### MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Address: 102 East Kirke Street, Chevy Chase Meeting Date: 11/12/2025

**Resource:** Outstanding Resource **Report Date:** 11/5/2025

**Chevy Chase Village Historic District** 

**Applicant:** Britt & Will Williams **Public Notice:** 10/29/2025

(Luke Olson, Architect)

**Review:** HAWP **Tax Credit:** n/a

**Permit No.:** 1067931 REVISION#4 **Staff:** Dan Bruechert

**Proposal:** Chimney Removal

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the HPC <u>approve with one (1) condition</u> the HAWP application with final approval authority to determine the condition has been satisfied can be delegated to Staff.

1. The chimney above the roofline must be replicated to match the dimensions and appearance of the historic chimney. Documents detailing the construction of the chimney must be submitted to Staff before the issuance of the final HAWP approval documents.

#### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

SIGNIFICANCE: Outstanding Resource within the Chevy Chase Village Historic District

STYLE: Classical Revival

DATE: c.1905



Figure 1: The subject property is located on a corner lot at the edge of the historic district.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The HPC approved a HAWP with two conditions at the May 22, 2024 HPC meeting for new construction, partial demolition, and several alterations at the subject property. The two conditions for approval were:

- 1. The material for the west deck and railing needed to be constructed out of wood and
- 2. Required detailed drawings of the existing and proposed sunroom windows.

These conditions were satisfied before Staff issued the final HAWP approval documents and signed off on the building permits.

The HPC approved revisions to the HAWP at the July 10, 2024 HPC meeting<sup>2</sup> and additional revisions at the September 20, 2024 HPC meeting. The revisions included alterations to the approved deck, patio construction, fence construction, removing and replacing a set of stone stairs, and fenestration alterations. The HAWP revisions were approved by consent without a hearing.

On September 17, 2025, the HPC approved a revision to the size and location of the previously approved swimming pool and its associated patio to satisfy the requirements of the Chevy Chase Village Zoning Ordinance. The HAWP revision was approved by consent.

#### **PROPOSAL**

The applicant proposes to remove an existing chimney and repair the roof.

#### **APPLICABLE GUIDELINES**

When reviewing alterations and new construction within the Chevy Chase Village 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 approved and adopted amendment for the Chevy Chase Village Historic District (*Guidelines*), *Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A* (*Chapter 24A*), and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards)*. The proposed substitute material for the proposed deck is to be reviewed in light of the HPC's *ADOPTED POLICY FOR THE APPROPRIATENESS OF SUBSTITUTE MATERIALS FOR PORCH AND DECK FLOORING* (Policy No. 24-01). The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

#### Chevy Chase Village Historic District Guidelines

The *Guidelines* break down specific projects into three levels of review - Lenient, Moderate and Strict Scrutiny.

"Lenient Scrutiny" means that the emphasis of the review should be on issues of general massing and scale, and compatibility with the surrounding streetscape, and should allow for a very liberal interpretation of preservation rules. Most changes should be permitted unless there are major problems with massing, scale or compatibility.

"Moderate Scrutiny" involves a higher standard of review than "lenient scrutiny." Besides issues of massing, scale and compatibility, preserving the integrity of the resource is taken into account. Alterations should be designed so that the altered structure still contributes to the district. Use of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The application and Staff Report for the approved HAWP is available here: <a href="https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/I.D-102-East-Kirke-Street-Chevy-Chase-1067931.pdf">https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/I.D-102-East-Kirke-Street-Chevy-Chase-1067931.pdf</a>.

content/uploads/2024/05/I.D-102-East-Kirke-Street-Chevy-Chase-1067931.pdf.

The HAWP revision Staff Report and application are available here: <a href="https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/I.H-102-East-Kirke-Street-Chevy-Chase-1067931-REVISION.pdf">https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/I.H-102-East-Kirke-Street-Chevy-Chase-1067931-REVISION.pdf</a>.

compatible new materials, rather than the original building materials, should be permitted. Planned changes should be compatible with the structure's existing design, but should not be required to replicate its architectural style.

