

## **Preliminary Review**

HPC2008-03-18-01

for 501 Brown Street

Property owners Shelley Winkler and Dave Stopak presented preliminary plans for an addition to their home at 501 Brown Street at the Tuesday, March 18, meeting of the HPC.

**General Description:** The homeowners explained that they were considering two options for an addition to their home, because Shelley's mother may join their household sometime in the future.

*Option B includes elements which are common to both design contemplations, and thus will be described first.*

**Option B** encompasses pushing out the back wall of the existing house by 8 feet, thus expanding the current kitchen and family room. A new porch room, accessed from the family room, is also planned at the back of the house (stretching across a portion of the existing garage). A gracious double-door entrance with a large, stone landing is shown at the rear of the house, between the expanded eating area of the kitchen and the family room bump-out.

In discussion, the homeowners explained that the plain access door to the garage on the back of the house, as shown on the sketch, would actually be a paneled door.

**Option A** is a more extensive plan. It contemplates the creation of a suite from one bay of the existing 2-car garage, in addition to 8 feet of new space on the north and west sides of the existing garage. The suite, which would have its own private entrance and porch at the front of the house, also includes adequate room for a live-in caretaker. The private front entrance to the suite shows plans for a future access ramp. A lift was also discussed as an option to a ramp. Interior access to the main house would be through the new sun porch room.

Option A includes a small "doghouse" dormer over the new sun porch. The homeowners indicated they might opt for a larger dormer, in which case it was recommended that they consider a shed-type dormer.

**Adequacy of the Documents Submitted:** The documents submitted were adequate for the HPC's preliminary review. Sketches prepared by architect Ralph Hurst depicting the rear/side elevation and a floor plan for each option were submitted. Front elevations were not included. The front elevation would not be affected on the basic Option B, but it would be affected by the changes of Option A. Materials were not specified. In discussion, the homeowners indicated that materials similar to those used in the existing house (not natural) would be used.

**Visibility from public ways:** The new construction will be most visible from Ridge Road and Brown Street and may be partially visible from Cherry Avenue and Maple Road.

**Contributing structure:** The house "Moondance" (ca. 1997, per the "House Histories") is not a contributing structure.

**Nearby Contributing structures:** A number of nearby houses are contributing structures, namely 2, 102, 108, 110, and 112 Ridge Road. Additional contributing structures in close proximity include 414 and 409 Brown Street.

**Compatibility with the existing structure:** The one-story addition is modest in height and in scale and is quite compatible with the existing house. The main roof line remains unchanged for both Option B and Option A. In both cases, the shed roof of the addition brings the eye down and the perceived scale remains modest. The shed roof and the inclusion of multiple windows in both options give the addition the look of an enclosed porch.

Either plan would add horizontal interest to the otherwise plain design of the back of the existing house.

**Compatibility with the historic district:** The inclusion of a sun porch, as well as the rear entrance landing, which emphasizes the connection with the outdoors, are most compatible with the historic district, and are commended. Option A also includes a front entrance porch for the new suite, another desirable feature.

**HPC Recommendations:** HPC suggested that the homeowners consider expanding the size of the new rear stone entrance landing, at least enough to accommodate some seating, in order to add to the livability of this new feature.

Finally, the HPC understands the homeowners' preference for no-maintenance building materials, but voices—nonetheless—its bias towards natural materials...

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Emilia A. Styles  
for the Historic Preservation Commission

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Date

*Please note that the Historic Preservation Commission acts only in an advisory capacity to both applicants and the Planning Commission. The reviews undertaken are designed to assist homeowners in their projects, to provide input to deliberations of the Planning Commission and, more generally, to contribute to historic preservation in Washington Grove.*

*Further information regarding the scope, powers, duties, and structure of the Historic Preservation Commission may be found in Article XV of the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Washington Grove. Section 5 (a) of Article XV describes the powers and duties of the Historic Preservation Commission in the building permit process. This section reads as follows:*

*The Commission shall review all applications for building permits filed with the Town Planning Commission which would involve any change to a structure or site visible from any public way for historical accuracy, integrity, or compatibility with the neighborhood and improvements therein. The Commission may recommend to an applicant alternative historical designs, materials and sources for the same which may be more historically compatible. The Commission shall forward its recommendations regarding the same, if any, in an advisory capacity, to the Planning Commission for consideration by the Planning Commission within thirty (30) days from the Commission's receipt of the application from the Planning Commission.*

cc: Applicant  
HPC members  
HPC Binder  
Web site, Bill Saar  
Planning Commission, John McClelland  
Mayor John Compton  
Town Clerk, Kathy Lehman