

37/3 prelim 7003 Westmoreland Avenue
Takoma Park Historic District

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Address: 7003 Westmoreland Avenue Meeting Date: 4/14/93
Resource: Takoma Park Historic District Preliminary Consultation
Case Number: n/a Tax Credit: No
Public Notice: 3/31/93 Report Date: 4/7/93
Applicant: C. Browner/M. Podhorser Staff: Nancy Witherell
PROPOSAL: Alteration to front porch RECOMMEND: Proceed

The applicants propose altering the location of the front porch steps so that they would project from the front rather than from the side. The new steps would be aligned with the front door. The house, a contributing historic structure, is a near twin of 7005 Westmoreland Avenue; both houses are the only ones in the immediate vicinity to have porch entrances from the side.

The porch wall would be redesigned accordingly, with a new opening made at the front and the existing opening on the side filled in.

Although the other bungalows nearby have front-opening porches, there is significance in having this variation to the pattern, particularly since the "twin" has the same side-stairs design.

Nevertheless, the architect has designed the project to conform with the Takoma Park amendment's guidelines for design review of this house, which (for contributing structures) were written to focus on "the importance of the resource to the overall streetscape and its compatibility with existing patterns rather than focusing on a close scrutiny of architectural detailing. In general, however, changes to Contributing Resources should respect the predominant architectural style of the resource."

In addition, present-day circumstances have led to a wider driveway that now extends directly to the base of the stairs. The applicants seek to create a more friendly entrance to the house, as stated in the attached letter from the architect.

In light of the above reasoning, the staff cites two guidelines from the amendment, and recommends that the applicants proceed with a HAWP application.

All exterior alterations, including those to architectural

feature and details, should be generally consistent with the predominant architectural style and period of the resource and should preserve the predominant architectural features of the resource; exact replication of existing details and features is, however, not required.

Additions and alterations to the first floor at the front of a structure are discouraged but not automatically prohibited.

The staff further suggests that the proposed railing be simplified. The existing railing may or may not be original, but it matches that of the adjacent twin house, and is more similar to others in the immediate area.

H A M I L T O N
S N O W B E R

A r c h i t e c t s

26 March 1993

Ms. Nancy Witherell
Historic Planner
Design, Zoning and Preservation Division
MNCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Witherell,

Enclosed please find documents supporting a preliminary application for work within the Historic Area of Takoma Park. I am acting on behalf of the owner and resident of the property, Mr. Michael Podhorzer, 7003 Westmoreland Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland.

The proposed project is the relocation of the stairs providing access to the front porch of the house. The renovation would remove this existing stair and provide a new one at the front of the house, along with a new walkway.

The primary architectural features of street elevation of the existing house consist of two gables, a large one over the main house and a smaller one over the porch, heavily overhanging and supported by brackets over a painted shingle main house. The porch rail is also has a painted shingle low wall. The porch roof is supported by paired columns with decorative trimwork between each pair. Entry to the porch is by a stair from the left side, coming off of a concrete driveway. The existing handrail consists of a 2" x 4" painted member. Both the porch and stairs are enclosed with horizontal and vertical latticework. At the street edge of the property is a rubble stone retaining wall approximately three feet high, which returns up the driveway in a concrete wall.

The proposed work would require the removal of the existing stair and handrail. The remaining opening would be filled in, using the same siding and wall cap detail found on the existing, closed side of the porch. An opening in the left front wall of the porch would be cut, centered on the front door of the house, and the new stair would be installed. The stair would consist of painted wood risers and treads, with a painted handrail and balusters. The area beneath the steps, and at the old stair location, would be filled in with new lattice work to match the existing. A new walkway would extend from the base of the stairs towards the street, and then curve towards the driveway. New landscaping would soften the area to each side of the stair and walkway. The existing tree to the right of the porch would remain.

The proposed work would alter the front elevation of the house, but in a way consistent with other design features. The original massing of the house would remain intact, including the larger gable of the main house and the smaller one over the porch. Additionally, the new design would provide a more friendly, welcoming appearance towards the street. The existing rubble wall at the sidewalk would remain intact.

Regarding the urban design implications of this renovation, I have included photographs of a number of the properties on either side of Westmoreland Avenue.

Most of the houses on the block are low, wood frame bungalows-cum-porches of a similar scale, massing and detailing as 7003. Virtually all of the houses have stairs that come off of the front of the porch towards the street. The lone exceptions to this pattern are 7003, and its immediate neighbor to the left,

7005. The two houses were built at the same time, and are very similar to one another. The primary distinction between the houses is the use of a different shingle pattern and the lack of column trim on 7005, and the changes in siting due to the topography of the street. Over time, different painting and planting patterns add to the distinction of the two properties.

