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

Landmark/District: **Mount Pleasant Historic District** (x) Consent
Address: **3446 Oakwood Terrace NW**

Meeting Date: **September 28, 2017** (x) Addition
Case Number: **17-582**

Staff Reviewer: **Tim Dennée** (x) Permit

The applicant, James Solomon, architect and agent for property owner George Tilton, requests the Board's review of a permit application to construct a two-story addition at the rear of this 1910 brick house designed by Albert H. Beers. The addition's footprint would measure about 14'6" by 26'6"—a larger size than is subject to administrative clearance. It would be of frame construction, sided.

This project came to the HPO's attention through DCRA's ProjectDox system. From the drawings in the online application to those in hard copy submitted for Board review, there have been a few minor changes. Most of the notes on materials have disappeared, as have the trimboards from the addition's corners.

The project offers two advantages in terms of retaining the character of the historic district. First, the demolition is kept to a minimum. Second, the house stands at the northern edge of the historic district, and the addition would only be slightly visible from neighboring historic properties, including the rear yards of the row below on 17th Street, and the rear yards of the nearest homes on the west side of Oakwood. From the latter vantage point, the addition would be seen end-on, poking a few feet beyond the existing enclosed rear porches.

The fact that the addition abuts the enclosed porches is a drawback, as they should ideally stand free as they always have. And at some point, a large field of siding starts to feel somewhat barn-like. Yet, this is mitigated somewhat by the two structures being of different depths, providing a visual break. But this house will now be encapsulated on two elevations by sided structures. To relieve this slightly, but in a meaningful way, the north end of the addition should be pulled southward a bit, to expose the return of the house's northwest brick corner.

In the online set, the siding is identified as horizontal fiber-cement, which is compatible for a rear addition (wood would be compatible as well, but not vinyl). The fiber-cement lap siding should not exceed six-inch exposure (which is what it scales to in the drawings), as wider exposures are more common toward the mid twentieth century and are not compatible with a building of this vintage. Narrower siding provides more texture, and the siding here need not match the exposure of that on the enclosed porches. There should be corner boards, however, for

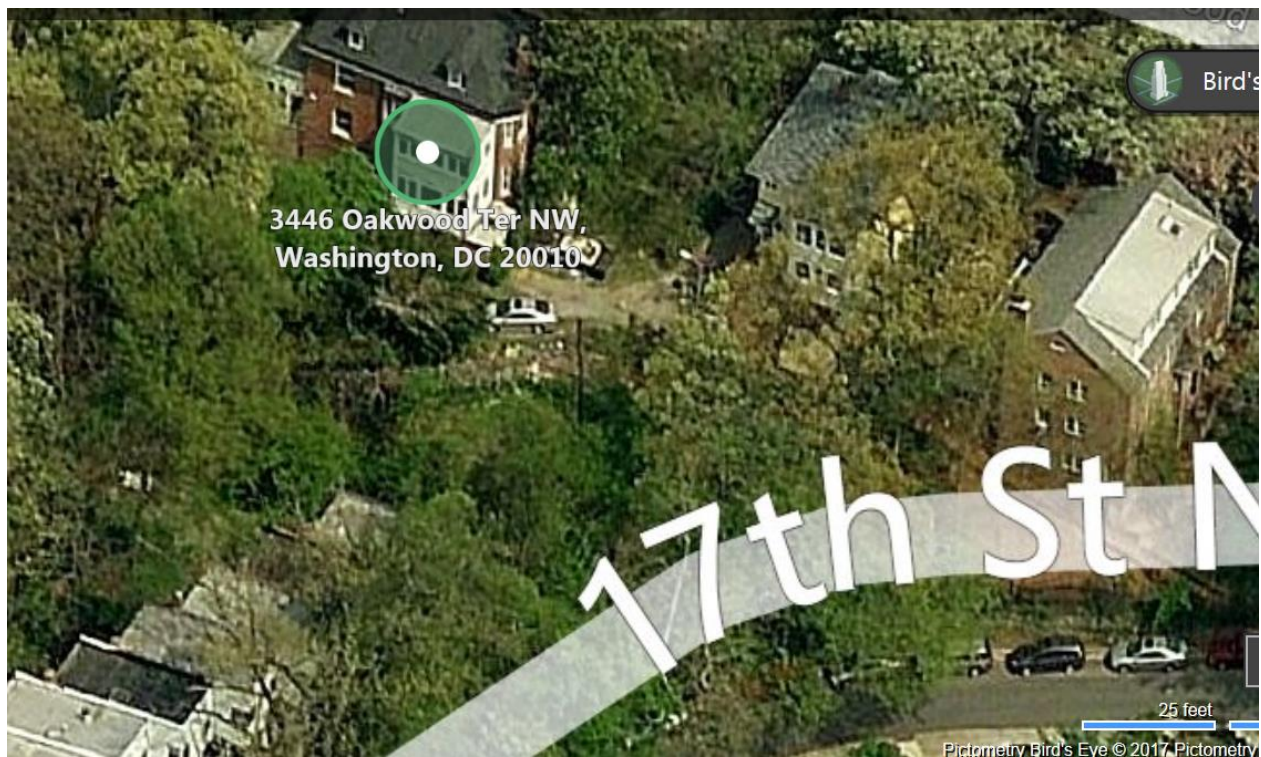
the practical reason of keeping water out of the siding's joints, but also for adding texture and some verticality.

The addition's roof would be a rubber membrane. The second-floor balconies are to have "metal" rails, although the note regarding the north-facing balcony is a bit ambiguous, calling for "exposed PT [pressure-treated] framing, composite decking and rail." It appears that this latter balcony would not be visible from Oakwood Terrace, obscured by the existing north addition. All these balconies should have solid-steel (or iron) railings, for their slender dimensions, rather than other metal alternatives.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Board recommend clearance of the permit application for the addition with the following conditions:

- 1. that the north end of the addition be pulled several inches southward to expose the return of the house's northwest brick corner;*
- 2. that the siding be horizontal fiber-cement lap siding not to exceed six-inch exposure;*
- 3. that the addition have corner boards; and*
- 4. that its balconies have solid steel or iron railings.*



The rear of 3446 Oakwood Terrace and its neighbors.