

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

Property Address:	2938 Macomb Street, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Cleveland Park Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	January 26, 2012	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	12-156	X	Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	Anne Brockett		New Construction

On behalf of owners Haley Kaufman and Jeff Alpher, Thomas Raithel of Acanthus Architects seeks concept review to add front and rear porches and restore the front window assembly to this Cleveland Park home. The house was designed and built with its next door neighbor (2936 Macomb) in 1922 by Ward and Cobb. Both houses were designed in the Dutch Colonial Revival style.

Project Description

The proposal seeks to add a front porch to this house, which features the original bracketed gable projection over the front stoop. The gable would be removed and a full-width porch constructed with a concrete floor and brick half piers supporting square posts. The front window bay, installed in the 1970s, will be removed and three ganged windows installed to match the historic appearance of the façade (see photo showing original condition).

On the rear, a new porch would occupy the southwest corner, wrapping the side and rear of an existing addition. A new stair would lead from a side door to the rear yard along the side of the property. With the exception of this side entryway, the remainder of the porch is screened in.

Evaluation

Removal of the non-historic bowed front bay window and returning the window opening to its original size and fenestration is consistent with the purposes of the preservation act. The rear porch is compatible in size, placement and design. It is set back slightly on the west side and in line with the existing addition on the east. Because of the proximity of the adjacent houses and the location of an existing chimney, the addition will be largely obscured from view from the street and would not impact the character of the house or historic district. This rear covered porch is consistent with other HPRB approvals.

However, the proposal to add a front porch would substantially alter the front elevation and public appearance of this simple Dutch Colonial Revival home. In addition, it would result in the removal of an original feature, the bracketed hood over the stoop, and push the entrance steps eight feet closer to the sidewalk. The proposal is not consistent with the Board's guidelines *Porches and Steps on Historic Buildings* which state "Adding a front porch or steps to a historic building, except in those cases where the original has been removed, will significantly alter the appearance of the front facade and thus is not appropriate."

The dominant features of a side-gable 1920s Dutch Colonial Revival house are a gambrel roof, a pent roof between the first and second floors, a front shed dormer, and a gabled or arched stoop overhang, all of which are present on the subject house. Numerous examples of this type can be found throughout the Cleveland Park Historic District at 3525 Porter; 3405 Rodman; 3306, 3314, and 3318 Ordway; and the 3500 block of Quebec, all of which demonstrate these characteristic architectural features. None has a front porch and most have stoop covers, often with brackets. In addition, the countless 1920s Colonial

Revival houses (with gable, rather than gambrel roofs) in Cleveland Park possess the same features, notably the pent roofs and stoop covers rather than porches. Where front porches do exist on side-gambrel Dutch Revival houses, they are most commonly recessed beneath an overhanging second floor, are integrated with the pent roofs between floors, and are steeply pitched. However, no example could be found in Cleveland Park with either a recessed porch or a porch similar to what is being proposed.

Mindful of the possibility of creating a precedent for porch approvals, the Board has reviewed several relevant projects in Cleveland Park, making its decisions on a case-by-case basis. These include 3010 Ordway, where a front porch was approved to replace an existing non-historic porch; 3205 33rd Place, which is a non-contributing building built in 1950s; 2922 Newark, which involved a complete rehabilitation of a significantly altered house to reorient it from Connecticut towards Newark; and 3520 Rodman, a Dutch Colonial Revival style house, where an appropriately scaled shed-roof stoop cover was added. The Board determined that a new front porch at 3511 Idaho was incompatible with the architectural character of the house and inconsistent with the purposes of the preservation act.

In addition to the design considerations of adding a front porch onto a Dutch Colonial Revival house, the front porch would also occupy much of the shallow front yard in front of this home. Without a porch, this house currently projects the furthest toward the street on this side of Macomb, along with 2936 and 2924. With the front porch, it would project further than any other house, with the possible exception of 2924.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board determine the front window restoration and rear porch to be consistent with the purposes of the preservation act, and find the front porch to be inconsistent with the purposes of the preservation act.