While the proposed renovations would change the house from its immediate neighbor to the left, it would follow a pattern set by every other bungalow on the street. With proper detailing, it would not disrupt the overall look or feel of the street.

Please review the enclosed materials. I would be happy to answer any questions that you have in advance of the public meeting on April 14th, and provide any additional documentation you think necessary.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Chris Snowber A.I.A.

Christopher R. Snowber, AIA

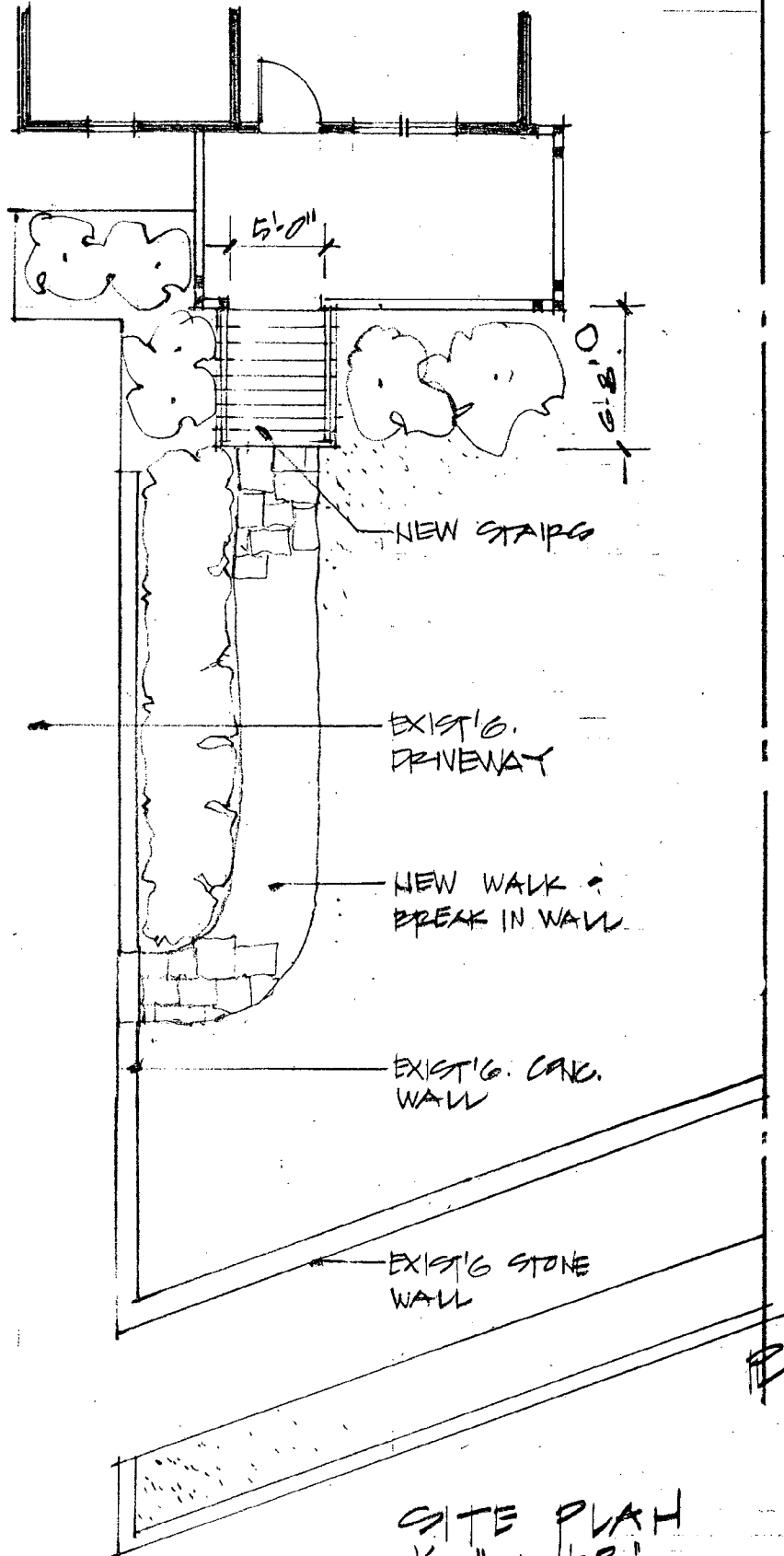
Enclosures: Perspective Sketch of Existing and Proposed Conditions
 Site Plan (1/8" = 1')
 Front Elevation (1/4" = 1')
 Side Elevation (1/4" = 1')
 Photographs of property and other houses on the street



