

HPC Review

HPC2021-2-16-01

for 317 Brown Street

Homeowner Katherine Evans submitted a building permit application dated January 22 for changes to her residence at 317 Brown Street. HPC reviewed the plan at its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, February 16. The homeowner was not present for the review.

General Description:

It is proposed to screen the existing front porch facing Brown Street.

Adequacy of the Documents Submitted:

The documents submitted were marginally sufficient for HPC's review of the project. They included a building permit application, building permit worksheet, and a site plan with the area to be screened marked in red.

General Scope of Project:

It is proposed to screen the existing front porch of the residence at 317 Brown Street.

Visibility from public ways:

The proposed changes will be visible from Brown Street and Pine Road.

Contributing resource:

The ca. 1880-1900 residence at 317 Brown Street is a contributing resource of the Washington Grove Historic District. The December 2019 Architectural Survey prepared by Robinson & Associates, Inc., describes it as a one-and-a-half-story, frame house clad with brick veneer. It has a vernacular, front-gable form and faces south toward Brown Street. A hipped porch extends across the entire front façade. The porch is approached by brick steps and has segmental arched openings between brick piers. Openings on the front façade, under the shelter of the porch roof, are somewhat obscured from view and include French doors and two double-hung sash (two-over-one) windows on the ground floor. Paired double-hung sash windows pierce the front gable.

Nearby contributing resources:

Contributing resources in close proximity to 317 Brown Street include 16 and 108 Maple Avenue as well as 103, 201, 313, 315, 319, 401, 405, 409, 410 and 414 Brown Street.

Compatibility with the historic district and/or existing structure:

Screening the existing porch can be compatible with the residence and with the historic district.

HPC Recommendations:

The building permit application included no details about the design or materials contemplated for the screens or entrance door to the porch.

HPC recommends that the screening be placed toward the inside of the brick porch pillars (that is, recessed toward the house rather than placed forward toward the street) in order to maintain full visibility of the piers, which are an important character-defining structural element of the home.

It is also recommended that the screens be constructed with simple, minimal framing, again so as to not conflict with the character-defining brick pillars. Each arched opening could contain a single screen, or – alternatively – two screens, as further described below.

The entrance onto the newly screened porch could be via a single screen door flanked by simple screened “sidelights”. If it is contemplated to include a screened transom element above the screen door, another option for the arched openings would be for each to include two screens: a large rectangular screen surmounted by a significantly shallower arched screen. In that case, the vertical line between the two screen elements in each of the four arched openings could continue the vertical line that separates the transom and the screen door.

HPC further recommends the use of natural materials, and suggests that framing and wood elements be painted to match the existing dark trim color, as seen in the window frames of the front gable.

HPC has included photographs of the home below.



Emilia A. Styles
for the Historic Preservation Commission

Date: February 22, 2021

cc: Applicant Planning Commission
HPC members Mayor John Compton
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.