

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

<b>Address:</b>	6710 Westmoreland Avenue, Takoma Park	<b>Meeting Date:</b>	4/17/2024
<b>Resource:</b>	Non-Contributing Resource <b>Takoma Park Historic District</b>	<b>Report Date:</b>	4/10/2024
<b>Applicant:</b>	Jim Walsh	<b>Public Notice:</b>	4/3/2024
<b>Review:</b>	HAWP	<b>Tax Credit:</b>	n/a
<b>Permit Number:</b>	1064236 RETROACTIVE	<b>Staff:</b>	Dan Bruechert
<b>Proposal:</b>	Exterior Alterations, Shed Installation, and Hardscape Alterations		

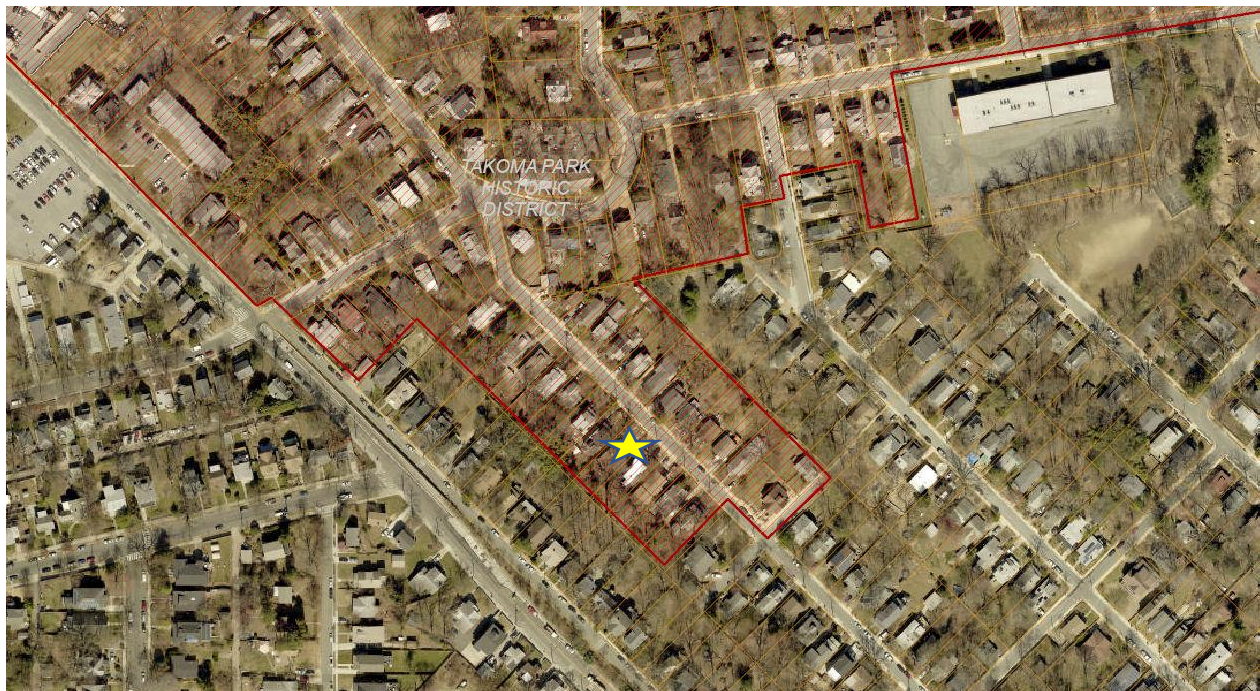
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Non-Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District  
**STYLE:** Craftsman  
**DATE:** c.1912



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

## **BACKGROUND**

The owners of the subject property recently submitted a HAWP application to install solar panels on the roof. In beginning the analysis of that HAWP application Staff identified several alterations that had been made to the subject property without a HAWP. HP Staff determined that the retroactive work needed to be reviewed and approved before proceeding with the proposed solar project.

Based on the photographic evidence, all of the work was undertaken and completed by the previous owner, before the current owners purchased the property in December 2023.

The HAWP application for roof-mounted solar panels will be considered at the next HPC meeting on May 8, 2024.