EXISTING ELEVATION



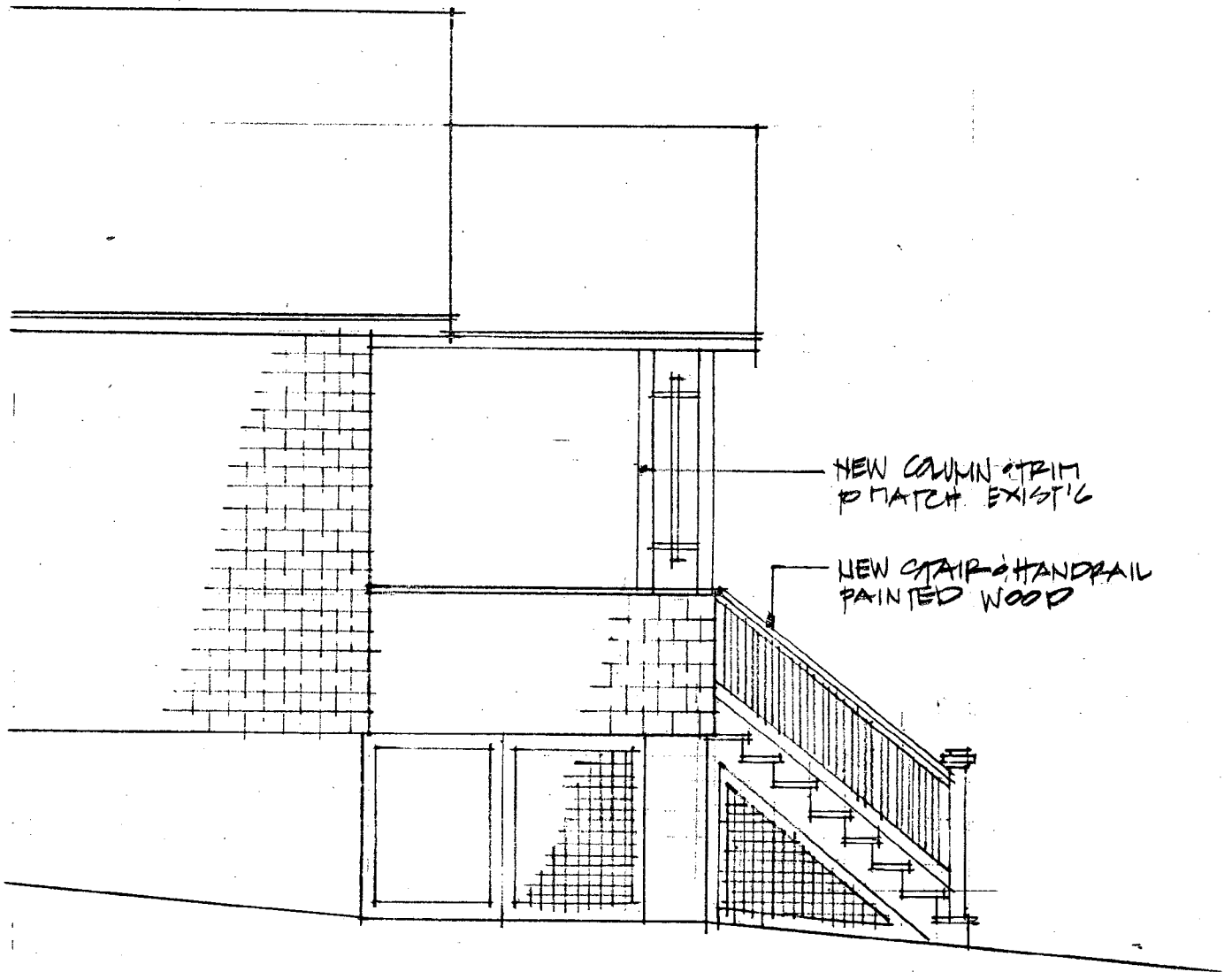
PROPOSED REVISION



SITE PLAN
 1/8" = 1'-0"



PROPOSED
FRONT ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



PROPOSED
SIDE ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



7004



7000

7002



7000



View down Westmoreland (6908, 6910, 6912, 6914, 6916)



6909



6916



6914

1001



1005



Photo location map

* PHOTOGRAPH PROVIDED

* 7004
* 7002
* 7000
* 6916
* 6914
* 6912
* 6910
* 6908
* 6906

WESTMORELAND AVENUE

* 7005
* 7003
* 7001
(Non-bungalow)
6913
* 6909

7003 Westmoreland Avenue



**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

**8787 GEORGIA AVENUE
SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND 20907**