

**Certificate of Review
for 217 Ridge Road**

Application for Building Permit

HPC2002-051001

June 17, 2002

An application dated 5/7/2002 for a building permit submitted to the Town of Washington Grove Planning Commission by Bailey Thompson, LLC was received by the HPC on May 10, 2002. The application is to construct a house and garage on an empty lot (the northernmost WSSC lot or Lot 4 of Parcel N305) at 217 Ridge Road. The application is signed by Jack Kontg'as, Manager and states that the applicant is Bailey Thompson L.L.C. The contractor is Petit and Griffin Inc. of 18205-D Flower Hill Way, Gaithersburg, MD.

The application includes plans with elevations and a house location plan or survey. The plans are for a house titled "The Fredricksburg." The house location plat provided shows the use of plans for a structure titled "Fredricksburg Reverse" which seems to be the mirror image of the structure described in the plans.

The application states that the lot size is 15,000 square feet and that a single-family dwelling and garage are to be built occupying 4716 square feet. The structure is a two-story structure. An earlier application dated 4/16/'02 stated that the structure was 3 stories.

In the house location plan, the house is shown with its porch facing west toward Ridge Road. The garage is shown as separate structure with a driveway coming in from Ridge Road. The plans for "The Fredricksburg" on sheet 6a show that the garage is connected to the house via a very short breezeway. Therefore, it is not clear whether the garage planned is separate or connected.

The project as shown on the plot plan is assumed to have a detached garage and the HPC sees this as well as the porch on the West side of the house as a positive factors reflective of the porches and detached garages common to Washington Grove homes. However, the plans show a four-foot width for the front porch. As this does not make for a usable porch, a width of approximately seven feet is recommended for the porch to function as it does in the Grove. There are no elevations showing the garage. There are two alternate plans for the framing of the garage, but no elevations to indicate its character.

The houses across Ridge Road in the immediate vicinity of the proposed structure are all two story (417, 416, and 301 Ridge Road). Thus, the planned two-story height is consistent with the immediate context, scale, and massing of the buildings nearby. It is also reflective of the homes constructed more recently on Brown Street "Extended."

The pitch of the roof is somewhat consistent with nearby structures. The massing of the house is broken up into three separate components and is stepped down, i.e. has subordinate masses. This is consistent with the multifaceted houses in the Grove where many homes have rather complex shapes composed of an original main structure and a series of subordinate additions. From the front, the predominant eave line is at the first floor, a device that is typical of the Grove and successfully reduces the scale of the house.

The plans show a structure whose orientation is predominantly frontal with very little break-up of the massing on the rear of the building. Though this is contrary to many of the Grove houses that orient to both front and back as well as, in many cases, their sides, the houses in the immediate vicinity of this house face the road. There is also less attention to detail in the rear (facing east) or side (facing north), and the concentration of architectural detail solely on the front of the house is not consistent with the adjacent houses or the majority of Grove houses. As this is the corner lot, with both the rear and the side door, and the garage plainly visible from Ridge Road, this would fall short of the expectations for compatibility. Fairly simple redistribution of details and/or further elaboration with elements such as door hoods and porches would help and be more compatible with the Grove.

It is not clear from the plans and elevations which materials will be used for siding and windows. Note that these are important factors with respect to compatibility with the Town of Washington Grove and it is difficult to review applications where materials are not specified and photos of structures in the vicinity are not shown. In general, use of traditional, natural materials more successfully contribute to the overall compatibility of the structures.

David Neumann, Chair
Historic Preservation Commission

Date

cc: Applicant:
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