



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: June 14, 2023
SUBJECT: CoA 23-09, 2911 23rd St. N., Maywood Local Historic District (LHD)

Background Information

The *Maywood National Register Nomination* describes the pre-1922 contributing dwelling at 2911 23rd St. N. as follows:

The three-bay-wide, wood-frame dwelling rests on a solid parged foundation. It is clad in wood shingles and has a side-gable roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. It has a one-story, three-bay, wood-frame screened-in front porch on square battered posts with knee braces at the comers. Windows are both six-over-one and four-over-one wood-sash, and grouped into threes, with beaded wood surrounds. Other notable features include a shed-roof front dormer and wide, overhanging eaves with exposed rafter tails.

Most recently in September 2019, the HALRB approved the replacement of the three-tab asphalt shingles on the existing roof of the garage with architectural asphalt shingles and the installation of a skylight on the rear of the same garage (CoA 19-14).

Previously in October 2018, the HALRB approved the installation of a skylight, air conditioning units, and new exhaust vents, as well as the replacement of three existing exterior wooden doors (CoA 18-22). At that time, the Historic Preservation Program (HPP) staff completed a survey of the exterior doors on the subject property, including the main entry door, the rear basement door, and the kitchen door, and found them to be in working condition. The applicants withdrew the door replacement component of their CoA.

Proposal

The applicant is requesting to install a pergola with a retractable fabric canopy, install a sunken fire pit, and replace a wooden rear basement door with a fiberglass door. Currently, the rear of the property has a concrete patio at the northwest corner (approximately 16' x 11'6"), a walkway along the north edge of the house (approximately 3'3" x 31'), and a concrete walk to the garage. The current patio and walkway total approximately 300 s.f. The applicant proposes to replace the existing concrete patio with a new concrete patio with flagstone border, stone patio steps, and a low concrete retaining wall at the northwest corner of the house. A new sunken fire pit will be installed adjacent to the pergola patio at the northeast corner of the home. The total square footage for the new proposed surface area will be 624 s.f. with dimensions approximately 35'7" x 18'.

The proposed pergola will have Craftsman-styled tapered wood columns encased in PVC trim. The pergola will have two columns and seven rafters and will be attached to the existing house with a new leger board. The existing concrete walk from the patio to the rear of the property will be replaced in-kind.

The applicant is also applying to replace the existing nine-lite half-glass wooden basement door at the rear with a fiberglass twelve-lite simulated divided lite door to match the twelve-lite front entry door. The “Vista Grande Fir” style exterior door is manufactured by Masonite.

Finally, the applicant is proposing to install a generator next to the sunken fire pit inside a low concrete retaining wall.

Design Review Committee (DRC) Review

The DRC considered this application at its June 7, 2023, hybrid meeting. Mr. Davis asked how the pergola would be connected to the house. Ms. Bolliger asked for details on the kind of stone that would be used for the patio. The project manager Ms. Castro agreed to get that information. Mr. Wenchel expressed concern about replacing a functioning door, which appeared to be historic material, and asked if that had been allowed in the Maywood LHD in the past. Ms. Bolliger replied that she did not remember it having happened in the past. Given the concern with the proposed door replacement, the DRC placed this item on the Discussion Agenda for the June 21, 2023 hybrid HALRB public hearing.

Recommendation

The HPP staff recommends approval of this application. The proposed pergola and patio will be located at the rear of the property and 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” (p. 27).

The proposed patio is larger than the 250 s.f. listed as appropriate for approval by staff via the administrative CoA process. However, patios have been identified as appropriate outdoor living additions in the LHD. Pergolas have been approved in Maywood in the past, most recently in December 2020 at 2204 N. Kenmore St. (CoA 20-26).

The proposed stone and concrete are acceptable materials under the *Maywood Design Guidelines*. The replacement of the concrete walk would be considered an in-kind replacement. Appendix D of the *Design Guidelines* states that “Under certain circumstances, the HALRB may permit the use of PVC trim on non-historic structures, non-contributing structures, new construction, and new additions to historic buildings. Trim elements include, but are not limited to, door trim, window trim, corner boards, cornice, fascia, etc.” All PVC trim must comply with the list of guidelines outlined in Appendix D.

Therefore, the proposed location of the new site elements, as well as the use of concrete, stone, and PVC, meet the intent of *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards*, specifically Standards #9 and #10:

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.



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10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Staff does not typically recommend replacement of materials considered appropriate in the Maywood LHD, such as wood, with materials like fiberglass. Wooden doors are typical in Maywood, both for interior and exterior uses. The *Design Guidelines* (page G-23) only outline fiberglass doors as appropriate in sheds.

However, it appears that the existing basement door in question is not a historic door given the 1984 date etched into the glass. The *Maywood Design Guidelines* do not list fiberglass as an inappropriate material in the LHD (Chapter 5: Exterior Renovation). This is a secondary door opening and not on the primary facade of the home. Given that the material is not historic, this change could meet the intent of Standard #9 of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

In June 2021, the HALRB approved the replacement of one wooden bathroom window in the addition of a contributing home in the LHD with an identical vinyl window in a shower (CoA 21-11) due to ongoing moisture issues. This was not a decision based on the desire to replace alone, but due to the ongoing humidity and ensuing rot affecting the site and the material. Evidence showed that wood was not appropriate in that location and that replacing wood in-kind would result in the same outcome in the future. Therefore, a man-made composite material was approved for that site-specific installation. However, the subject door, although a modern door, does not appear to be in the same condition of deterioration as the window in CoA 21-11 or the side door currently being proposed for replacement at 3210 23rd St. N. in CoA application 23-13.