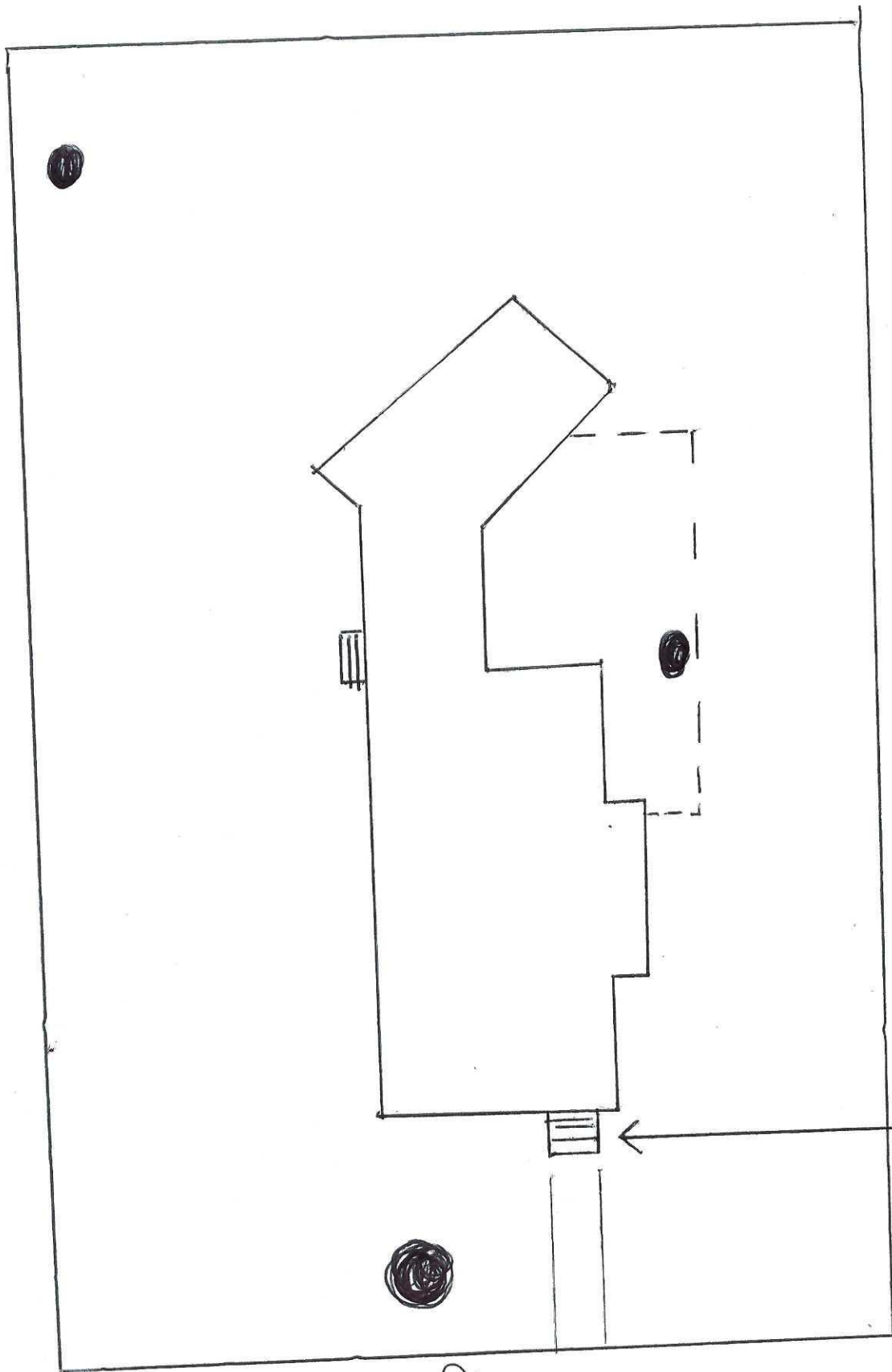
5/4 x 8 riser boards

Leave existing pipe railing as is

Pipe railing is connected to existing post and in ground next to steps







*
Replace
steps

Site Plan
7000 westmore land ave

Work description HAWP

Historic Area Work Permit **1060596**

Replace front steps

For:

George Kohl

7000 Westmoreland ave

Takoma Park MD 20912

Remove existing concrete steps to the front porch.

Replace with new pressure treated pine framed steps.

Install 5 steps -- 5ft wide.

2x6 boards used for treads

5/4 x 8 boards for risers

Leave existing pipe railing in place.



DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING SERVICES

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Rabbiah Sabbakhan
Director

HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT APPLICATION

Application Date: 2/26/2024

Application No: 1060596
AP Type: HISTORIC
Customer No: 1402216

Affidavit Acknowledgement

The Contractor is the Primary applicant authorized by the property owner
This application does not violate any covenants and deed restrictions

Primary Applicant Information

Address 7000 WESTMORELAND AVE
TAKOMA PARK, MD 20912

Othercontact Karpas (Primary)

Historic Area Work Permit Details

Work Type ALTER

Scope of Work Remove concrete steps and replace with wood framed steps