

**TOWN OF HERNDON, VIRGINIA
HISTORIC DISTRICT REVIEW BOARD
VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA
DECEMBER 16, 2020
HERNDON COUNCIL CHAMBERS BUILDING
765 LYNN STREET
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

1. Roll Call
2. Determination of Quorum

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3. November 4, 2020 Work Session Draft Minutes
4. November 18, 2020 Public Hearing Draft Minutes

COMMENTS

5. Comments from the Board Members
6. Comments from the Staff Members

PUBLIC HEARING

7. **APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR AN ALTERATION TO AN EXISTING STRUCTURE, HPRB #20-019**, to consider an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the reduction of the required front yard building setback from 35' to 20', permissible within the Heritage Preservation Overlay District, on the single family residential property at 764 Grace Street, Herndon, Virginia, located at the south corner of the intersection of Grace Street and the Washington and Old Dominion Trail right-of-way, and further identified as Fairfax County Tax Map 0104-02-0017. The property is zoned R-10, Residential, Single Family; and consists of 16,074 total square feet of land. Owners/Applicants: Bryce A. Perry and Phuong T. Pham.

ADJOURNMENT



MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Walker & Members of the Heritage Preservation Review Board

From: Elizabeth M. Gilleran, AICP, Director of Community Development

Date: December 10, 2020

Subject: HPRB #20-019, 764 Grace Street, Front Setback Reduction

This memo serves as an update for the referenced case, HPRB #20-019, scheduled for the December 16, 2020 HDRB public hearing.

During the December 2, 2020 HDRB work session, several questions were raised regarding the appropriateness of the requested extension into a required front setback considering the newly adopted Historic District Overlay Guidelines. Staff has attempted to answer these questions and provides the following updates.

A question was raised regarding whether additions on side facades can be permitted under the new Guidelines. The staff reached out to the Town's consultants at Commonwealth Preservation Group (CPG), who were instrumental in the development of the Town's new guidelines. The company is owned and operated by Paige Pollard, and was selected in part due to her extensive experience with historic district guidelines. Prior to establishing CPG, she managed the Virginia Department of Historic Resources Local Government Assistance Programs as well as the department's Tidewater Region Preservation Program, working with property owners and local governments from over 30 cities and counties. The consultants responded to the staff's inquiry regarding side additions with the following message. *"In this case, the guideline that states new additions should not be visible or should be minimally visible from the public right-of-way is one of several bullet [letter] points under the main guideline that states that new additions should be subordinate to the historic building; these subpoints provide guidance on how to assure the addition remains secondary to the historic resource. The review should strike a balance between all guidelines - not necessarily meet every single bullet point."* A copy of the pages 73 and 74, *Guidelines for New Additions*, from the adopted Guidelines, showing the arrangement of numbered main guidelines vs the lettered subpoints, is attached to this memo for your convenience (Attachment #1.)

The staff will be scheduling a training session between the consultants and the HDRB in early 2021. Items, such as this, will be explained at that time.

During the work session, a discussion occurred regarding “compatibility” and how it differs from “complimentary” and whether contemporary design juxtaposed with a contributing structure can be found to be “compatible.” Following the work session, the staff found the term “compatibility” in the glossary of the adopted Guidelines. The definition states, *“Compatible: (of two things) able to exist or occur together without conflict; in harmony with surroundings.”*

When staff asked Ms. Pollard this question, she directed staff to the definition of “Contemporary yet compatible” found in the glossary. This term is defined as, *“Contemporary yet compatible: A principle that encourages contemporary design that is compatible with the scale, massing, form, materials, color, and texture of the historic building in order to differentiate modern elements from historic.”* Ms. Pollard also provided this additional explanation, “For contemporary compatible, the goal of that statement is to promote modern design, but avoid design that jumps out as incongruous to the district. In other words, the historic resources should 'own the stage' while modern infill should be tasteful, can represent modern aesthetic, yet always be subordinate.”

Contemporary yet compatible is one of the most difficult balances to achieve, and one of the most misunderstood principals in historic preservation. Staff hopes that through images and discussion, the consultants will be able to further explain this concept during the training session. The current application though does not concern the architectural design of the proposed addition. The massing diagrams provided by the applicant were meant to illustrate the proposed location of the addition and the applicant’s intent to limit the size of the addition and material impact on the historic structure. As explained in the staff report, dated December 16, 2020, if the extension into the required yard is approved, the applicant will submit an application for the architectural design of the new addition at a future date.