"Strict Scrutiny" means that the planned changes should be reviewed to insure that the integrity of the significant exterior architectural or landscaping features and details is not compromised. However, strict scrutiny should not be "strict in theory but fatal in fact" i.e. it does not mean that there can be no changes but simply that the proposed changes should be reviewed with extra care.

- o <u>Fences</u> should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not.
- O Garages and accessory buildings which are detached from the main house should be subject to lenient scrutiny but should be compatible with the main building. If an existing garage or accessory building has any common walls with, or attachment to, the main residence, then any addition to the garage or accessory building should be subject to review in accordance with the Guidelines applicable to "major additions." Any proposed garage or accessory building which is to have a common wall with or major attachment to the main residence should also be reviewed in accordance with the Guidelines applicable to "major additions."
- Major additions should, where feasible, be placed to the rear of the existing structure so that they are less visible from the public right-of-way. Major additions which substantially alter or obscure the front of the structure should be discouraged, but not automatically prohibited. For example, where lot size does not permit placement to the rear, and the proposed addition is compatible with the street scape, it should be subject to moderate scrutiny for contributing resources, but strict scrutiny for outstanding resources.
- O <u>Porches</u> should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not. Enclosures of existing side and rear porches have occurred throughout the Village with little or no adverse impact on its character, and they should be permitted where compatibly designed.
- Roofing materials should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not. In general, materials differing from the original should be approved for contributing resources. These guidelines recognize that for outstanding resources replacement in kind is always advocated
- o <u>Siding</u> should be subject to moderate scrutiny if it is visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if it is not.
- Swimming pools should be subject to lenient scrutiny. However, tree removal should be subject to strict scrutiny as noted below.
- o <u>Tree removal</u> should be subject to strict scrutiny and consistent with the Chevy Chase Village Urban Forest Ordinance.
- O <u>Windows</u> (including window replacement) should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not. Addition of compatible exterior storm windows should be encouraged, whether visible from the public-right-of-way or not. Vinyl and aluminum windows (other than storm windows) should be discouraged.
- The *Guidelines* state five basic policies that should be adhered to, including:
  - o Preserving the integrity of the Chevy Chase Village Historic District. Any alterations should, at a minimum, perpetuate the ability to perceive the sense of time and place portrayed by the district
  - Preserving the integrity of contributing structures. Alterations should be designed in such a way that the altered structure still contributes to the district.
  - o Maintaining the variety of architectural styles and the tradition of architectural excellence.

- O Design review emphasis should be restricted to changes that will be visible from the front or side public right-of-way, or that would be visible in the absence of vegetation or landscaping.
- Alterations to the portion of a property that are not visible from the public-right-of-way should be subject to a very lenient review. Most changes to the rear of the properties should be approved as a matter of course.

#### Montgomery County Code; Chapter 24A-8

- (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.

#### Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

- #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.
- #5: Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- #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 proportion, 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 two-and-a-half-story side gable house with Neoclassical elements on a corner lot. The HPC approved the demolition of the one-story addition to the southwest and approved the construction of a two-story addition in its place.

The subject property has three chimneys. There is a chimney at either gable end of the main block of the house and a chimney at the rear of the projecting-L. During construction, the applicant identified substantial damage to the rear chimney. Further investigation by a structural engineer (letter attached)

determined that chimney had deteriorated to the point it was, "unable to resist the tensile stresses at the base of the chimney." And that is considered too tall for an unreinforced chimney due to its tall, slender proportions. The applicant proposes to remove this chimney and to repair the roof.



Figure 2: Photo of the chimney showing visible cracks and previous repairs.

Staff finds that based on the analysis by the structural engineer that the existing chimney has deteriorated beyond repair and needs to be demolished. The question then is, what is the appropriate treatment for the chimney's location?

Staff has found instances where the HPC has allowed the removal of a chimney but required the reconstruction of the chimney above the roof line. Usually, those were instances where the chimney was highly visible from the public right-of-way or where the chimney was highly decorative.

In other circumstances, the HPC has allowed the removal of a chimney and required no replacement. These chimney removals are often a utility chimney that is less visible from the public right-of-way and/or less decorative.