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicant seeks retroactive approval for:

- Enclosing and modifying the front entry,
- Altering the exterior siding,
- Replacing windows and doors.
- Installing an asphalt driveway,
- Modifying the front landscape including:
  - Removing the existing exterior stairs and railing;
  - Demolishing the brick and concrete retaining wall;
  - Constructing a new retaining wall, stairs, and railing;
  - Other landscaping;
- Installing a new shed, and
- Constructing a rear patio and retaining wall.,

## **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*). As a retroactive HAWP, the HPC is to review the work as though it was proposed.

### ***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.

Non-Contributing/Out-of-Period Resources should receive the most lenient level of design review. Most alterations and additions to Non-Contributing/Out-of-Period Resources should be approved as a matter of course. The only exceptions would be major additions and alterations to the scale and massing of Non-

Contributing/Out-of-Period Resources which affect the surrounding streetscape and/or landscape and could impair character of the district as a whole.

***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

(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 was constructed as a one-and-a-half-story Craftsman bungalow. Several modifications to the front, including enclosing and modifying the front porch and a second-floor expansion significantly altered the character of the building to such a degree that the subject property was designated as a 'Non-Contributing' resource in the original Takoma Park Historic District Master Plan Amendment.

In reviewing a HAWP application submission for roof-mounted solar panels, Staff identified that work has been completed at the subject property without an approval. Staff directed the applicant to identify the work completed to satisfy the requirements of Chapter 24A. All of the work was completed before the property owners' December 2023 purchase of the subject property. The work identified includes alterations to the front of the house, including replacing the existing siding, replacing several windows and the front door, installing an asphalt driveway, hardscaping/landscaping alterations, installing a new shed, and constructing a rear patio and retaining wall. Staff finds that under the lenient review for 'Non-Contributing' resources, the work does not constitute alterations to the size and mass of the property that will have a detrimental impact on the character of the district as a whole and recommends the HPC approve the HAWP.





Figure 2: c.1990s photo of the subject property before the unpermitted work was completed.

**Front Alterations**

Sometime after 1957, the front porch was enclosed and modified creating the appearance seen in *Figure 2*. The first floor of the house was covered in asphalt siding, while the second floor was covered in asbestos siding. The window material was unidentified, but based on the photo submitted, was either aluminum or vinyl. The property was recently modified to remove the siding, replace the windows, and demolish and reconstruct the front stairs.

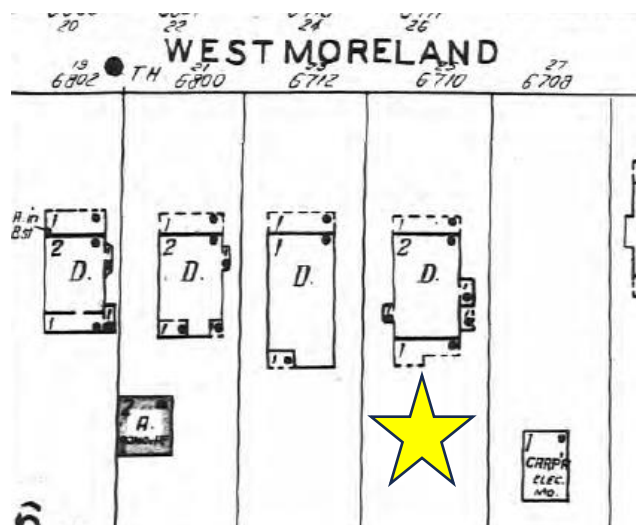


Figure 3: 1959 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the subject property with an open, one-story, front porch.

The entirety of the front was re-sided in vinyl siding, creating a unified exterior appearance. The placement and configuration of the windows were retained, but the windows were replaced with vinyl one-over-one sash windows on the first floor and six-over-one sash windows on the second floor. The front door, which is not shown in the submitted photograph, has been relocated to the front wall plane. The new door is either a vinyl or aluminum full-light door. The final change was either a wholesale replacement of the front stairs or removing the knee wall and railing from the front stairs and installing a new metal railing.

Staff finds the changes do not result in a change to the mass or size of the subject property, let alone a change that will have an impact on the surrounding district. As with the siding, Staff finds the HPC rarely approves vinyl siding and doors, but finds that maintain the non-historic fenestration pattern will not negatively impact the character of the site or surrounding district. Finally, Staff finds the proposed raw concrete stairs and metal railing reduce the overall mass of the front stairs and allow more of the house to be seen from the right-of-way. Staff finds that the alterations to the front of the house are appropriate given the non-contributing status of the resource under the *Design Guidelines* and 24A-8(d) and recommends the HPC approve these changes.



