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

Property Address:	6817 and 6819 5th Street, NW	(X) Agenda
Landmark/District:	Takoma Park Historic District	Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	June 22, 2023	(X) Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	23-364 and 23-365	(X) Alteration
		New Construction
		Demolition
		Subdivision

Architect Jermaine Howard, representing the owner, seeks concept review for construction of two-story additions and one-story decks on the rear of two bungalows in the Takoma Park Historic District. The projects would also include demolition of a one-story garage on each property and some minor changes to fenestration on the existing side elevations.

These two bungalows were built by H.L. Thornton and designed by architect Doran Platt, who designed and built a number of houses on this and the surrounding blocks. 6817 dates from 1915 and 6819 from 1916. The houses are similar to each other in width, depth, and with prominent front dormers over generous front porches, but differ slightly in plan and detailing.

Proposal

The projects call for construction of similar two-story additions on the back of each house, projecting 17'2" on 6817 and 15'0" on 6819, clad in cementitious siding, and each capped by a shed roof projecting off the rear roof slope of the house. The additions have been inset slightly from the west rear corners of the houses to differentiate their masses and to retain the overhanging eaves on the main body of the house.

The plans show a substantial amount of interior demolition, removing most of the interior walls, as well as removal of the rear walls and the back half of the roofs.

Evaluation

Adding a two-story addition that is compatible with a bungalow can be challenging, as the building form is characterized by its second floor being contained under a large overhanging roof. The proposed additions are generally successful by being massed under shed roofs that spring just below the roof ridges and being inset slightly on one side from the back corners of the houses.

The extent of interior demolition is concerning because it appears likely that with so many interior walls removed, portions of floor assemblies may also need to be removed. Together with the demolition of the rear walls and the back half of the roof, that would result in a good portion of the buildings being removed and would meet the standard for "substantial demolition" in the Board's regulations (DCMR 10-C, Section 305).

The removal of the two garages does not raise preservation concerns. In its brick work, form and detailing, the two-car garage at 6817 is clearly of mid-20th century construction. While the garage at 6819 does likely date from the time of construction of the house – they share the same stucco and window – garages have not been recognized by the community, the Board, or in the National

Register nomination as contributing to the Takoma Park historic district as they have in other districts (such as Cleveland Park). With the larger size of modern automobiles, the building's narrow width also precludes it being used for the purpose for which it was constructed.

Recommendations

HPO recommends that the Board approve the conceptual plans for the additions and demolition of the garages as compatible with the character of the historic district, on the condition that the following revisions are incorporated into the final plans:

6817 5th Street

- *The extent of interior demolition should be reduced and a demolition plan showing the intended removal of the floor assemblies developed.*
- *The house is clad in its original stucco on the first floor and wood shingles on the second; the proposed plans show the house clad in fiber-cement siding. The plans should be revised to retain the stucco and repair or replace the wood shingles in-kind.*
- *The house retains most of its original and distinctive wood windows, including 9/1 and 12/1 double hung sash on the front, a 15-light "special" window on the left side elevation, and one remaining 9-light window flanking the fireplace on the right elevation. The plans call for the windows to be replaced with vinyl 1/1 windows and for the 15-light special window to be removed and the opening changed. The plans should be revised in accordance with the Board's window regulations, replacing all of distinctive windows on the front and side elevations in-kind and not altering the opening of the special window on the side elevation.*
- *The compatibility of the addition would be improved, both in composition and to help break down its scale, by following the example of the main body of the house in using stucco for the first floor and wood siding (or shingles) on the second story.*
- *Removal of the vinyl sheathing on the underside of the roof eaves is encouraged.*

6819 5th Street

- *The extent of interior demolition should be reduced and a demolition plan showing the intended removal of the floor assemblies developed.*
- *The house is clad in the original stucco on the first floor and vinyl siding on the second; the proposed plans show the house clad in fiber-cement siding. The plans should be revised to retain the stucco on the first; selective removal of the vinyl should be undertaken to determine the original material of the second floor, which should be repaired or replaced in-kind.*
- *The windows have almost all been replaced with one-over-one vinyl but there is one 9-light wood window remaining on the second floor (right elevation), suggesting that this house had multi-light windows. If the windows are to be replaced, the plans should be revised in accordance with the Board's window regulations to specify windows that replicate the original or a compatible condition on the front and side elevations.*

- *The compatibility of the addition would be improved, both in composition and in helping break down its scale, by following the example of the main body of the house in using stucco for the first floor and wood siding (or shingles) on the second story. As this addition will be visible from and face Butternut Street, the concrete block foundation should be parged to match the foundation of the house.*

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