
HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Landmark/District:	Cleveland Park Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	3512 Lowell Street NW	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	March 31, 2016	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	16-292	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Frances McMillen	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Applicant John Barabino, with drawings prepared by Cunningham Quill Architects, seeks conceptual design review for a two-story addition that includes expanding the basement and constructing a rear deck and side porch. The project would also include some alterations to non-original window openings on secondary elevations, replacing an in-ground pool, razing a garage, and landscape modifications.

Property Description

Designed by Davis Palmer for owner and builder Charles H. Taylor, 3512 Lowell Street was constructed in 1916. The subject property is a two-story stucco clad house with a tile hipped roof with projecting eaves. A two-story wing recessed a few feet from the face of the house is located on the west elevation. A free-standing two-bay garage with a tile and standing seam metal roof is located at the rear of the property. The fenestration throughout the house consists of a mix of window styles and sizes, the result of multiple alterations over time.

Proposal

The proposal calls for a two-story addition that includes expanding the basement to allow for a garage, rear decks, and a porch on the east elevation. The addition would project 20' from the southwest corner of the house at its farthest point and extend roughly 25' to the east; it would be clad in stucco and have a standing seam metal roof. Fenestration would consist of multi-lite casement and double-hung windows. The garage would be located below the addition and recessed slightly from the house. The proposal also calls for several rear decks.

A 6' tall pool enclosure fence would be located on the east side of the house a few feet inside the property line fronting Lowell Street. Other landscape modifications include widening a section of the driveway as well as replacing some paving with plant beds; new stone terraces to the east and southeast of the house; replacing the existing pool; removing existing and erecting new stone retaining walls in the front and rear yards; and replacing the front entry steps and lead walk.

Evaluation

The proposal is generally compatible with the house and the historic district. The addition is modest in size and compatible with the house in terms of design, massing, scale, fenestration, and materials. The proposed east elevation porch is referential to the covered entry at the front of the house and is also compatible with the subject property in terms of design, scale and materials. The proposed changes to

the fenestration will bring order and uniformity to the existing windows, which on the rear of the house are currently a wide variety of sizes and styles that are not proportional or compatible with the house. The new windows are primarily six-over-one double-hung sash windows, which are in keeping with the house's predominate window style.

Historic maps document a garage at the subject property that was likely constructed around the same time as the house and that it was later altered to include an additional bay. The Board has generally been flexible in its evaluation of proposed modifications to and removal of garages in Cleveland Park, approving alterations and razes when a garage does not significantly add to the character of or contribute to our understanding of the development of a property or the historic district. While this garage is visible from Lowell Street, because of its location at the rear of the property it does not have a strong presence on or engage with the street. With the exception of the tile roof, the building is extremely modest in character and does not share a significant relationship with the house.

The proposed 6' pool enclosure fence, located approximately 3' from the property line and adjacent to the public sidewalk along Lowell Street, would replace an existing fence set back approximately 10' from the property line. However, tall privacy fences such as this are not typically pulled forward of the front building plane of the house in the historic district, and such fences pulled to the sidewalk are not found on neighboring properties or streets. An examination of properties on Lowell Street and surrounding streets revealed front yard fences close to the public sidewalk to be roughly 42" in height and taller side yard fences to be set back considerably from the street. Retaining the existing fence location is recommended as the proposed location is not in keeping with the character of the street or compatible with the open, park-like quality of front yards in Cleveland Park.

Additional details on the proposed retaining walls will be needed, including their height and material. The applicant is encouraged to work with staff on the selection of a compatible stone.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept compatible with the subject property and the historic district, with the exception of the location of the new front fence, and delegate final approval to staff with the condition the applicant work with staff on the selection of materials for the retaining walls, front steps and lead walk, windows, and driveway.