

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	7310 Baltimore Avenue, Takoma Park	Meeting Date:	6/11/2025
Resource:	Contributing Resource Takoma Park Historic District	Report Date:	6/4/2025
Applicant:	Ellen Brown	Public Notice:	5/28/2025
Review:	HAWP	Tax Credit:	No
Permit Number:	1118459	Staff:	Devon Murtha
PROPOSAL:	Tree Removal		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve with one (1) condition** the HAWP application with final approval delegated to staff:

1. The applicant must plant another tree in the back yard. The species and location of tree must be determined in collaboration with the Takoma Park arborist.



Figure 1: The subject property at 7310 Baltimore Avenue in the Takoma Park Historic District is indicated with a star. The red cross hatch is the district.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Front-Gabled Vernacular with Romantic/Victorian Details
DATE: c. 1885-1895

The subject property is a Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District. The two-story house sits on a .17 acre lot situated on Baltimore Avenue.



Figure 2: View of subject property from Baltimore Avenue.

PROPOSAL

The applicant is proposing to remove a 30.5" D.B.H. Silver Maple from the rear yard (*Figure 3*). The applicant has submitted a report from both the Takoma Park arborist and a private arborist. The Takoma Park arborist determined that the tree was "low to moderately vigorous" in the "spiral decline process." The Takoma Park arborist noted that the tree could likely be preserved for additional years and would have a moderate impact to canopy if removed. The supplemental private arborist report stated that the tree likely suffers from verticillium wilt and determined that the tree will likely die within the next three years.



Figure 3: View of silver maple behind house.



Figure 4: View of silver maple front right-of-way along Baltimore Avenue.

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 *Montgomery County Code, 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 that 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/g 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 changes and additions should respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space.

Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A-8

The following guidance that 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;
- (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

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 will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will 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

Staff is supportive of the proposal to remove the Silver Maple in the rear, on the condition that the applicant plant a new tree.

The Silver Maple is a large tree, measuring 30.5’ D.B.H., and is likely between 60-70 years old. Staff finds that the Silver Maple is visible from the right-of-way along Baltimore Avenue. Per the *Guidelines*, all alterations should “respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space,” which includes the existing canopy of the district.

Although the tree contributes to the canopy and overall character of the district, Staff finds that the applicant has submitted sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the Silver Maple in the rear yard is in the process of decline. Although the tree is neither dead nor an immediate hazard, the two arborist reports indicate that the tree has a limited lifespan. There is no effective treatment for verticillium wilt beyond containment so that it does not spread from branches into the rest of the tree, and the applicant has stated that they have worked for several years with an arborist to manage the issue. Staff also notes the applicant’s concern about its proximity to the house.

In order to mitigate the effects of removing the trees, the applicant should plant a tree that will grow to a similar size, to be determined in collaboration with the Takoma Park arborist.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve with one (1) condition** the HAWP application with final approval delegated to staff:

1. The applicant must plant another tree in the back yard. The species and location of tree must be determined in collaboration with the Takoma Park arborist.

the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(1) and (2), and Chapter 24A-

8(d) and the *Takoma Park Historic District* having found that the proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in character with 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 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 HPC as a revised HAWP application at staff's discretion;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall notify the HPC 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 301-495-1328 or devon.murtha@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.



Submitted online
(w/o attachments) 5/21/2025

FOR STAFF ONLY:
HAWP# 1118459
DATE ASSIGNED _____

**APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301.563.3400

APPLICANT:

Name: Ellen Brown
Address: 7310 Baltimore Ave.
Daytime Phone: 3014952712 (landline) or 3013320722 (cell)

E-mail: ebbrown2005@verizon.net
City: Takoma Park Zip: 20912
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? X Yes/District Name Takoma Park
____ 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 checked="" 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.

Ellen Brown

5/21/2025

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
7310 Baltimore Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Owner's Agent's mailing address

Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses

Jimmy and Halli
7312 Baltimore Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Ary Amerikaner and RJ Hagerman
7308 Baltimore Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Description of Property: Please describe the building and surrounding environment. Include information on significant structures, landscape features, or other significant features of the property:

This is a single family house built in 1917. It is on a narrow lot with a dying maple in the middle of the back yard.

The City of Takoma Park approved a preliminary approval for removal of the maple on 5/15/2025. The email is attached.

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

Mature maple is dying and likely has verticillium wilt, based on 3 years of monitoring by a private arborist. During storms, large diameter limbs (some up to 30-40 feet long) have blown down. Large chunks of bark have fallen from various limbs with many other locations having areas where bark has fallen or is cracked open and will soon fall. The tree has been monitored and thinned annually to remove dead areas for at least 3 years. It is very thin with sparse foliage compared to many years ago when it was healthy. The tree should be removed before other limbs or the tree fall and injure a person or the house.

