

HPC Review - Preliminary  
for 117 Grove Avenue

HPC2018-04-11-02

Paul and Eva Patrone recently purchased the home at 117 Grove Avenue. During the pre-purchase inspection process, significant problems with the condition of the foundation were identified; the homeowners wish to correct them before moving into the house in early summer.

Paul had hoped to come to the the monthly meeting of the HPC on Wednesday, April 11 (rescheduled from the usual third Tuesday of the month), to discuss in person the required repairs, but he was unable to participate due to a work conflict.

**General Description:** The proposed work includes repair of termite damage to the foundation/support beams, remediation of water infiltration issues, and insulation measures.

**Adequacy of the Documents Submitted:** The documents submitted were sufficient for HPC's review of the project. They included Paul's email to HPC dated April 11, which attached photos of the existing house and sample stock photos of the "band board fix"; Paul and Eva's letter to the PC and HPC dated April 4; and a portion of Unique Construction's proposal letter of March 28. These documents are attached to this review.

**General Scope of Project:** As can be seen from the included photographs, the first floor and porch sit very close to grade, which likely contributed to the deterioration issues. A number of main support beams, compromised by extensive termite damage, need to be replaced. The foundation piers under at least two porch posts are likely deteriorated and will also need to be replaced.

Parging on the exterior foundation is disintegrating and may pose a risk of water infiltration. It is proposed that the lower portion of the house (exterior foundation) will be removed and replaced with "appropriate structural/waterproof elements and covered with mortar in the spirit of the current parging." Insulation of the crawl space will also be included in the project.

The contractor has warned that the full extent of damage can only be assessed once the parging and two lowest rows of siding are removed, allowing access to the crawl space. Similarly, portions of the porch and kitchen floors will need to be uninstalled for access/assessment purposes.

Rotting porch floorboards will be addressed as well.

The majority of the proposed work will not be visible from the outside. Likely only the two rows of white, synthetic "band board" replacing the two lowest rows of white aluminum siding, and the new parging, will be discernible.

**Visibility from public ways:** The repairs will be visible from Grove Avenue and Grove Road.

**Contributing structure:** The house, identified as c. 1888-90 in the Town's list of Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources, is a Contributing Resource.

**Nearby Contributing structures:** 117 Grove Avenue is one of seventeen Contributing Resources along Grove Avenue between Brown Street and Oak Street.

The others include 102, 103, 105, 107, 108, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 118, 122, 123, 124, 125, and 127 Grove Avenue.

**Compatibility with the historic district and/or existing structure:** The proposed changes are compatible with the existing residence and with the historic district.

**HPC Recommendations:**

HPC has no specific recommendations for this project. HPC thanks the Patrones for their stewardship of this home.

  
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Emilia A. Styles  
for the Historic Preservation Commission

4-14-2018  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date: April 14, 2018

cc: Applicant Planning Commission  
HPC members Mayor Joli McCathran  
HPC Binder Town Clerk, Kathy Lehman  
Web site, Bill Saar

*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.*

## Emilia Styles

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**From:** Paolo P <physics1248@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 11, 2018 7:54 AM  
**To:** mimistyles6464@yahoo.com; wharris.cragsmoor@gmail.com; johncompton@me.com; gail.littlefield@yahoo.com; dstop4@gmail.com; bboohar@sbaranes.com  
**Cc:** Eva Patrone  
**Subject:** repairs to 117 Grove Ave  
**Attachments:** Patrone Proposal\_p1.PDF; Letter\_of\_intent.pdf

Dear HPC,

Recently my wife Eva and I purchased the lot and house at 117 Grove Avenue in Washington Grove. Before moving in, we need to perform repairs, largely to the foundation of the home. However, these will likely lead to minor aesthetic changes to the external appearance of the house near the foundation (however the footprint will not change). Thus, I'd like to initiate discussion with the HPC on these changes to facilitate the process of obtaining a building permit for the repairs.

