

Montgomery County Historic Preservation

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 311 Lincoln Avenue, Takoma Park RESOURCE: Takoma Park Historic District APPLICANT: Rebecca Miller REVIEW: HAWP CASE NO.: 1154507 PROPOSAL: Fence and handrail installation	MEETING DATE: 5/13/2026 REPORT DATE: 5/6/2026 PUBLIC NOTICE: 4/29/2026 TAX CREDIT ELIGIBLE: No STAFF: Laura DiPasquale
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Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the HPC approve the HAWP application.

Architectural Description

Significance: Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District

Date: c. 1920s

Style: Craftsman Bungalow



Figure 1: The location of the subject property (shown with a yellow star) in the Takoma Park Historic District.

Proposal

The applicant proposes to install 4-foot tall cedar board fencing along a retaining wall above a sunken patio in the side rear yard of the property and to install simple metal handrails along two sets of steps leading to the front walkway.



Figure 2: Location of the proposed fencing along the top of the retaining wall (left) and example of the proposed fence and gate (right). The gate would be located at the top of the concrete stairs leading from the sunken patio to the rear yard.



Figure 3: Mock-up of the railing location along the front steps (left); mock-up of the railing location along the side steps (center); and example of the proposed metal railing (right).



Figure 4: Aerial view of the subject property showing the locations of work.

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 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.

Residential Areas

In Takoma Park, there are a number of elements which define the streetscape and building patterns.

- Use of decorative stone retaining walls (where required by topographic changes) and occasionally fences to define a sidewalk line and separate yards from street.
- Sidewalks and planting strips along the street.
- Orientation of driveways and parking areas to the rear and side of buildings.
- Extensive landscaping, including mature trees and flowering plants (e.g. azaleas).

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

- Minor alterations to areas that do not directly front on a public right-of-way – such as vents, metal stovepipes, air conditioners, fences, skylights, etc. – 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-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 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

(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:

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 will 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

Staff supports the proposed project and recommends approval. Staff finds that the proposed fencing and handrails will not substantially alter the exterior features of the site and are compatible in height, design, and materials with the historic resource and district, per Chapter 24A-8(b)(1) and (2), and *Standard* 9. Staff finds that the placement of the 4-foot tall fencing along the top of a retaining wall within the side rear yard will not impair the streetscape or patterns of open space in the district, consistent with the *Guidelines*.

Staff also finds that these elements could be removed in the future without impairing the integrity or form of the property, per *Standard 10*.



Figure 5: View of the subject property from Lincoln Avenue. The proposed fencing would be located behind the existing fencing beyond the driveway on the far left.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(1) and (2), 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;

The Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines;

and with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #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 301-495-2167 or laura.dipasquale@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.

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:

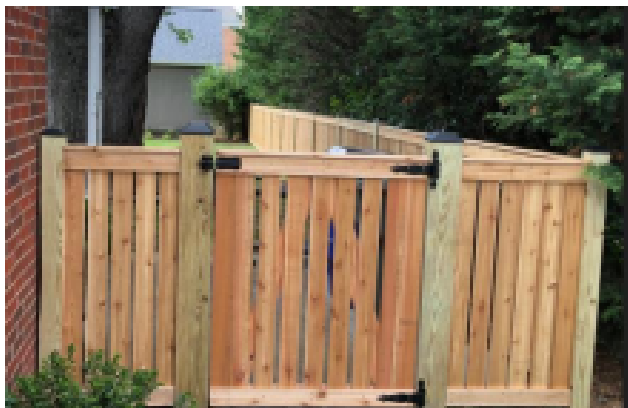
Work Item 3: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:



new 4' wood
fence and gate

2 new metal
railings

Proposed fence and gate design



Proposed handrail design



OWNERS NAME(S): Rebecca Miller	DATE: 4/13/2026
JOB ADDRESS: 311 Lincoln Ave	EMAIL: rhmillr@gmail.com
CITY STATE & ZIP: Takoma Park, Maryland 20912	OTHER: 0
BILLING ADDRESS: Same	CELL: 202-412-8195

DESCRIPTION OF WORK TO BE COMPLETED BY CONTRACTOR:

Furnish labor and materials to **INSTALL approx. 29 linear feet of 4' Tall Cedar Space Board Picket Fence. Fence constructed using 1x4 pickets, 1x4 top/bottom fascia, and a 1x4 cap board. Runners will be 2x4 boards, fastened to the posts with Teco clips.**

- All posts to be secured in the ground using Dry Packed concrete.
- Exact picket spacing TBD by installer based on post OC spacing once posts are set.
- Install (1) 3' wide x 4' tall Flat Top Cedar Picket Single Gate(s) with cedar frame.
- Install (2) 6x6 pressure treated Gate Post(s).

Frederick Fence Co. is NOT responsible for obtaining any permits for the above referenced work.

Exact fence line location TBD due to drain running along wall and private electric line somewhere in the area along entire proposed layout



CUSTOMER TO DO BEFORE INSTALL

DISCLAIMERS:

- If property pins are not present, we recommend a boundary survey. Customer responsible for boundary lines and fence location.
- Customer will confirm start and stop points with foreman at start of installation.
- Frederick Fence does not haul away dirt or rocks.
- Frederick Fence not responsible for damage to underground sprinklers, dog fences, or private utilities.
- No refunds or returns on special order materials (Includes Vinyl, Aluminum, & Steel Fence).

Owner Initials:

PAYMENT TERMS:

For the above services and/or materials & equipment (also permits where required) the OWNER agrees to pay the CONTRACTOR the total amount stated in the box labeled "Contract Total". A deposit will be required before project start and may not exceed 1/3 of the total contract price. A second deposit will be required at the start of the job for all jobs exceeding \$15,000 and must not exceed 1/3 of the total contract price. The final balance will be due upon completion.

CONTRACT TOTAL \$ 2,151.00



Deposit	\$	717.00
2nd Deposit	\$	-
Final Balance	\$	1,434.00

Due Upon Completion

APPROXIMATE STARTING AND COMPLETING:

Work under this contract will start in **1-3 Weeks** subject to circumstances beyond the control of the contractor, (including weather and material delays) and will be completed in approximately **1-2 Days**

CREDIT CARD INFORMATION:

Pay your Deposit or Final Balance on our website! Go to Frederickfence.com and click the gold button at the top.



CONTRACT ACCEPTANCE:

The undersigned CONTRACTOR and OWNER agree and accept the terms and conditions set forth in pages 1 through 4 and further agree that this contract contains the final and entire agreement between the parties here to and neither they nor their agents shall be bound by any terms, conditions, statements, warranties, or representations, oral or written, not herein contained. This contract is not binding upon FREDERICK FENCE CO, INC. until accepted. **You, the buyer, may cancel this transaction at any time prior to midnight of the fifth business day or seventh business day if the buyer is at least 65 years old, after the date of this transaction.**

Date: Owner Signature:

Lic. No. 0 Salesman: Brody

Pricing and approx. lead time on this contract is only valid for 2 weeks from estimate date and will need to be re-quoted if date of signing is after 4/27/2026











311

311

