



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Robert K. Sutton
Chairman

Date: November 2, 2022

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mitra Pedoeem
Department of Permitting Services

FROM: Dan Bruechert
Historic Preservation Section
Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

SUBJECT: Historic Area Work Permit #1011276 - Landscape Alteration

The Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has reviewed the attached application for a Historic Area Work Permit (HAWP). This application was **Approved** by the HPC Staff.

The HPC staff has reviewed and stamped the attached construction drawings.

THE BUILDING PERMIT FOR THIS PROJECT SHALL BE ISSUED CONDITIONAL UPON ADHERENCE TO THE ABOVE APPROVED HAWP CONDITIONS AND MAY REQUIRE APPROVAL BY DPS OR ANOTHER LOCAL OFFICE BEFORE WORK CAN BEGIN.

Applicant: David Schindel
Address: Hampden Ln - Overhill Rd. Intersection, Bethesda

This HAWP approval is subject to the general condition that the applicant will obtain all other applicable Montgomery County or local government agency permits. After the issuance of these permits, the applicant must contact this Historic Preservation Office if any changes to the approved plan are made. Once work is complete the applicant will contact Dan Bruechert at 301.563.3400 or dan.bruechert@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.





HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

HAWP #: _____ at: _____

submitted on: _____

has been reviewed and determined that the proposal fits into the following category/categories:

Repair or replacement of a masonry foundation with new masonry materials that closely match the original in appearance;

Installation of vents or venting pipes in locations not visible from the public right-of-way;

New gutters and downspouts;

Removal of vinyl, aluminum, asbestos, or other artificial siding when the original siding is to be repaired and/or replaced in kind;

Removal of accessory buildings that are not original to the site or non-historic construction;

Repair or replacement of missing or deteriorated architectural details such as trim or other millwork, stairs or stoops, porch decking or ceilings, columns, railings, balusters, brackets shutters, etc., with new materials that match the old in design, texture, visual characteristics, and, where possible materials, so long as the applicant is able to provide one extant example, photographic evidence, or physical evidence that serves as the basis for the work proposed;

Construction of wooden decks that are at the rear of a structure and are not visible from a public right-of-way;

Roof replacement with -compatible roofing materials, or with architectural shingles replacing 3-Tab asphalt shingles;

Installation of storm windows or doors that are compatible with the historic resource or district;

Repair, replacement or installation of foundation-level doors, windows, window wells, and areaways, or foundation vents, venting pipes, or exterior grills that do not alter the character-defining features and/or the historic character of the resource;

Construction of fences that are compatible with the historic site or district in material, height, location, and design;

Fence is lower than 48" in front of rear wall plane;

Construction of walkways, parking pads, patios, driveways, or other paved areas that are not visible from a public right-of-way and measure no more than 150 square feet in size;

Replacement of existing walkways, parking pads, patios, driveways, or other paved areas with materials that are compatible with the visual character of the historic site and district and that are no greater than the dimensions of the existing hardscape;

Construction of small accessory buildings no larger than 250 square feet in size that are not visible from the public right-of-way;

Installations of skylights on the rear of a structure that will not be visible from the public right-of-way, and would not remove or alter character-defining roof materials;

Installation of solar panels and arrays in locations that are not readily visible from the public right-of-way or that are designed so as to have a minimal impact on the historic resource or the historic district (e.g., systems that are ground-mounted in areas other than the front or side yard of a corner lot, located on accessory or outbuildings, on non-historic additions, or on rear facing roof planes);

Installation of car charging stations in any location on a property or in the right-of-way;

Installation of satellite dishes;

Removal of trees greater than 6" in diameter (d.b.h.) that are dead, dying, or present an immediate hazard.

Removal of trees greater than 6" in diameter (d.b.h.) in the rear of the property that will not impact the overall tree canopy of the surrounding district or historic site;

Replacement tree required as a condition; and,

Other minor alterations that may be required by the Department of Permitting Services post-Commission approval that would have no material effect on the historic character of the property.

Staff finds the proposal complies with Chapter 24A, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and any additional requisite guidance. Under the authority of COMCOR No. 24A.04.01, this HAWP is approved by J. Brueckert on _____. The approval memo and stamped drawings follow.

Greenwich Forest Project Description

Proposal. Replace Pepco power with low voltage solar power in a neighborhood park in the Greenwich Forest Historic District, and install two small solar panels in a garden area in the park.

Background. This application is being submitted by the Historic District Committee of the Greenwich Forest Citizens Association (GFCA), a non-profit MD corporation and neighborhood membership association in Bethesda. GFCA’s Articles of Incorporation defined its boundaries that now include 93 households, 71 of which are designated properties in the Greenwich Forest Historic District. A triangle park in the County right-of-way is also located within the Historic District (indicated in red, below). The park includes a masonry sign built by the developers in the early 1930s, with “Greenwich Forest” back-lit at night. The park and masonry sign were designated Contributing Properties when the historic district was approved in 2011.

Intersection of Hampden Lane & Overhill Road	Park	1928		C
Intersection of Hampden Lane & Overhill Road	Sign	ca. 1933	Cafritz Construction Co.	C

Designation of Greenwich Forest park and sign in the approved Historic District inventory, June 2011

APPROVED
Montgomery County
Historic Preservation Commission

REVIEWED
By Dan.Bruechert at 10:45 am, Nov 02, 2022

- Greenwich Forest Historic District
- Parcel Boundaries
- Pavement outside of ROW
- Public Right of Way (ROW)
- Master Planned ROW
- Contributing buildings
- Non-contributing buildings
- Other buildings

200 100 0 200 Feet

Since its creation in the 1930s, GFCA has taken responsibility for maintenance of this park and sign, including upkeep of the lawn and plantings, and occasional repair of mortar and equipment that provides electrical power to the sign. GFCA has paid utility bills for water and electricity to the park, recently representing a \$600 annual cost.

