



HISTORICAL AFFAIRS AND LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD
ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS STAFF REPORT

TO: Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB)
FROM: Serena Bolliger, Historic Preservation Planner
DATE: May 9, 2023
SUBJECT: CoA 23-08, 4025 North Randolph Street, The Hermitage Local Historic District

Background Information

The Hermitage, located at 4025 North Randolph Street, is a Rustic Revival-styled log house constructed in 1931. The house is representative of the naturalistic qualities of the Rustic Revival style with its saddle-notch log construction, use of stone, and rustic interior finishes. The design of the house celebrates craftsmanship, echoes the rough-hewn textures found in nature, and embraces the surrounding landscape. It is unique to the architectural landscape of Arlington County as no other examples of the Rustic Revival style have been identified to date.

The log house's original materials and "H-shaped" floor plan remain evident and dominate the view of the property from North Randolph Street. The dwelling consists of a central single-story side-gable block with flanking, projecting front-gable wings on its northern and southern extents. The northern wing is one-story, and the south wing is one-and-one-half stories. There are two additions, constructed ca. 1985 and 1995. The house sits on a triangular-shaped lot that severely slopes downward towards its western extent.

In March 2022, the HALRB approved a retroactive CoA (CoA 22-05) for various landscaping alterations.

Proposal

Currently, the owner is applying to renovate the non-historic rear addition to the house, particularly the central gable addition on the east elevation.

The existing windows date to 1985 and are aluminum-clad with 1" x 4" flat profile trim. The applicant is proposing to install four new windows, two in the north side of the central gable in the renovated bathroom, one in the north side of the central gable in the bedroom, and one in the south side of the central gable in the expanded closet. The bathroom windows will be Fibrex Andersen A-series windows due to their location in the shower with a painted wood interior and Andersen Aluminum Flat profile (5/4" x 4") exterior trim. The bedroom window will be a

Weathershield French Casement with a 2” sash and aluminum cladding on the exterior. The closet window will be a small Weathershield awning-type window, with a bronze aluminum clad exterior and similar flat stock trim that will be painted.

The two existing skylight windows are being replaced in the central gable of the east elevation and two additional Velux skylights are being installed. The owner plans to install low-profile deck-mounted Velux FS series windows approximately 9’ back from the rear elevation.

The applicant proposes to replace the existing arch and casement windows in the east elevation of the gable with identical aluminum-clad windows. They propose adding 2/2 muntin bars to try to improve the blank modern look of the existing. The intent is that there will be no appreciable difference in appearance to the current except as noted. Weathershield trim would be either manufacturer-supplied pre-manufactured 5/4” x 4” flat-type trim, or Azek-type PVC, painted to match.

The small hyphen roof between the central and the south gable on the east elevation will be raised 1’ to make the space more usable. As they are only proposing to raise the roof slightly, their intent is to use new roll roofing similar to existing and tuck it under the existing asphalt composition shingles on the gables. Any new shingles due to breakage or construction requirements will match the current specifications.

An existing vent stack on the north roof surface of the central gable on the east elevation is remaining. An existing exhaust vent is being relocated to the same area, and a new exhaust vent is being added.

Existing siding is tapered, painted shiplap, either redwood or fir. The siding will be replaced/repared in the areas of the window installations and the raised roof, as needed for the installation of the windows only. Where possible, the owner hopes to re-use the existing wood but anticipates some replacement due to damage. They had initially proposed Hardie or Boral siding but now plan to use redwood, cedar, or fir as available locally for the repairs, in matching profile that will be “toothed-in” to avoid obvious seams.

DRC Review

The Design Review Committee (DRC) considered this application at its May 3, 2023, hybrid meeting. Given that all the proposed renovations are in the non-historic rear addition of the historic log home and given that the applicant does not propose to increase the footprint of the home, the DRC members had no comments. The DRC placed this application on the Consent Agenda for the May 17, 2023, hybrid HALRB public hearing.

Recommendation

The Historic Preservation staff recommends approval of the subject application as submitted. The *Hermitage Historic District Design Guidelines* state the following about the character of the LHD:



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“The southern wing (with its raised roof) retains historic significance as it continues the design and materials that existed prior to the alterations. The property’s site and landscape elements will be subject to the design guidelines, but the fencing, pathways, and driveway will be considered non-historic elements in the district. The priority for preservation of the site will involve maintaining the historic and architectural integrity and character of the historic log house. The design guidelines also will strive to protect the existing topography of the site that is important to the relationship of the building to its surrounding environment.”

This project maintains the integrity of the historic portion of the home and improves its livability without adding to the footprint or affecting the topography or the historic log cabin. The windows proposed to be replaced are non-historic and were installed as composite and clad in the 1980s. The LHD’s Design Guidelines outline procedures for window replacements on the historic portion of the home but do not mention the windows in the non-historic additions. The new siding and roofing will match the existing, which is appropriate per *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*. The proposed changes will not be visible from the right-of-way in front of the western façade of the home, and given the sloping topography of the rear landscape, almost all changes will be undetectable from the public path behind the house to the northeast.