

Certificate of Review
for 352 Ridge Road

Application for Building Permit
HPC2005041901

An application for a building permit submitted to the Town of Washington Grove Planning Commission by Melih Cakmak was received for review by the HPC at its April 19,2005, meeting. The application is for construction of a new house at 352 Ridge Road. The design and drawings were prepared by Raoul Lissabet, AIA, Architects, LLC. The Owner will serve as General Contractor.

General Description: The project is for construction of a 5, 236 square foot two-story house with finished basement and integral garage. The house consists of living, dining, kitchen, family room and study on the first floor; 4 bedrooms and 2 baths on the second floor; and one bedroom, full bath, study and rec. room in the basement with a separate entrance. The design includes 2 double volume spaces as well. The front of the house is treated in a very formal manner with brick veneer, large arched and shuttered windows, and decorative details emphasizing the center entrance. The double garage has its doors on the front façade as well. The other three sides indicate plain siding finish and very little architectural detailing. The roof appears as a single large gable parallel to the road with two cross gables punctuating the front and one on the back. The predominant eave line is 20’ above the surrounding grade and the ridge is at 30’.

Adequacy of the Documents Submitted: The submitted documents portrayed the project well and included a site plan showing the location of the house on the lot and included specimen trees in the area, floor plans, 4 elevations, building sections, framing plans and a typical wall section.

The Owner was not present for this review but did present and discuss preliminary drawings at the previous meeting in March.

Visibility from public ways: The new house will be visible from Ridge Road.

Contributing structure: NA.

Nearby Contributing Structures: There are no nearby contributing structures.

Compatibility with the existing structure: NA

Compatibility with the neighboring area: The neighboring houses in the area known as Washington Grove Hills until recently consisted of modest-sized largely single story structures set well back from the road. The overall ambience of the neighborhood gave a country road feel to the area. Subdivision was permitted as a condition of annexation and 4 larger houses have been built on “flag” lots behind the existing modest houses. This will be the fifth. Two houses in front of these flag lots have been enlarged substantially as well, creating an area within the neighborhood of houses that resemble the type of construction that would be encountered in typical upscale subdivisions in the rest of Montgomery County rather than those encountered in

the Grove. It will appear, however, larger and less varied in bulk than the other newer houses. The formal nature of the design is more at home in a line of similar suburban houses with dressed-up street facades than in the present location in a wooded area set back from a rural road. The character of this design conflicts with the goal of integrating the neighborhood more completely with the rest of Washington Grove, reinforces the feeling of an enclave of large houses right in the center of the neighborhood, and separates the smaller houses further down Ridge even more from the rest of the Town.

Compatibility with the historic district: This project has not respected the modest nature of the houses in the Grove. The extreme size, the formal design and the inflated presence are at odds with the character of the existing cottages and the informal presence of the typical houses. The design does not attempt to follow the adopted guidelines that encourage reducing the apparent eave height, breaking up the roof massing and overall bulk of the structure, treating all sides of the house to a similar level of detail, utilizing porches to add character and integrate with the natural setting, and separating the garage mass from the house. It utilizes design elements that instead intentionally attempt to make the house seem larger and more formal.

HPC Recommendations: Revise the design to incorporate some of the characteristics that will reduce the apparent bulk of the structure, if not the actual bulk, and will lend itself to its more rural location, or select another design more in keeping with the neighborhood and Town. The HPC would be eager to help in that process.

Bob Booher
for the Historic Preservation Commission

April 30, 2005

Date

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.

cc: Applicants
HPC Binder
Web site