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

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Property Address:	<b>3401 34<sup>th</sup> Place, NW</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>Cleveland Park Historic District</b>	<b>X</b> Consent Calendar
		<b>X</b> Concept Review
Meeting Date:	<b>October 27, 2016</b>	<b>X</b> Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	<b>16-680</b>	New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Steve Callcott</b>	Demolition
		Subdivision

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Owners Brodie Ruland and Lisa Kolb, with plans prepared by Thomson and Cooke Architects, seek concept design review for building and site alterations on a house in the Cleveland Park Historic District.

### **Property Description**

This corner four-square house was constructed in 1904 by John Sherman, the director of the Cleveland Park Company that was responsible for the first generation of development in the emerging suburb. While not listed on the permit, the house was likely designed by his wife, Ella Bennett Sherman who was responsible for many of the design of many of the houses developed by the company between 1904 and 1910.

The house is clad in clapboard siding and features a generous one-story porch that wraps the two street facing elevations. The house has distinctive Craftsman-inspired features, including original diamond-pane windows, a shingle-clad battered dormer on the 34<sup>th</sup> Place elevation, and deep overhanging eaves.

### **Project Background**

The project calls for increasing the width of a one-story projecting bay contained within the porch on the side elevation, adding a dormer on the side elevation that takes its shape and detailing from the original dormer on the front, and installing a brick retaining wall and replacement fence.

### **Evaluation**

The bay expansion and new dormer are compatible in form, materials and detailing with the character of the house. As the dormer is further developed, it will be important that the shape, profiles, proportions and slopes replicate those features on the existing dormer to ensure a compatible relationship. [If the roof is proposed for replacement as part of the project, the replacement material should be specified and shared with HPO].

Low retaining walls are common throughout Cleveland Park, including in the immediate area, and evident erosion at the corner of this property makes it clear why a wall here would be practical. As the plan for the wall is further developed, the site plan should retain a sense of sloping topography down to the retaining wall rather than making the yard absolutely flat. As well, if a fence is to be reconstructed for the side yard, it should be pulled several feet back from the new wall in order that it not result in an over height condition where the combination of wall and fence rises directly

adjacent to the public sidewalk; this will not only make for a more compatible relationship but is a public space requirement for walls and fences constructed beyond the building restriction line. Finally, the applicants should be encouraged to explore a wall that is clad in stone rather than brick. Stone is the most prevalent material for retaining walls in the historic district, particularly for this first generation of eclectic Craftsman-inspired houses; while brick is found for retaining walls, it is almost always used on Georgian and Colonial Revival houses in which brick is the predominant building material.

**Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept for the bay expansion, new dormer window and retaining wall, contingent on the revisions to the retaining wall and site plan outlined above, with final construction approval delegated to staff.*