Work Item 1: remove maple tree in back yard

Description of Current Condition:

Mature maple is dying and likely has verticillium wilt, based on 3 years of monitoring by a private arborist. During storms, large diameter limbs (some up to 30-40 feet long) have blown down. Large chunks of bark have fallen from various limbs with many other locations having areas where bark has fallen or is cracked open and will soon fall. The tree has been monitored and thinned annually to remove dead areas for at least 3 years. It is very thin with sparse foliage compared to many years ago when it was healthy. The tree should be removed before other limbs or the tree fall and injure a person or the house.

Proposed Work:

Remove dying maple tree

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	1. 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	*	*	*	*	*		*

Tree Removal Request :: W012951-050625 - Preliminary Approval

From: Online Customer Service Center (takomaparkmd@mycusthelp.com)

To: ebbrown2005@verizon.net

Date: Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 11:00 AM EDT

05/15/2025

APPLICATION NUMBER W012951-050625

Ellen Brown
7310 Baltimore Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Re: Tree Removal Application at:
7310 Baltimore Ave
Takoma Park MD 20912

Dear Ellen Brown:

The City of Takoma Park has assessed this tree identified in your Tree Removal Permit Application. Below are the notes from the assessment:

Tree Type: **SILVER MAPLE**
Trunk Diameter: **30.5 inches**
Tree Location Relative to House: **BACK CENTER**

Tree Condition Rating (1-5):
Crown/Branches: **1**
Root & Root Collar: **2**
Tree Health & Species Profile: **2**
Trunk: **2**
Criterion Total (4-20): **7**

Assessment Notes:

Low to moderately vigorous tree currently in the decline spiral process. Significantly sparse in the upper canopy, decay columns in scaffolding branches, and included bark at bifurcation. Likely able to preserve for additional years, but beyond that timeline would require an unreasonable extent of arboricultural inputs. Large canopy tree. Moderate impact to canopy reduction if removed. Within 1x height of tree is the home.

Based on this assessment, your application has received **Preliminary Approval**.

You have not yet received a permit to remove this tree.

Preliminary approval means that the City will post your property for a 15 day period beginning 05/15/2025 and ending for public comment. A permit to remove the tree will be granted after the comment period is completed and the City receives the signed agreement to adhere to the City's tree replacement requirement. If public comments are received that request an appeal of the removal, a hearing before the Tree Commission will be scheduled to determine if removal can proceed.

Historic Area Work Permit (HAWP)

Additionally, since your property is located within the Historic District, you are required to receive a HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT (HAWP). To apply for a HAWP, contact Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services by phone 301-563-3400, by email MCP-Historic@mncppc-mc.org or online at:

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/historic/historic-area-work-permits/>

Note that this preliminary permit letter may serve as the Tree Survey required for your HAWP application.

Replacement Planting Requirement

Permits for trees that are not determined to be dead or hazardous come with a replacement planting obligation. The City Code defines a formula to be used in calculating the number of trees required to be planted using the trunk diameter and the Urban Forest Manager's condition assessment of the removed tree. After your 15-day appeal period is completed, you will need to indicate the method with which you would like to fulfill your replacement planting obligation. You have three ways you can do this:

- Agree to plant the required trees
- Pay a fee-in-lieu of planting equaling \$312 per 1.5" trunk caliper tree
- A combination of both tree planting agreement and fee-in-lieu payment

Conditions for Replacement Planting Option

- You must plant the number of 1.5" caliper trees indicated in your preliminary approval notice, or an equivalent basal area of larger trees up to 3" caliper. For this Tree Removal Request, the number of 1.5" trees required is **(1) tree(s)**
- Trees must be planted on a private property within the City of Takoma Park. [See here for a map of the City's boundaries.](#)
- Trees must be of the same size category as the tree that was removed. For your tree, that is the **(LARGE)** category.
- Trees must be selected from the Approved Tree Species List, linked here: <https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/government/public-works/Trees/Takoma-Park-Approved-Tree-Species-List%20-%202023.pdf>
- Documentation of the completed planting must be provided within six months after your permit is issued. Failure to plant the trees within six months is a violation of the law.
- You cannot use a publicly subsidized program, including the City's Tree Takoma program, to plant your required trees. If you would like to use the Tree Takoma program or another public tree planting program, you must opt to pay the fee-in-lieu to satisfy your requirement.