*Figure 4: The subject property's current appearance.*

### **Driveway Replacement**

The existing driveway had two concrete ribbons. It was removed and replaced with an asphalt driveway that also provides access to a parking pad at 6712 Westmoreland Ave. The overall dimensions of the driveway do not appear to have been altered.



Staff finds the existing concrete ribbon driveway is a common feature within the Takoma Park Historic District. The green strip provides more planting and reinforces the district's park-like setting. Asphalt is usually disfavored because it creates a flat black appearance instead of the mottled gray. Like the alterations at the front of the house, this change will not have an impact on the mass or size of the resource and the change will not impair the character of the district as a whole, per the *Design Guidelines*.

While Staff recommends the HPC approve the driveway replacement, Staff encourages the applicant to consider replacing the driveway with a more compatible material (i.e., exposed aggregate concrete or block) when the asphalt fails and needs to be replaced at a future date.

### **Hardscape and Landscape**

Several modifications have been made to the hardscape and landscape at the front of the house. Most of the front yard had been converted for use as a concrete parking pad (see *Figure 5*, below). The retaining wall was constructed with a mix of raw concrete on the right and yellow brick on the left. A concrete set of side-loading stairs with a simple wood railing provided access from the street. A wood railing was installed at the front edge of the retaining wall. The applicant replaced the failing retaining wall and fence. An additional change in the front yard is the construction of a small shed, measuring approximately 6' × 10' (six feet deep by ten feet wide), with a hipped roof with asphalt shingles abutting the front stairs. The shed appears to have been constructed using parged CMU blocks.



*Figure 5: Photo showing the failing brick retaining wall (right) and the house at 6708 Westmoreland (left).*

The new retaining wall appears to be a poured-in-place concrete wall, faced in stone. New stairs were built with flagstone treads and a metal railing that matches the front stair railing, discussed above. A low (approximately 2' (two feet tall)) metal picket fence is installed at the front edge of the retaining wall.



**Existent Parking pad in front of 6710 Westmoreland**

*Figure 6: Photo of the subject property (left) from 2002, showing the previous parking pad.*

Staff finds the alterations to the retaining wall are appropriate and help to unify the appearance at the front of the house. Additionally, Staff finds the condition of the brick portion of the retaining wall, from a 2013 HP Staff photo, shows the wall was suffering from spawling and physical failure and needed to be replaced. Staff finds the low metal fence on top of the retaining wall does not detract from its character and is less visually obtrusive than the existing wood fence. Staff finds the retaining wall, fence, and stairs are all compatible with the character of the house and surrounding district and recommends the HPC approve the alteration under 24A-8(d) and the *Design Guidelines*.

Staff finds the placement of the shed is not in a location where it would typically be considered. However, there are several mitigating factors at the subject property that Staff finds are warranted. The grade at the subject property rises significantly from the street. The front retaining wall is approximately 6' (six feet tall). As the lot continues to rise, almost all of the foundation level is exposed at the front, and at the rear of the house the patio (discussed below) is surrounded by a 6' – 8' (six to eight foot tall) retaining wall. Because of this change in grade, installing a shed in any other location would require significant amounts of excavation. Staff additionally finds that the shed's design and materials are simple and do not visually draw visual attention. Based on the house's overall architectural character, Staff finds shed does not threaten the character of the district as a whole and recommends the HPC approve the shed under 24A-8(d) and the *Design Guidelines*.

### **Rear Patio**

Behind the house, there is a flagstone patio surrounded by a stone retaining wall. Based on aerial photography, we know there was some type of patio in the same approximate footprint as the current patio. This feature is not at all visible from the public right-of-way.

Staff finds the size and materials for the patio are appropriate for the subject property and surrounding district. Additionally, because the patio is not at all visible from the right-of-way, it will not have an impact on the size and massing of the house and Staff recommends the HPC approve the patio under the *Design Guidelines*, 24A-8(d), and Standards 2, 9, and 10.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve** the HAWP under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(1), (2), and (d), having found that the proposal, as modified by the condition, is consistent with the *Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines* 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.