The *Design Guidelines* do not have a guideline specific to chimneys.

Staff finds the rear chimney is narrower than the gable end chimneys but does have the same crown design, which shows more consideration went into the design and construction of this chimney than a purely utilitarian brick or block chimney. Additionally, because the subject property is on a corner lot, the rear chimney is visible from the public right-of-way. Staff finds additional consideration should be given to the proposal due to the subject property's designation as an 'Outstanding Resource.' According to the *Design Guidelines*, these categories are established to provide the HPC with guidance as to the architectural and historical significance... [and] structures with the highest degree of importance should

receive the most detailed level of design review for HAWPs."

Considering the design significance of the chimney and its 'Outstanding Resource' categorization, and because the proposed change is in a location that is visible from the public right-of-way, Staff recommends the HPC add a condition to the HAWP that requires the chimney, above the roofline, to be reconstructed. Because of the stucco exterior, Staff finds that the chimney could be constructed out of masonry or framed, provided the exterior is stuccoed to match the house and the crown is replicated. With the recommended condition, Staff finds the HAWP is appropriate under 24A-8(b)(1), the *Design Guidelines*, and *Standards #2* and 5.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission <u>approve with one (1) condition</u> the HAWP application with final approval authority to determine the condition has been satisfied can be delegated to Staff:

1. The chimney above the roofline must be replicated to match the dimensions and appearance of the historic chimney. Documents detailing the construction of the chimney must be submitted to Staff before the issuance of the final HAWP approval documents;

under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(1) and the *Chevy Chase Village Historic District Guidelines*, 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 5;

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

HAWP#\_1067931 REVISION DATE ASSIGNED\_\_\_\_

FOR STAFF ONLY:

APPLICANT:	britteldridgewilliams@gmail.com
Name:Britt & Will Williams	E-mail: will@firstwashingtonmortgage.com
Address:102 E Kirke St	City: Chevy Chase Zip: MD
Daytime Phone:202-591-2316	Tax Account No.:00454173
AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):	
Name: LUKE OLSON	E-mail: LOLSON@GTMARCHITECTS.COM
Address: 7735 OLD GEORGETOWN RD STE 700	City: BETHESDA Zip: 20814
Daytime Phone: 240-333-2021	Contractor Registration No.:
LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE: MIHP # of Histo	ric Property
Is there an Historic Preservation/Land Trust/Environment the East map of the easement, and documentation from the East Are other Planning and/or Hearing Examiner Approval (Conditional Use, Variance, Record Plat, etc.?) If YES, is supplemental information.	asement Holder supporting this application.  Is /Reviews Required as part of this Application?
Town/City: Chevy Chase Nearest Cro	
Lot: 14,15 & pt 16 Block: 34 Subdivision: 0009 Parcel:	
TYPE OF WORK PROPOSED: See the checklist on I for proposed work are submitted with this applicable accepted for review. Check all that apply:  New Construction Deck/Porch Addition Fence Demolition Hardscape/Land Grading/Excavation Roof I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the and accurate and that the construction will comply was agencies and hereby acknowledge and accept this to	Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure Solar Tree removal/planting  dscape X Window/Door Other: foregoing application, that the application is correct with plans reviewed and approved by all necessary

October 13, 2025

Mr. Luke Olson GTM Architects 7250 Woodmont Ave., Suite 200 Bethesda, MD 20814

RE: 102 East Kirke St., Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Removal of existing tall chimney

#### Dear Luke:

This letter serves as confirmation to our previous conversation regarding our request to remove the existing deteriorated tall chimney on the above referenced project.

Our reasoning for the removal of the chimney was that the 20"x 48" x 14'-0" tall chimney had severe deterioration to the brick mortar that would have made the chimney unable to resist the tensile stresses at the base of the chimney. This tall and slender chimney when subjected to a 30 psf design wind loading would have induced a 58psi tensile stress at the base of unreinforced brick masonry chimney, which is considered too high for the unreinforced and deteriorated brick masonry.

Sincerely,

Gus Radwan, P.E.



# HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFING [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



