Conditions for Fee-in-Lieu Payment Option

- Indicate that you would like to pay the fee-in-lieu instead of planting via the MyTKPK portal and pay the invoice generated by City Staff.
- The fee-in-lieu amount to satisfy your entire replacement planting obligation is \$312 times **(1) tree(s)**, or: **(\$312)**

An email notice with further instructions will be sent after your application has passed its 15-day appeal period.

If you have any questions, please contact the Urban Forest Manager by replying to this email.

Inspection recommendations for: 7310 Baltimore Avenue

From: Christopher Larkin (clarkin@bartlett.com)

To: ebbrown2005@verizon.net

Date: Thursday, May 29, 2025 at 12:13 PM EDT

Ellen and Permitting officials

The maple in the left rear near the 7310 Baltimore Avenue has been pruned to remove dead limbs for the last three years and again this year has further dieback with the loss of several 6-8 inch diameter limbs/stems. The remainder of the tree is now not a viable tree for survival and will die within the next 3 years. The cause of decline is likely a combination of verticillium wilt (found in the pruned dead limbs each of the previous years) and the heat drought and rain cycles of the last 5 years.

This tree is not a viable tree. Removal is recommended.

Thank you,

Christopher Larkin
Arborist Representative
Board Certified Master Arborist MA-0131B

CHRISTOPHER LARKIN ARBORIST REPRESENTATIVE
ISA BCMA, Tree Risk Qualified MA-0131B | MD LTE 616

BARTLETT TREE EXPERTS

1 Metropolitan Court, Gaithersburg, MD 20878

p 301-881-8550 O | 301-881-9063 F | 240-447-0837 C

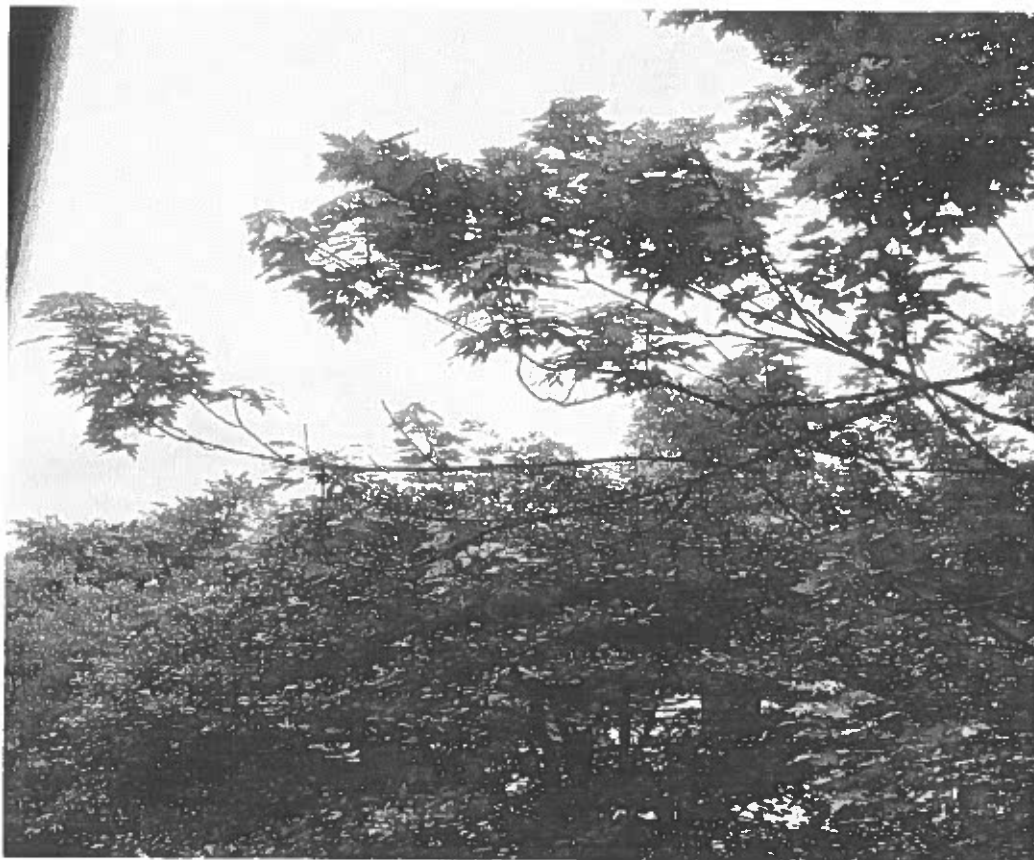
e clarkin@Bartlett.com

bartlett.com

Ellen Brown, 7310 Baltimore Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912









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