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/Exc avation/Land scaing	*	*		*	*	*	*
Tree Removal	*	*		*	*	*	*
Siding/ Roof Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Window/ Door Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Masonry Repair/ Repoint	*	*	*	*	*		*
Signs	*	*	*	*	*		*

THIS DOCUMENT IS CERTIFIED TO:



CASE #: 2023-21103



# WESTMORELAND AVENUE

S45°E 42'

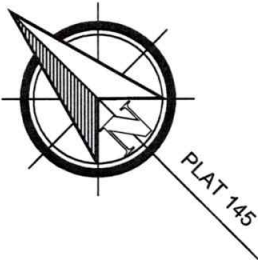
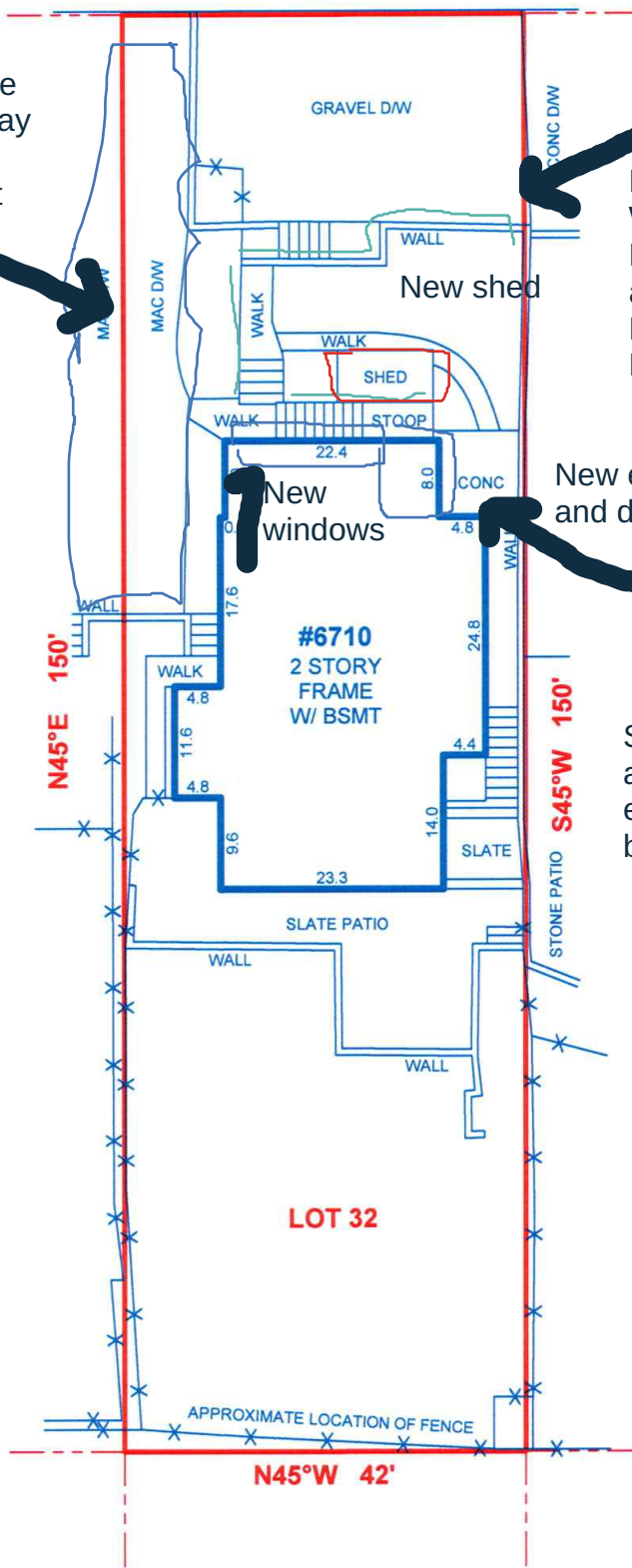
Replace Driveway with asphalt

Remove Woden Railing and install Metal Frame

New windows

New entry way and door

Siding along entire building



LOCATION DRAWING OF:

**#6710 WESTMORELAND AVENUE**  
**LOT 32**  
BLOCK 17  
**PINECREST**  
PLAT No. 145

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

SCALE: 1"=20' DATE: 11-28-2023

DRAWN BY: AP FILE #: 239179-757

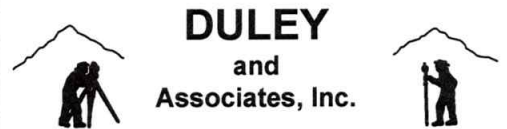
### LEGEND:

- X- - FENCE
- B/E - BASEMENT ENTRANCE
- B/W - BAY WINDOW
- BR - BRICK
- BRL - BLDG. RESTRICTION LINE
- BSMT - BASEMENT
- C/S - CONCRETE STOOP
- CONC - CONCRETE
- DW - DRIVEWAY
- Ex. - EXISTING
- FR - FRAME
- MAC - MACADAM
- N/F - NOW OR FORMERLY
- O/H - OVERHANG
- PUE - PUBLIC UTILITY ESMT.
- PIE - PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT ESMT.

