



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, Acting Historic Preservation Planner
DATE: January 10, 2024
SUBJECT: CoA 24-01, 2900 22nd Street N., Maywood Local Historic District (LHD)

Background Information

The house at 2900 22nd Street N. was constructed in 2009. Given that the house was built after the Maywood neighborhood was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003, the property is not included in the nomination. As such, the house is considered non-contributing to the historic district. The house could be described as follows:

The four-bay-wide, two-story wood-frame dwelling rests on a solid parged foundation. It is clad in cement-fiberboard siding and cedar-wood shingles and has a side-gabled roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. It has a one-story, full-length front porch featuring tapered posts on brick piers and decorative wood railings. Windows are both four-over-one and six-over-one wood-sash and two-over-two wood-fixed. Other notable features include a shed-roof front dormer with three windows and wide, overhanging eaves with brackets and exposed rafter tails.

Prior to the house's construction, the lot was vacant except for a shed. The HALRB first approved the siting of the proposed house in July 2006 and then approved the construction of the single-family dwelling on Lot 112 in November 2006 (CoA 06-33). Since the proposed house required a setback modification, it went before the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) and its determination required changes to the original design. The applicant returned to the HALRB in April 2007 with changes to the siting of the house and modifications to the attached garage; the HALRB approved CoA 07-10 which allowed for the changes proposed to the original design, the removal of the extant shed, and the demolition of the garage located on the adjacent property at 2904 22nd Street N. (both properties were owned by the same individual). In September 2007, the applicant again returned to the HALRB with modifications to the front and west elevations of the house; these changes were approved (CoA 07-32).

In February 2008, the HALRB approved CoA 08-06A, which included amendments to the construction of the house such as the removal of the proposed rear chimney, the use of cedar shingles on the second floor instead of cement fiberboard siding, and changing the first-floor windows on the west elevation from a group of three windows to two windows. The HALRB denied the portion of the project requesting to modify the grade to compensate for the new foundation wall height. Subsequent changes were approved by the HALRB in March 2008 (CoA 08-06B), which modified a window on the rear elevation, the design of the front steps, the height of the foundation walls and new grading, and the conceptual landscaping for the site. Another alteration to the front entryway of the property was approved via CoA 08-20 in June 2008. Later that year, the HALRB approved CoA 08-32 for new railings, a revised rear deck, and new

front steps. In June 2010, the HALRB approved CoA 10-13 for the removal of a 41” white oak from the front of the property; the HALRB requested that the applicant plant two replacement trees to compensate for the removal of the oak tree. Finally, in October 2010, the Historic Preservation Program (HPP) staff approved ACoA 10-13 for the installation of a 4’-tall and 6’-tall fence along the property line.

Proposal

The current application involves the demolition of the existing rear deck and stairs and the construction of a new rear deck and screened porch. To accommodate the new rear deck and screened porch, the applicant is proposing to expand the exterior footprint of the house on the eastern side of the rear (south) elevation by 3.3’ x 3.3’. This expansion will have an 8” CMU wing wall with a parged coat at the foundation to match the existing and Hardie lap siding to match the existing with PVC trim. The expansion necessitates the removal of the four existing six-over-one wood windows in that area; these will be replaced with a double-leaf, fully-glazed wood door on the rear elevation (Jeldwen “Colonial” style inswing patio door). The applicant also is proposing to install three four-over-one wood windows on the east elevation of the house.

The new rear deck (located on the east side of the rear elevation) would measure 103 s.f. The deck would have composite deck flooring, composite railings, and a new flight of stairs with riser lights leading to a concrete landing at the ground level. PVC lattice would be installed underneath the deck in between the support posts. In-between the deck and the screened porch, the applicant is proposing to install a gas fireplace. The gas fireplace, which would open to the screened porch but have its rear exposed on the deck side, would have a stone veneer.

The screened porch (situated on the west side of the rear elevation) would measure 173 s.f. To make room for the screened porch, the applicant will have to demolish a portion of the existing patio at the ground level for the footings of the porch but plans to infill the area with 2’ x 4’ flagstone on 4’ concrete to match the existing. The screened porch would feature composite decking and composite railings to match those being used on the rear deck. Screens would enclose the porch and the railings would be located on the inside of the screening. The porch would also feature a gabled roof sheathed in architectural asphalt shingles and two fixed, Velux skylights; the applicant also intends to change the roofing of the entire house from a 3-tab asphalt shingle to an architectural shingle to match that of the new screened porch. It should be noted that these two items, the skylights and the roofing shingle change, can be approved via the Administrative CoA process. Structural cedar brackets would also be used on the exterior of the screened porch. Finally, the applicant is proposing to remove the existing door on this side of the house, slightly enlarging the opening, and replacing it with a wood, sliding glass door (Jeldwen Sitrine door).

In addition to the construction of the rear deck and screened porch, the applicant is also proposing to make a new window opening along the east elevation to install a fixed, vinyl window. This window would be in the bathroom of the house, specifically in the shower. Finally, the applicant requests to replace the wood flooring on the front porch with composite decking; the existing wood railings would remain in place.

