



HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD  
ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB)  
**FROM:** Mical Tawney, Historic Preservation Associate Planner  
**DATE:** April 10, 2024  
**SUBJECT:** CoA 24-09, 2725 23<sup>rd</sup> Rd. N., Maywood Local Historic District (LHD)

**Background Information**

The *Maywood National Register Nomination* describes the pre-1916 contributing dwelling at 2725 23<sup>rd</sup> Rd. N. as follows:

The three-bay-wide, wood-frame dwelling is clad in weatherboard and has a side-gable roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. It has a one-story, three-bay, wood-frame front porch on posts and both nine-over-one and six-over-one wood-sash windows. Other notable features include a gable-roof front dormer with three six-over-one wood-sash windows, and wide, overhanging eaves with exposed rafter tails.

The Virginia Cultural Resource Information System describes the detached garage at 2725 23<sup>rd</sup> Rd. N. as follows:

The one-bay, wood-frame garage is clad in weatherboard, and has a front-gable roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. The building features wide, overhanging eaves, and a wood cornice.

The *Maywood National Register Nomination* gives the garage a construction date of 1936 and notes it as a contributing historic resource. The source of this date is attributed to a map, likely the 1936 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Arlington County, which shows the house with a detached garage. The same garage is present on the 1959 Sanborn map. However, further research by the Historic Preservation Program (HPP) staff indicates that the present-day garage is most likely not the garage that was present in 1936. The Arlington County House Cards, which functioned as an early building permit tracking system, note that a detached garage with a full basement was approved for construction on October 11, 1983. Mical Tawney and Lorin Farris of the HPP staff completed a brief field survey of the garage in April 2024 and concluded, based on the physical evidence, that the existing garage is likely the garage constructed in 1983. Thus, it is for this reason that the HPP staff believes the current garage to be non-historic and no longer contributing to the Maywood LHD or National Register district.

According to the HPP's records, no Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) projects have been applied for or completed at the subject property.

It should be noted that the house is situated at the end of 23<sup>rd</sup> Rd. N. and at the edge of the Maywood LHD boundary. There are no neighboring houses to the east and south of the property; the closest

neighboring building is situated to the west, the non-contributing house at 2729 23<sup>rd</sup> Rd. N. Thrifton Hill Park, a public park, surrounds the house to the south, east, and portions of the north.

### **Proposal**

The applicant is proposing to construct a two-story rear and side addition to the existing house that would connect it with the existing detached garage. The construction would require the partial demolition of about one-third of the rear of the existing house, the partial demolition of the rear portion of the existing garage, and the partial demolition of the existing rear patio space. To construct the addition, the applicant would also need to remove a healthy 23" Japanese Cryptomeria tree situated directly behind the garage in the rear yard.

The proposed addition features a two-story, flat-roofed hyphen that would connect the existing house to a larger two-story front-gabled side addition overtop of the existing garage. A secondary entrance featuring a half-glazed wood door and wood entry stairs and deck would provide access to a first-floor mudroom in the hyphen section. Siding throughout the addition would either be wood lap siding to match the siding on the existing house or smooth fiberboard cement siding to match the existing siding. All trim would be 5/4" millable Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC). Roof shingles on the addition would be architectural asphalt shingles to match the existing. The garage would feature a new wood overhead door with a faux double door appearance. All windows would be either from the Anderson 400 vinyl-clad wood window series or from the Pella wood window series. Windows to be used include one-over-one, three-over-three, six-over-one, and nine-over-one, double-hung-sash windows and fixed, picture windows. The rear elevation also features a sliding glass wood door and a wood deck supported by wood posts that spans the length of the rear addition.

### **Design Review Committee (DRC) Review**

The DRC first considered this application as a preliminary review item at its March 6, 2024, hybrid meeting. Mr. Davis expressed that he felt the addition overwhelmed the existing garage and wanted more visual recognition that the garage was present. Staff asked for more information about the site and if a rear addition would be possible. The applicant noted significant grade issues, lot line and setback restrictions, and consideration for neighbors' views as the reasoning behind why the design was oriented toward the side of the existing house rather than towards the rear. Mr. Wenchel stated a desire for the roof lines of the center hyphen and side addition on the garage to be lower to help further distinguish between historic and new construction. He also offered suggestions for the garage door and asked about the purpose of the entryway on the hyphen. Mr. Davis stated he felt the windows on the addition were proportionally too large and suggested that they be made smaller; he also noted that the rear elevation was a bit "glassy" with an abundance of windows. The DRC encouraged the applicant to return next month with these changes incorporated into the design.

The DRC considered an official CoA application for the project at its April 3, 2024, hybrid meeting. Mr. Davis asked again if a rear only addition had been explored. The applicant explained that the side-yard setback restrictions and steep drop-off in the rear grade made a side addition the best solution for the design.

The DRC's discussion largely focused on the various roof lines in the design. Mr. Wenchel and Ms. Foster agreed that the height of the hyphen's roof line should be lowered to help further differentiate between the old and the new. Ms. Foster and Mr. Davis felt there were too many competing roof lines and suggested that the applicant keep the hyphen but edit the roof of the garage addition to either a side-gable or a front-gable roof only.



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Staff shared the information found about the garage's history; given the change in the garage's contributing and historic status, staff posed a question about the inclusion of the garage into the design and if the design could change to make it appear more secondary to the original house should the garage no longer be included. Staff also expressed a desire for the addition to be lower in height (1 to 1½ stories). The applicant explained their preference to keep the garage in the design so that it could be used as a functioning garage.

Suggestions about details to the design, such as where to eliminate windows, where windows should be made lower, or where there was crowding of fenestration, were made by both the DRC and staff. Overall, the DRC felt that the proportion of the windows on the addition were too large and asked that they be made smaller; they also asked for a better "rhythm" with the windows on the addition. The DRC preferred the windows on the rear and side addition to be one-over-one to help further differentiate between the old and the new construction.