### COLOR KEY:

- (RED) - RECORD INFORMATION
- (BLUE) - IMPROVEMENTS
- (GREEN) - ESMTS & RESTRICTION LINES

A Land Surveying Company



Serving D.C. and MD.

14604 Elm Street, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Phone: 301-888-1111

Fax: 301-888-1114

Email: orders@duley.biz

On the web: www.duley.biz

### SURVEYOR'S CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY STATE THAT I WAS IN RESPONSIBLE CHARGE OVER THE PREPARATION OF THIS DRAWING AND THE SURVEY WORK REFLECTED HEREIN AND IT IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN REGULATION 12 CHAPTER 09.13.06 OF THE CODE OF MARYLAND ANNOTATED REGULATIONS. THIS SURVEY IS NOT TO BE USED OR RELIED UPON FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FENCES, BUILDING, OR OTHER IMPROVEMENTS. THIS PLAT DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR THE ACCURATE IDENTIFICATION OF PROPERTY BOUNDARY LINES, BUT SUCH IDENTIFICATION MAY NOT BE REQUIRED FOR THE TRANSFER OF TITLE OR SECURING FINANCING OR REFINANCING. THIS PLAT IS OF BENEFIT TO A CONSUMER ONLY INsofar AS IT IS REQUIRED BY A LENDER OR A TITLE INSURANCE COMPANY OR ITS AGENTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE CONTEMPLATED TRANSFER, FINANCING OR REFINANCING. THE LEVEL OF ACCURACY FOR THIS DRAWING IS 1". NO TITLE REPORT WAS FURNISHED TO NOR DONE BY THIS COMPANY. SAID PROPERTY SUBJECT TO ALL NOTES, RESTRICTIONS AND EASEMENTS OF RECORD. BUILDING RESTRICTION LINES AND EASEMENTS MAY NOT BE SHOWN ON THIS SURVEY. IMPROVEMENTS WHICH IN THE SURVEYOR'S OPINION APPEAR TO BE IN A STATE OF DISREPAIR OR MAY BE CONSIDERED "TEMPORARY" MAY NOT BE SHOWN. IF IT APPEARS ENCROACHMENTS MAY EXIST, A BOUNDARY SURVEY IS RECOMMENDED.



### DULEY & ASSOC.

**WILL GIVE YOU A 100% FULL CREDIT TOWARDS UPGRADING THIS SURVEY TO A "BOUNDARY/STAKE" SURVEY FOR ONE YEAR FROM THE DATE OF THIS SURVEY.**

(EXCLUDING D.C. & BALT. CITY)





DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING SERVICES

Marc Elrich  
*County Executive*

Rabbiah Sabbakhan  
*Director*

# HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT APPLICATION

Application Date: 3/26/2024

Application No: 1064236  
AP Type: HISTORIC  
Customer No: 1487856

## Comments

I am applying for retroactive approval

## Affidavit Acknowledgement

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

## Primary Applicant Information

Location 6710 Westmoreland AVE 6710 Westmorelan Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Homeowner Walsh  
Homeowner Walsh (Primary)

## Historic Area Work Permit Details

Work Type ALTER  
Scope of Work Install vinyl siding, replace front windows, remove wood railing and install metal railing, pave driveway, enclose porch, install shed.





6710



Your HAWP Permit application has been created successfully!

The permit application number is **1064236**.

Please write down this number for future reference.

You will be notified by email when the permit is ready to be issued.

We value your feedback regarding our online application process! Please take a moment to complete a brief survey

***DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL PERMIT IS ISSUED.***

***\* You MUST complete the HAWP form below. Incomplete forms will not be considered by the Historic Preservation Commission***

***[Link to fillable PDF HAWP form.](#)***

***\*Your completed HAWP form and any supporting documents must be emailed to [HAWP@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:HAWP@montgomeryplanning.org).***