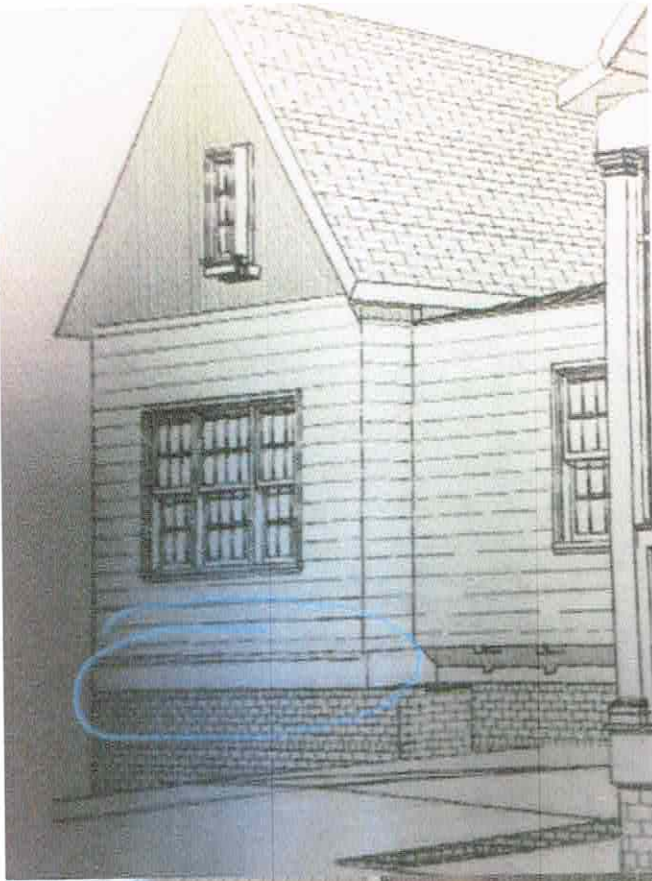
Mimi Styles mentioned to me that the HPC is meeting on Wednesday April 11. While I am unable to attend the meeting due to previously scheduled work events, I am enclosing for your consideration a scope of work and images illustrating the type of change that would be made to the house. In particular, we anticipate that the bottom two rows of siding would be replaced with a band board. In the attached images whose names start with "band\_board" (the house with the visible brick foundation), this feature is the white board between the brick foundation and siding. A similar element (without the brick foundation) would replace the lowest two rows of siding on 117 (photos also attached for your reference). The parging would remain as-is on our house.

Also enclosed is a letter of intent I wrote describing the damage in more detail and scope of work that we intend to pursue. The repairs are being made to fix significant termite damage to the structural beams and prevent further infestations. In the letter I reference the permit application, which we have not yet submitted. (We are still waiting on a few structural drawings from the contractor.) However, the attached images should provide a complete description of the exterior changes.

Many thanks for your time.

Paul Patrone







## Paul & Eva Patrone

117 Grove Ave.  
Washington Grove, MD 20880  
202-215-4286

April 4, 2018

Planning Commission (PC)  
Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)  
Town of Washington Grove, Maryland  
P.O. Box 216  
Washington Grove, MD 20880-0216

Members of the PC and HPC

In the process of purchasing 117 Grove Avenue, several inspectors and contractors advised us that the foundation of the house on Lot 10 requires significant repairs, likely needing to be done in advance of our moving in. The purpose of this letter is to lay out in simple terms the scope of damage and our plans to repair it. **As this work necessarily requires some modification (albeit minor) to the exterior appearance of the house, we have addressed this letter to both the PC and HPC in an effort to facilitate the permit process.** More detailed drawings and information are provided in the enclosed application.

Our initial assessment of the foundation identified five main support beams that have suffered extensive termite damage. The destruction is in excess of 75% of the beam cross-section in some places, with one beam having entirely collapsed. The sites of this damage are located: (i) under the walls of the living room near the boundary between Lots 10 and 11; (ii) under the kitchen wall closest Grove Road; and (iii) under two of the other walls enclosing the kitchen. Additionally, at least two of the columns on the porch have foundation piers that are likely compromised.

