

**HPC Review**  
for 206 Chestnut Avenue

HPC2021-5-18-02

Homeowner Sara Jean Moyer submitted an Application for Residential Building Permit dated April 29 for changes to accessory buildings on her property. HPC reviewed the project at its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 18, held via Zoom. The homeowner was not present for the review.

**General Description:**

The homeowner proposes to demolish the existing deteriorated greenhouse attached to the rear of the existing garage accessed from Hickory Road. The rotted upper rear wall of the garage would be replaced and an access door to its loft would be added. An exterior staircase to the loft area of the garage is proposed. A pre-fab shed would be placed on the remaining footprint of the demolished greenhouse.

**Adequacy of the Documents Submitted:**

The documents submitted were sufficient for HPC’s review of the demolition project and exterior staircase. They included a permit application, location drawing, photographs and sketches.

No details about the proposed shed were provided, other than the building’s general dimensions of 9’x11’.

**Visibility from public ways:**

The proposed changes will be visible from Hickory Road, Oak Street and Chestnut Avenue. Some visibility will be seasonal, depending on foliage cover.

**Contributing resource:**

The house is a contributing resource to the Washington Grove Historic District. The December 2019 Architectural Survey prepared by Robinson & Associates, Inc., describes the home as follows:

***206 Chestnut***

*ca. 1935-40 (Washington Grove house history, 1940; MD assessment, 1940)*

*206 Chestnut Avenue is a one-and-a-half-story, frame house built circa 1935-40. The core of the house is a Cape Cod cottage with a side-gable roof and Colonial Revival detailing. At the north end of the house is a one-and-a-half-story wing that appears to be a later addition. It has a gambrel roof that is set perpendicular to the roof over the original section of the house. The gable and gambrel roof forms are pierced with gabled dormers. The front of the house faces east toward Chestnut Avenue. This façade features a glazed and paneled door accentuated with an entablature. The door is accessed by a raised wood deck that extends along the entire length of the house. The windows to either side of the door include single and paired six-over-six, double-hung, vinyl sash. The gambrel wing features a sliding-glass door at the lower level and a glazed door above that opens onto a second-story, wood deck. The door accessing the deck is flanked by double-hung sash windows. A large, brick, exterior, end chimney is located on the north façade. At the rear of the lot along Hickory Road stands a one-and-a-half-story, cinderblock and frame garage with an attached carport.*

**Nearby contributing resources:**

Contributing resources in close proximity to 206 Chestnut Avenue include 127, 128, 201 and 202 Chestnut Avenue; 10, 12 and 102 Center Street; 201, 203, 205, 207, 213 and 215 Washington Grove Lane.

**Compatibility with the historic district and/or existing structure:**

HPC has no concerns about the demolition of the greenhouse or the compatibility of a simple exterior staircase to access the garage loft.

HPC has no comments about the proposed shed, as no details were provided. It should be noted, however, that HPC generally does not review accessory buildings under 100 square feet, and the dimensions of the proposed shed are noted as 9’x11’ (99 square feet).

**HPC Recommendations:**

The homeowner included a photograph of the exterior staircase at 122 Grove Avenue as a model for this project.

This model may no longer meet current Montgomery County building codes; HPC recommends that the homeowner review the range of compliant options with her building contractor.

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Emilia A. Styles  
for the Historic Preservation Commission

Date: May 25, 2021

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

*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.*