Design Review Committee (DRC) Review

The DRC considered this application at its January 3, 2024, hybrid meeting. None of the DRC members had concerns or questions about the proposed demolition and construction of the new screened porch, the new rear deck, or the small enlargement to the rear of the house. Much of the DRC’s conversation focused on the proposed materials for the project. The applicant explained to the DRC that many of the



HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD
ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

wood elements on the house (such as deck flooring and railings) already had deteriorated which necessitated their replacement; this was primarily the logic for requesting the use of composite materials. Mr. Wenchel felt the proposal was appropriate since much of the work was being completed on the rear of the house, and therefore, would be largely invisible from the public right-of-way. He noted that wood today is not made how it historically was and that it was a shame it had deteriorated so quickly. He said he would be more concerned if composite materials were being used on the front of the house where they would have increased visibility. Mr. Davis asked clarifying questions about the proposed windows. The applicant and Ms. Tawney explained that the three windows being installed closer to the rear would be wood, but that the new proposed window opening on the side elevation would have a vinyl window since it would be in a shower. This prompted some discussion about precedent in the Maywood LHD for the use of vinyl windows in bathrooms and other high moisture areas of homes. Ms. Foster echoed sentiments expressed by Mr. Wenchel about being comfortable with the use of composite on the rear of the house, but also noted that composite materials render a different tactile interaction than wood. Although the DRC members felt comfortable with the overall project scope, they agreed that the full HALRB should discuss the appropriateness of the proposed materials. The DRC placed this item on the Discussion Agenda for the January 17, 2024, hybrid HALRB public hearing.

Recommendation

Given that this home is of new construction and non-contributing to the LHD, the HPP staff recommends approval of this application. The proposed deck and screened porch will be located at the rear of the property and will not be visible from the front elevation right-of-way. The project therefore meets the intent of Chapter 6: New Addition/Building of the *Maywood Design Guidelines* which state, “In most cases, the new addition should not be prominently visible from the street and should be located to the rear of the house, if possible” (pg. 27). Ideally, the construction of a new addition would have limited impact on the existing house and its historic fabric. The construction of the proposed rear deck and screened porch necessitates the expansion of the existing house; however, the expansion is small (3’ x 3’) and limited to the rear of the house which is not visible from the public right-of-way.

While neither decks nor screened porches are mentioned specifically in the *Maywood Design Guidelines* as appropriate for the Maywood LHD, there are existing examples of both throughout the district. Examples of houses with decks and/or screened porches can be found at 2165 and 2201 N. Lincoln Street, 2300 N. Kenmore Street, 3312 and 3623 21st Avenue N., 2821 23rd Street N., and 2309 N. Kenmore Street. While retaining the porch railing inside of the screen would typically not be recommended as it obscures the banister detail, Maywood has existing examples of screened porches with interior handrails including at 2302 N. Jackson Street, 3401 21st Avenue N., and 2300 N. Kenmore Street. Most recently, the HALRB approved CoA 22-13A for 2101 N. Kenmore Street to screen a rear porch and retain the porch railing inside of the screen; however, it should be noted this project was not built. The HPP staff considers screened porches and rear decks appropriate ways to increase the livable space of houses in Maywood.

Regarding the materials proposed for the project, the HPP finds most of them to be appropriate for the Maywood LHD. The proposed doors are made of wood, an appropriate material for the LHD. The proposed siding and PVC trim would match existing on the house and 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*. It should be noted that the Hardie siding does not need approval in this application because it is an in-kind replacement.

The proposed replacement windows for the east elevation meet the intent outlined in Chapter 6: New Addition/Building (Windows – pg. 44) and Appendix H: In-Kind Window Replacement Guidelines of the *Maywood Design Guidelines* (pg. 100). Although these windows will not replace the windows being removed for the rear expansion, they will match the existing windows on the house in material, design, dimension, and appearance. Regarding the proposed vinyl window for the bathroom, the *Maywood Design Guidelines* state that “vinyl or aluminum (or vinyl- or aluminum-clad) windows are inappropriate for Maywood.” However, there is precedent in the LHD for the use of vinyl windows in specific cases related to high-moisture spaces like bathrooms. Examples can be found at 3301 22nd Street N. (CoA 18-01) and 3607 22nd Street N. (CoA 21-11). In both these examples, the vinyl window replaced an aluminum-clad wood (CoA 18-01) and a non-historic wood window (CoA 21-11) that had deteriorated due to high moisture exposure. While the proposed vinyl window in the subject application would be a new insertion, and therefore would not have a pre-existing condition to prove a wood window would be incompatible in the space, the HALRB’s approval of other instances of vinyl windows in the LHD set a precedent for the use of vinyl windows in bathrooms.

However, the HPP staff encourages the HALRB to discuss the appropriateness of the use of composite materials in this project. In Chapter 6: New Addition/Building of the *Maywood Design Guidelines*, it is noted “In general, four circumstances warrant the consideration of substitute materials: 1) the unavailability of historic materials; 2) the unavailability of skilled craftsmen; 3) inherent flaws in the original materials; and 4) code-required changes...” and continues with regards to porch flooring and decking materials, “artificial materials may be considered for decks or porch flooring, if the above conditions are present.” Due to the deterioration (an “inherent flaw”) of the wood flooring on the front porch of the subject house, it would be appropriate per the *Maywood Design Guidelines* for the flooring to be replaced with composite materials as long as that material is compatible in appearance with historic materials. However, the composite railings and deck flooring on the rear of the house would be new and not have an “inherent flaw” to prove their use as essential; thus, the HALRB should consider this material placement.

As a point of comparison, other newly built, non-contributing houses in the Maywood LHD have incorporated a mixture of composite and wood materials. The dwelling at 2326 N. Jackson Street used wood handrails and guardrails on the front and rear of the house but used composite materials for the porch flooring (CoA 21-05; CoA 21-05B). The house at 3205 23rd Street N. used pressure-treated wood on the stairs and handrails (CoA 21-02A). The house at 2322 N. Fillmore Street used wood railings, wood porch flooring, and wood stairs (CoA 15-01; CoA 15-01B). Since the precedent for the use of materials in new construction varies in the LHD, the HALRB should consider both the location and appropriateness of the proposed materials on the subject property, the materials’ interaction/visibility with the public, and their precedent-setting nature.