

HPC Review - Preliminary
for 208 Washington Grove Lane

HPC2021-10-19-01

Homeowner Sharon Sisson submitted a proposal to screen the front porch of her residence at 208 Washington Grove Lane. It was reviewed at the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the HPC on Tuesday, October 19. The homeowner was not present for the review. As no building permit accompanied the application, HPC's review is considered preliminary.

General Description: The proposed project contemplates screening the existing front porch.

Adequacy of the Documents Submitted: The documents submitted were sufficient for HPC's review of the project. They included a written description of the project, existing condition photos of the homeowner's porch, a photo of a similar porch with screening in place, and information about the screening product.

General Scope of Project: Screening the 33'x8' front porch and adding a single entrance screen door, centered in the middle bay of the porch.

Visibility from public ways: The proposed construction will be visible from Washington Grove Lane.

Contributing structure: The house, identified as c. 1915-1930 in the list of Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources in the 2020 updated National Register Nomination, is recognized as a contributing resource to the historic district. The December 2019 Architectural Survey prepared by Robinson & Associates, Inc., describes the home as follows:

208 Washington Grove Lane
ca. 1915-30

The one-and-a-half-story, frame, Craftsman-style bungalow at 208 Washington Grove Lane has a deep front porch with a shed-roof form, tapered piers, a wood railing, and a wood deck. While the porch steps align with the center axis of the house, the ground-level window and door openings along the front (east) façade are asymmetrical. A large, shed-roof dormer with three sash windows dominates the front slope of the roof. The exterior walls are clad with asbestos shingles. The primary window type is two-over-two, double-hung sash. A side-gable outbuilding with space for storage and a garage stands at the rear of the lot.

Nearby Contributing structures: Washington Grove's historic district includes 33 structures on Washington Grove Lane; 29 of them are identified as contributing resources.

Compatibility with the historic district and/or existing structure: The proposed screening project is compatible with the historic district and with the existing structure.

HPC Recommendations:

1. It is highly recommended that the screen panels be installed **behind** the existing wood railing, **i.e., house-side versus street side**. Installation behind the wood railing will allow the architectural detail of the railing to remain visible from the public way after the porch is screened.

2. The homeowner stated the possibility of using “one large central screened panel per opening” rather than the multiple panels per opening as depicted in the “similar example” photo submitted with her proposal. **Single panels** in the north and south bays are indeed strongly preferred, as they will allow the character-defining tapered craftsman columns to remain a dominant feature of the front elevation of the home. (The center bay, of course, will be comprised of three panels to accommodate a screen entrance door).
3. It is recommended to recess the screen panels flush with the top interior side of the tapered porch columns (rather than midway vertically between the porch columns) in order to maximize shadow lines when viewed from the public way.
4. The homeowner may wish to investigate the availability of a salvaged wood-framed screen door for the project. (Community Forklift in Hyattsville/Edmonston is often a good source for reasonably priced vintage items.)

Emilia A. Styles
for the Historic Preservation Commission

Date: October 26, 2021

cc: Applicant Planning Commission
HPC members Mayor John Compton
HPC Binder Town Clerk, Kathy Lehman
Web site, Christine Dibble

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.