The DRC left the decision up to the applicant as to whether they wanted to return to the DRC for another round of feedback or if they preferred to move forward to the HALRB. Given that the applicant felt confident in being able to make the suggested changes to the design, the DRC placed this item on the Discussion Agenda for the April 17, 2024, hybrid HALRB public hearing.

### **Recommendation**

First, the HPP staff would like to thank the applicant for their hard work to implement the design changes recommended by the DRC and staff. Staff appreciates the efforts to take those suggestions into consideration and the overall changes made to the design since it was first brought forward to the DRC in March.

The HPP staff's primary concern with this proposal is the massing and scale of the addition to the existing house. The *Maywood Design Guidelines* state that a "new addition should not be prominently visible from the street and should be located to the rear of the house, if possible" (pg. 27). It further states "additions should not be larger than and should be visually secondary to the original house" (pg. 27). While the HPP staff understands how the lot limitations have influenced this project's design, staff feels that the design as presented still has the potential to overwhelm and changes the directional expression of the original Bungalow form of the existing house. Staff appreciates the lowering of the roof line between the existing house and the additions but would support an additional decrease so that the addition reads as even more secondary to the original house. Thus, staff encourages the HALRB to discuss the scale and massing of the proposed addition to determine its appropriateness to both the subject property and the surrounding context of the LHD.

Although staff feels that the proposed scale and massing of the addition would benefit from further revisions, they find that the following elements, which are noted in the *Maywood Design Guidelines* for consideration with new construction projects, are not adversely affected by this design:

- The front setback (positioning of the house to the road);

- The uniform spacing between houses (there is not a neighboring house to the east where the addition would be located);
- The height of the first floor and floor-to-floor heights (these would remain uniform); and
- The proportion and rhythm of the windows (particularly those on the front and side elevations).

Regarding materials, the proposed siding and trim meet the standards outlined in both Appendix C: Cement Fiberboard Siding Materials and Appendix D: Cellular Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) Trim in the *Maywood Design Guidelines*. While decks are not mentioned specifically in the *Design Guidelines*, there are existing examples throughout the LHD. The HPP staff considers rear decks to be an appropriate way to increase the livable space of houses in Maywood. The use of wood as the material for both the mudroom porch and the rear deck is also appropriate per the *Design Guidelines* (pgs. 17, 40, and G-19). Likewise, the proposed mudroom door and garage door are appropriate per the *Design Guidelines* (pgs. 21 and G-28 and G-34 respectively). Sliding glass doors have been permitted on rear additions elsewhere in the district as well (i.e., 2900 22<sup>nd</sup> St. N. [CoA 24-1] and 3623 21<sup>st</sup> Ave. N. [CoA22-1]).

Staff finds the proposed design, dimension, and appearance of the windows for the addition to meet the intent outlined in Chapter 6: New Addition/Building (Windows – pg. 44) of the *Maywood Design Guidelines*. However, staff finds the proposed window material may be incompatible with the district. The Anderson 400 series windows, while made of wood, are vinyl-clad. The *Design Guidelines* state “vinyl or aluminum (or vinyl- or aluminum-clad) windows are inappropriate for Maywood” (pg. 19). Recent side and rear addition projects in the LHD exclusively proposed and were approved by the HALRB for the use of wood windows (e.g., 2328 N. Edgewood St. [CoA 21-28]; 2317 N. Kenmore St. [CoA 22-14]; 2309 N. Kenmore St. [CoA 22-04]). While clad windows are used in the district, they are largely used on non-contributing houses (i.e., 2821 23<sup>rd</sup> Rd. N. [CoA 21-32] and 3215 22<sup>nd</sup> Street N. [no CoA - approved in 1992]). Pella wood windows are noted as the other type of window the applicant could use; since staff recommends the use of wood windows (not clad) in the addition, they believe these windows to be more appropriate for the addition. The window material should be another item for HALRB discussion.

Per the County Forester’s report, the tree requested for removal is a 23” Japanese Cryptomeria tree with no health issues, full foliage, and was rated at 90% for health (the excellent category). The forester denied the requested removal of the tree because it was determined healthy. The forester also noted that other trees on the property (ones not requested for removal by the applicant) and/or on the neighboring property at 2729 23<sup>rd</sup> Rd. N. could potentially be affected by construction traffic or stockpiling for the project and encouraged the applicant to consider tree protective measures for those trees. While the HPP staff typically would recommend saving a healthy mature tree in the LHD, the HALRB should consider the unusual site circumstances when determining the appropriateness of this tree removal; in essence, the current design would require its removal. Per the *Maywood Design Guidelines*, a tree that has been removed must be replaced with another of a similar size at maturity. Since the proposed house footprint does not allow for the replacement of the tree in the same location, staff agrees that it would be appropriate for the replacement tree to be planted elsewhere on the property, should the HALRB allow its removal. The applicant should review the County’s guidance for appropriate tree species for any replacement trees.

Initially, the HPP staff had reservations about the inclusion of the existing garage into the design in terms of the precedent that could set within the LHD for designs incorporating existing secondary structures. However, given that staff’s research determined the garage is not historic or contributing to the district, staff finds the incorporation of the garage into the design acceptable. The inclusion of the existing, non-historic and non-contributing structure is an innovative means by which to incorporate existing materials and fabric into a design.



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In conclusion, the HPP staff recommends the HALRB consider the following two aspects of the proposed design as part of its project review:

- Scale and massing of the proposed addition and whether it is appropriate for both the subject property and the overall Maywood LHD; and
- Proposed window materials in the addition.