Electrical power to the sign is provided by Pepco through an underground cable from a utility pole on Hampden Lane. The underground cable emerges behind the masonry sign, connects to Pepco’s meter, and then goes into a locked cabinet with circuit breakers, a 110 volt outlet, and connections to lights on the sign. The meter box, cabinet, and electrical equipment are all corroded and beyond repair (see photos, next pages). GFCA has paid Pepco \$1,128 to disconnect power to the park so that the deteriorated equipment could be removed safely.

Greenwich Forest Project Description

GFCFA submitted a HAWP application in mid-July 2022 to remove and discard the cabinet and all deteriorated electrical equipment. HPC staff informed us by letter dated July 29, 2022 that proposed work was considered routine maintenance that does not require a HAWP. The work proceeded and several electrical contractors have inspected the site and submitted proposals to install new electrical equipment. These estimates all exceed \$6,000, including Pepco's charge of \$1,128 to reconnect the power supply installed. In parallel, GFCFA explored the option of replacing 110 volt power powered by solar panels. This application proposes installation of the solar cost less than \$3,000.

Proposal. GFCFA requests approval to install an "off-the-grid" solar power (not connected to the Pepco grid) that would replace Pepco-provided electricity. All components will reside in the space previously occupied by a copper-clad cabinet, except for the solar panels which will be installed in or next to a garden surrounding the Greenwich Forest sign.

The proposed solar power equipment would include:

- Two solar panels, each measuring approximately 26" x 52"
- Two 12vDC batteries that would be charged during the day
- A solar charge controller that controls the connection between the solar panels and batteries;
- Connections between the batteries and the lights on the sign, and a photocell and time that opens this connection during specific nighttime hours; and
- An inverter with several plug outlets, connected to the batteries, to generate 110vAC current.

All of the above components except for the solar panels will be installed in the recessed space left vacant after removal of the deteriorated equipment (see photos, below). The opening of this space would have a door with louvers to permit ventilation and a padlock for security.

GFCFA will follow the County's requirements for [a low-voltage electrical permit](#), as described on the DPS website.



Exterior and interior of electrical equipment cabinet prior to removal of cabinet and deteriorated equipment

APPROVED
Montgomery County
Historic Preservation Commission



REVIEWED illuminate the sign at night;
between the solar panels and batteries;
By Dan.Bruechert at 10:45 am, Nov 02, 2022
the sign, and a photocell and time that opens this

Greenwich Forest Project Description



Empty recess left after



and proposed louvered and locked door.

APPROVED
Montgomery County
Historic Preservation Commission

[Signature]

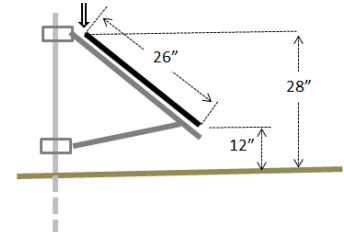
REVIEWED
By Dan.Bruechert at 10:45 am, Nov 02, 2022

Placement of solar panel

Two solar panels will be needed to charge batteries during sunlight hours so that the sign can be illuminated for approximately six hours after sunset each day. The solar panels must face due south, tilted 39° from horizontal. Each panel is held in place by an adjustable frame attached to a post set in the ground, as illustrated below.



Solar panel tilted 39° from horizontal



Several years ago, GFCA embarked on a beautification initiative for the garden area around the masonry sign. The Association, supported by voluntary contributions by residents, has already invested more than \$6,000 on addressing deferred maintenance needs and installing new plants. GFCA's members recently approved an additional \$10,000 expenditure to complete installation of a more sustainable garden of native plants. A proposed location for the solar panels in this garden is illustrated in the following pages. The landscape architect who provided the garden's design will be involved in locating the solar panels within the garden and reducing their visibility from the right-of-way. The exact position will not be finalized until the system is installed and tested during winter, when daylight hours will be the shortest and the sun will be lowest in the sky.

As shown below, the long axis of the masonry sign is oriented east-west, and the front of the sign points south. The photograph below was taken from behind the sign to show the open sky to the south and the proposed location of the solar panels, in an area of Liriope, a low-growing native groundcover.

Greenwich Forest Project Description



As seen on the map below, the proposed location of the solar panels is northwest of the Greenwich Forest sign approximately eight feet behind and six feet to the left of it. As illustrated previously, the lower edge of the panels will be approximately 12" above the ground, which would be above shadows cast by the surrounding groundcover plants. The upper edge of the panels would be about 28" above the ground.

APPROVED
Montgomery County
Historic Preservation Commission



REVIEWED

By Dan.Bruechert at 10:45 am, Nov 02, 2022

The panels would be screened from view in all directions, without interfering with the southern exposure needed to recharge the system. As part of the improvement and installation of plants in the garden around the Greenwich Forest sign, evergreen azaleas will be transplanted to screen the solar panels from the north and west. A large *Viburnum* shrub would be relocated to reduce the visibility of the panels from the southwest. The sign would block the view of the panels from most areas of the Triangle. Existing cherry laurels and additional plants to be installed will obscure them from the east.

Greenwich Forest Project Description

The landscape architect responsible for the garden's design will make additional adjustments in plant location to minimize visibility of the solar panels after the panels have been installed.

APPROVED
Montgomery County
Historic Preservation Commission

REVIEWED

By Dan.Bruechert at 10:46 am, Nov 02, 2022



Mock-up of solar panels showing proposed locations prior to installation of screening plants

