
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District:	Anacostia Historic District	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	1354 Maple View Place, SE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent
Meeting Date:	February 24, 2011	<input type="checkbox"/> New construction
Case Number:	11-113	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Addition
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alterations
Staff Reviewer:	Tim Dennée	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept

The applicant, contract purchaser Marlon Meade (with designer BGK DesignBuild LLC), requests the Board’s review of a conceptual application to reconstruct fire-damaged portions of this 1907 frame house,¹ to add a rear addition and decks, to re-side and to restore the façade.

The subject property has been vacant and a neighborhood eye sore for several years. Between fire damage and subsequent deterioration due to exposure, most of the house lacks a roof and most of the second-floor framing, and there are large gaps in the exterior walls, including the loss of the upper half of a two-story addition on the east side.² This represents perhaps the final chance to save this historic house. And despite its present condition, there is a practical value to retaining the building in addition to the preservation interest. Like many historic homes in Anacostia, it does not have a conforming side yard on the west side, so the retention of the walls may avoid the necessity of narrowing a replacement building or seeking a variance or creating entirely new foundations.

Demolition

Especially as the applicant is not presently the owner and does not have access to perform exploratory work on the building, there are many issues that will have to be resolved later, in consultation with staff. Most important is the fact that the building will obviously have to be largely reconstructed, but it cannot be shown precisely how much at this point. The building is unsafe and difficult to enter at the moment, making a more exact determination impossible. The demolition drawings are inaccurate in the sense that demolition will surely include more than the removal of interior partitions and windows. The ‘proposed’ drawings, for instance, make it clear that the removal of the rear wall is intended for connection to the new addition.

Addition

The addition is of an appropriate size relative to the main block. Its massing is a little unusual for the shed roof on the east side, but this is consistent with and is screened by the reconstructed side addition.

Decks

¹ The house was the residence of George W. King, Jr., who sold harness, “English saddlery,” luggage and other leather goods from a downtown shop.

² This structure appears to have originated as a one-story, open porch, but it was widened and a second story was added in 1916. It was subsequently rebuilt and enclosed, partly with masonry.

In their extent, the rear decks are not inconsistent with others that have been approved in the historic district, although they would be better pulled back from the building corners to the outside edges of the rear openings. The upper deck can be supported with three or four regularly spaced posts (best aligned over the footers below) instead of the six irregular ones shown.

The side deck would be best narrowed to what is necessary for the door landing, as it appears to small to serve as a deck for recreation, and it accentuates the projection of the existing side addition from the narrow main block.

Reconstruction of side addition

The siding on the second story of the reconstructed side addition should either match or be compatible with that of the main block (all siding on the plans is specified as six-inch exposure, but it is drawn wider than that). As the addition postdated the main block, it should not reproduce the historic window hoods but rather have simple casings. While its first-floor windows are understandably truncated because the interior is to be a kitchen, the upstairs windows should all be taller, especially as they would serve as egress from a bedroom.

Façade

Historic map evidence suggests that the building had a full front porch, despite the fact there is none now. Although later faced with brick, the projecting bay in front appears to be early, because the interior trim appears old, and the old window frames are set deeply into the brick facing.³ This raises the possibility that there was originally a bay beneath a porch, or that an entrance overhang extended from the bay roof. Removal of the asbestos shingles should reveal evidence the original condition, which should provide guidance for the restoration of the facade.

Similarly, the original siding is almost certainly remains beneath the asbestos shingles, and it should serve as the model for the material, exposure and profile of all the replacement siding. Its removal would also reveal the nature of the siding or shingles in the front gable.⁴ The front elevation drawings may be refined with this additional evidence.

Roof

The house was originally roofed with wooden shingles, almost certainly the most common historic material for pitched roofs in this suburban neighborhood.⁵ It the most historically accurate replacement roofing, but substitutions are understandably to be considered. Standing-seam metal is a substitute that is more durable and would commonly be found in the more rural areas of Washington. It is proposed to be used throughout on this building. It is probably most important to use such a traditional material on the prominent front porch roof rather than on the less prominent side slopes of the front-gable roof.

Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Board approve the concept for the addition, with the delegation to staff of further review of all details of the reconstruction and rehabilitation.

³ The house's construction permit states, however, that there were to be no projecting bay windows.

⁴ The architecture of this building is a revival of transitional late Federal/early Greek Revival gable-fronted houses found in New England and along the Great Lakes. Such buildings often had flush weatherboard siding in the gables, rather than the later Victorian shingles. But with its front bay, it is not a pure example, and might be said to belong to the "Free Classic Revival," and so may have had any of a number of siding types in the gable.

⁵ Wood shingles were relatively inexpensive, and there was less concern about fire where buildings were generally detached. Although they had been invented by the time this house was constructed, asphalt shingles were not commonly available yet, and the three-tab shingle had yet to be developed.