Regarding the sequence of applications, unlike other types of HDRB applications, reduction in setback applications precede the submittal of any related site plans, single lot development plans or building location surveys. This exception to the more familiar process is needed to establish required zoning setbacks and yards prior to site plan submission. Without HDRB action to permit a reduced front yard setback, any plan that showed a proposed addition or structure within a required yard or setback, would be categorially denied since it would fail to meet zoning requirements.

The staff is aware that the Board rarely encounters an application for a reduced front setback. By its nature, reduced front setback applications are very different than other HDRB applications. To assist the Board, the staff has provided a draft resolution that summarizes the process and thought behind an approval, as recommended by staff, of this application. Draft resolutions are routinely provided to the Planning Commission

and Town Council. While the attached resolution provides the rationale for the approval, it also imposes conditions with which the applicant and the future application must comply.

Staff will be providing draft resolutions with future HDRB staff reports to help the Board communicate to applicants and the public how the Guidelines are applied and why particular decisions are made.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Attachments:

1. Pages 73 and 74, *Guidelines for New Additions*
2. Draft Resolution for Approval dated December 16, 2020

New Additions

The most important considerations when planning an addition to an historic building are compatibility, differentiation, and reversibility. New additions should be compatible — consistent, harmonious — to the historic building, but should also be differentiated — differences between historic and new should be discernible — so that it is clear they are not original. New additions should also be constructed so that in the future, if they are removed, the form and integrity of the historic building remains; towards this end the addition should be designed to minimize the removal of existing exterior walls and roof.

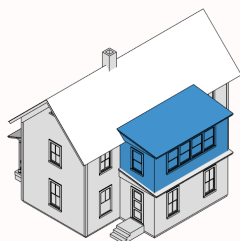
These guidelines are provided for applicants and design professionals as a guide to help direct the design of their proposed addition to a contributing resource, and town staff and the HDRB to use as the basis for the review of COAs.

Process Note: *When planning a new addition to a contributing building, owners and designers should contact staff during the earliest stages of conceptualization to ensure that the addition reflects the guidelines and meets zoning requirements. The HDO Procedure Guide provides additional information regarding the application process and required materials.*

Guidelines For New Additions

1. Proposed additions that remove more than 49% of the exterior walls and/or roof require new construction and demolition COAs. The Zoning Administrator will determine whether or not new construction and demolition COAs are required.
2. New additions should be designed to preserve significant historic materials, features, and form.
 - a. The design of a new addition should minimize the requirement for historic material loss at the connection point to the historic building.
 - b. To retain historic exterior materials on the interior of the new addition, new additions should utilize historic openings to access the new addition rather than cutting new openings or construct a small hyphen to connect the historic building to the new addition.
3. New additions should be subordinate to the historic building.
 - a. The new addition should be sized as secondary to the primary historic resource.
 - b. New additions should not overpower the form or change the scale of the historic building.
 - c. The placement, orientation, massing, and scale of the new addition should be designed in such a manner that it does not impact the integrity of the historic building.
 - d. New additions should not be visible or should be minimally visible from the public right-of-way.

CHAPTER 5 TREATMENT OF CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS



One case of an appropriate second story residential addition is an addition over top of an existing first story wing.

- e. Second story additions on historic buildings are generally not appropriate unless the addition is designed in such a way that it does not impact the massing, scale, and character of the historic building.
4. New additions should be compatible with, but differentiated from, the historic building.
 - a. The openings of the new addition should mimic the rhythm of the historic building but differentiate them in design and configuration. The arrangement of the proposed windows and doors should reflect that of the existing building.
 - b. A physical break (if using a hyphen connection) or a small setback between the historic building and the new addition should be provided to create visual distinction between the historic and modern portion of the building.
 - c. Materials should be compatible, but differentiated from those found on the historic building.
 - d. Alternative materials can be appropriate for new additions as a means of differentiating the addition from the historic building, Refer to Chapter 6, Use of Alternative Materials, for information on selecting an appropriate alternative material.
5. The style of the proposed windows and doors should be compatible with the contributing building's existing windows and doors, but should not attempt to replicate them.
 - a. Glass should be clear in all cases other than for decorative accent windows.
 - b. For windows consisting of multiple panes of glass, simulated divided lites should have dimensional muntins or grills on the exterior of the glass.
6. New chimneys should be clad in masonry.
 - a. Weatherboard siding is not appropriate for chimneys.
 - b. Fireplace vents should not be located on front facades
 - c. Metal flues should only be exposed above the eaves of the roof.
7. New roof connections should be below the peak of the existing roof.
 - a. Proposed dormers should be sized to reflect the scale and architectural style of the addition and not detract from the contributing building.
8. Place new additions to avoid damage or elimination of historic site features.
 - a. If historic site features exist on the property, ensure the placement of new addition does not negatively impact or eliminate these features.

