

## HPC Review

HPC2023-07-18-01

for 120 Chestnut Avenue

A building permit application for work at 120 Chestnut Avenue was forwarded to the HPC and reviewed at the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the HPC on July 18. Homeowner Jorge Matamoros did not participate in the review, but rather was represented by realtor Carolina Madrano.

**General Description:** There is no plan to change the footprint of the existing house. The siding, windows and doors had already been removed prior to Montgomery County issuing its stop-work order for failure to secure a county building permit. The owner plans to demolish the existing garage/shed at the back of the property facing Hickory Road.

**Adequacy of the Documents Submitted:** The documents submitted were sufficient for HPC's review of the project. They included a building permit application, worksheet, site plan/location drawing, four elevation drawings, floor plans and various construction drawings.

**General Scope of Project:** Exterior changes to the house will include new siding and trim, all new windows and new doors. The asbestos siding that had existed when the house was purchased has been removed. The exterior now has been covered with plywood sheathing. The roof has already been replaced. The enclosed back porch facing Hickory Road will be modified to make it more open in order to allow more light to enter the home.

During the review, HPC failed to ask about plans for disposition of the cast-iron water pump on the back porch. If the homeowner does not plan to retain the pump, HPC hopes it will not be discarded and would like to work with the owner regarding its disposition.

On the first floor, walls are being demolished to effect a more open floor plan. The existing fireplace and staircase are being retained. A small powder room is planned on the first floor, near the staircase. On the second floor, some demolition is planned in order to add closets to the bedrooms; a master bathroom is also being added.

The renovation will be in accordance with Montgomery County's latest standards, including more stringent requirements for insulation and window efficiency.

**Visibility from public ways:** The proposed renovation will be visible from Chestnut Avenue and Hickory Road.

**Contributing structure:** The house, identified as c. 1911 in the list of Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources in the 2020 updated National Register Nomination, is a contributing resource to the historic district. The December 2019 Architectural Survey prepared by Robinson & Associates, Inc., describes the home as follows:

### **120 Chestnut Avenue 1911 (MD assessment, 1908)**

The two-story house at 120 Chestnut Avenue has a foursquare form and a hipped roof. It is oriented facing east, toward Chestnut Avenue. The house features a front porch that wraps around to the north façade. The porch has a wood floor and is supported by turned posts that are connected by a wood railing. The front façade is asymmetrically arranged with an off-center front door. The door is paneled and glazed, and above the door opening is a transom.

Most of the house is lit by two-over-two, double-hung sash, wood windows with wood casings. Shed dormers project from the roof's north and south slopes. A partial-width, shed extension is attached to the rear (west) façade. The house is clad with asbestos shingle siding. A brick interior chimney is located at the peak of the roof. At the rear of the lot is a gabled garage covered with wood siding.

**Nearby Contributing structures:** 120 Chestnut Avenue is surrounded by contributing resources; those in closest proximity include 111, 113, 118, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 127, 128 Chestnut Avenue, 17050 Railroad Street, 115, 117, 119, 121, 123, 125, and 127 Washington Grove Lane.

**Compatibility with the historic district and/or existing structure:** Compatibility with the historic district and with the existing structure will not be affected by any change to the footprint or height of the existing structure. In this case, continued compatibility will be influenced rather by the choice of siding, windows, and doors as well as porch finishes. Careful selection will ensure compatibility. See recommendations below.

#### **HPC Recommendations:**

*We appreciate the rehabilitation of a contributing structure that helps preserve the historic integrity of the Grove, and we make the following suggestions to achieve the highest level of compatibility.*

#### **Siding**

Fiber cement siding (such as Hardie Plank) would be a more appropriate siding material for the home and for the historic district than the vinyl product that may be contemplated.

#### **Front Door**

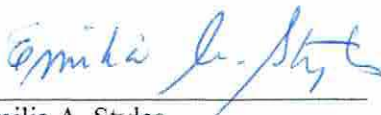
The East Elevation shows plans to relocate the existing front entrance and replace it with a two-part sliding door. As discussed with the agent, a sliding door is more appropriate for a secondary entrance (onto a patio for example) rather than for the front entrance.

The Chestnut Avenue entrance is the formal entrance to the home, and either a set of hinged, swinging double doors, or a single hinged, swinging door flanked by fixed sidelights would be better suited to the main entrance. An example of the single door with sidelights option is depicted on the West Elevation (back porch entrance) of the documents submitted.

#### **Natural Materials**

The use of natural materials is highly recommended for windows and porch finishes.

While the proposed fence is outside the HPC's scope of review, it is suggested that the homeowner consider wood for the extensive fencing contemplated for this property.



Emilia A. Styles  
for the Historic Preservation Commission

7-26-2023

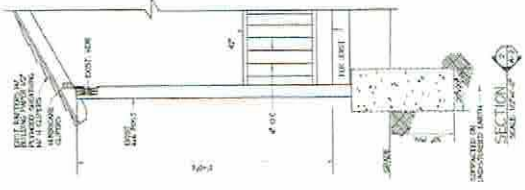
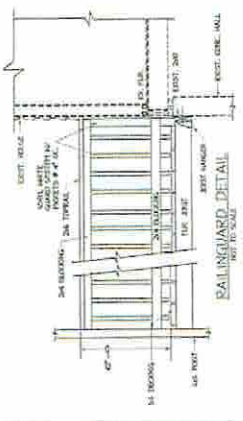
Date: July 26, 2023

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.



I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE IS A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY OF THE ORIGINAL AS SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.