Beyond this, various inspections have identified a host of lesser problems and sites of potential damage that cannot be verified non-destructively. Specifically, the parging (i.e. the external mortar wall along the bottom of the house) is decaying in several places and poses a risk of water infiltration into the crawl space. It is also restricting access to several other foundation piers that are suspected of being compromised as a result of settling and/or redistribution of loads, given the decayed state of the beams. Moreover, the lower few rows of siding are damaged at various places near the foundation, likely related to decay of the parging.

After consulting with several contractors, we have settled on a plan that we believe can resolve all of these problems while also allowing us to more fully assess the health of the

foundation and fix other problems that may be discovered (e.g. additional compromised piers). The main exterior work will amount to removing the parging and lower two rows of siding to allow unfettered access to the crawl space and support structures. The kitchen floor and portions of the porch (mainly rotting wood) will also be removed to provide access to the underlying substructure. Given this access, beams and piers will be repaired and/or replaced on an as-needed basis. The lower perimeter of the house will then be replaced with appropriate structural / waterproof elements and covered with mortar in the spirit of the current parging. We have been advised, however, that the aluminum siding used on the house may be difficult to match. **Therefore the contractor advocates installing a “band-board” in place of the two lowest rows of siding. We anticipate that this will be the only aesthetic change in the external appearance of the house once all repairs are completed.**

All told, we have been advised that under a conservative estimate, this work will take between six and eight weeks from start to finish. Moreover, we have been advised that the repairs should be done before we move into the house. Specifically, the damaged structural elements have unknown load-bearing capacities and may fail under atypical stresses of repeatedly moving large furniture in and out of the house.

**Given the extent of and long time-frame for repairs, we respectfully request an expedited review process for the building permit.** Currently we are renting an apartment with a lease that expires this summer. Significant delays in starting repairs could force us to move into the house while foundation work is being done and/or floors are missing from significant parts of the first story. Moreover, paying “double rent” for more time than necessary will cause undue financial burdens.

Finally, we are happy to meet with the PC and/or HPC to discuss any of these plans in more detail.

Sincerely,

Paul Patrone

Eva Patrone



# UNIQUE CONSTRUCTION INC

501 WOODLAND RD. GAITHERSBURG MD 20877

240-793-7484

March 28, 2018

Paul Patrone  
2316 Colston Dr.  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RE: 117 Grove Rd.  
Washington Grove MD 20880

We are pleased to quote the following;

Furnish all labor and materials to complete the remodeling work requested. All work will be completed as per the attached plans, specifications and the attached scope of work.

**See the attached detailed scope of work and itemized pricing.**

**General overview of work to be performed;**

**Living room flooring and kitchen structural repairs;**

Remove the siding on the lower perimeter of the house and inspect the areas along the perimeter for decay. Replace the rotten wood with new pressure treated beams and /or sill plates. Install PVC or composite band boards replacing the siding. This design is often used in Cottage designed and Cape Cod homes. The crawl space envelope will then be insulated with rigid foam board on the interior framing with cement board and stucco finish on the exterior.

**NOTE:** It is our opinion that this method of repairs will eliminate the need to remove any interior hardwood flooring and will enhance the exterior appearance while providing an insulated perimeter with proper termite protection.

Remove the kitchen flooring to access the crawl space below. Install 3 concrete piers to support a new beam installed to support the existing floor joist. Additional blocking will be installed on top of the beam to support the other floor joist of different heights. The exterior perimeter of this area will be removed and replaced as described in the living room perimeter.

Inspect the existing beam and piers supporting the existing kitchen/ master bedroom wall and make necessary repairs. This may include installing new piers and replacing any additional termite damaged and other rotted wood found.

**NOTE:** This cost will be determined when we have access to this area and the exact conditions are observed.