TOWN OF HERNDON, VIRGINIA

DRAFT RESOLUTION

December 16, 2020

Resolution – to consider HPRB #20-019, to allow a reduction of 15 feet within a required front setback to accommodate a future addition located at 764 Grace Street, Fairfax County Tax Map Number 0104-02-0017.

WHEREAS, The applicant has submitted an application to permit a future addition to encroach up to 15 feet within a required 35 foot front yard setback of a property improved with a contributing structure; and

WHEREAS, The design of the addition shall be the subject of a future HDRB application; and

WHEREAS, The massing diagrams submitted with HPRB #20-019 are for informational purposes only to assist in the determination of the case at hand for a reduction in setback and are not afforded any guarantees in regard to future approvals; and

WHEREAS, The Historic District Review Board has reviewed this application for a reduction in front setback, as allowed per Section 78-60.3(e) of the Town of Herndon Zoning Ordinance, and has held a public hearing.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic District Review Board of the Town of Herndon, Virginia, HEREBY:

Approves HPRB #20-019, to allow a reduction of up to 15 feet within a required 35-foot front setback to accommodate a future addition located at 764 Grace Street, Fairfax County Tax Map Number 0104-02-0017, based upon the following findings and conditions;

1. The intent of the Historic District designation and the associated Historic District Overlay Guidelines is not to prevent change, but to guide change in a manner appropriate to the historic resources within the District and the District itself.
2. The preferred location for an addition to this contributing structure (historic resource) is along the northern elevation due the following factors:
 - a. The situation of the contributing structure negates the ability to achieve additional usable building square footage along the rear of the structure due to the structure's position within, and

- closely adjacent to, the required 25-foot rear yard located along the eastern property line.
- b. The orientation of the historic resource, placement and nature of abutting land uses and curvature of the right-of-way makes the southern façade of the property highly visible from the right-of-way and from several contributing structures, while the north façade has limited visibility from within the Historic District.
 - c. To preserve historic form and the presence of significant architectural features on the south façade of the historic resource, to include the now enclosed but discernable historic side porch and the visible differentiation of the historic rear extension of the structure, which is not visible on the north façade, the south façade should remain visible.
3. To build an addition on the north side of the historic resource a reduction in setback is necessary for the following reasons:
- a. The north façade of the historic resource is located near the apex of the triangular lot providing limited space between the required front and rear yards.
 - b. In accord with best preservation practices and in keeping with the Guidelines, an addition on the northern elevation will preserve a greater amount of the historic façade material because of the location of existing facade openings, one of which is located approximately 13 feet into the setback.
4. To ensure that the permitted extension into the front setback and the forward portion of the north façade, is not averse to the Guidelines regarding the need for additions to remain visually subordinate to the historic resource, the following conditions are imposed:
- a. The façade of the addition shall be setback at least one foot from the northwest corner of the front façade.
 - b. The addition and its roof shall not touch the roof or eaves of the historic resource or extend above the eaves of the existing roof.
 - c. The addition shall not exceed one to one and a half stories.
 - d. Attachment of the addition to the historic structure shall not extend above the bottom of the historic resource's second story windows.
 - e. A minimum of 50% of the front façade of the addition shall consist of windows.
 - f. Landscaping between the addition and the Grace Street right-of-way shall consist of a minimum of 2 understory trees and 5 shrubs with medium to large growth habit. The landscaping is not intended to completely shield the addition from view, but rather make it less visible than the historic resource.

5. These findings and conditions are related to the permitted extension into a front setback. Any future application for an addition shall be decided upon the ability of that application, through the design of the addition, to meet the Guidelines for New Additions, per Chapter 5 of the Town of Herndon Historic District Overlay Guidelines, and the conditions set forth above.