

DeKalb County Historic Preservation Commission

Monday, June 17th, 2024- 6:00 P.M.

Staff Report

Regular Agenda

M. 1761 South Ponce de Leon Avenue, Karen Soorikian. Construct a rear addition, modify windows, enclose front porch, and install landscaping. **1247058.**

Built in 1928 (15 238 01 014)

This property is located in Druid Hills Character Area #2 and in the Druid Hills National Register Historic District.

09-05 1761 South Ponce de Leon Avenue (DH), Eric Rothman. Rear addition and relocate garage. **Approved**

05-23 1761 South Ponce de Leon Avenue, 1761 S Ponce de Leon Land Trust. Build a low retaining wall in the front yard. 1246446. **Approved.**

Summary

The applicant proposes the following work:

1. Construct addition on the rear and side of house. The existing nonhistoric covered porch, constructed in 2005, will be removed and a new two-story addition will be constructed. The addition will include a cross-gable clay tile roof with gables facing the rear and side yard on the second story and an open porch on the lower story. The roofline of the addition will measure 29' in height, below the level of the main existing roof ridge. The lower level will measure 1200 square feet, including both the family roof addition and the covered porch. The upper level will measure 900 square feet. The lower story porch will include a large archway on the rear and sides and be constructed with brick with limestone accents. The gables will be clad to match the timber detailing on the front of the house. The windows for the new addition will be steel and match the existing windows on the house. The new addition will be set back from the side façade of the historic house by 1'. The existing chimney on the rear of the property will be removed and two new brick chimneys will be constructed on the rear of the house.
2. Enclose open front porch. The open porchway on the left side of the house will be enclosed with a with stops made of painted wood and Ultravue High Visibility Screens. The existing metal guardrails will be reused.
3. Modify windows and doors. The current windows are steel, and all windows will be aluminum. The window and door modifications will include:
 - a. Remove the kitchen window and install a larger window on the driveway side of the house. The current set of two 4x2 divided lite windows will be removed and replaced with a larger set of six 5x2 divided lite windows.
 - b. Remove mudroom window and install a larger window on the driveway side of the house. The current three-pane window will be removed and replaced with a set of two 5x2 divided lite windows.
 - c. Replace mudroom door with a Dutch door. This will not be visible from the Right of Way.

- d. Remove mudroom window and install a larger window on the rear of the house. The current set of three 3x2 divided lite windows will be removed and replaced with a set of four 5x2 divide lite windows.
 - e. Remove existing doors and windows from the rear of the house at the lower level and replace them with a row of glass doors. The current set of doors and windows on the lower level will be removed and replaced by a row of three sets of glass doors.
 - f. Remove siding and windows from the rear of the house at the upper level and replace them with a set of windows. The current windows and false-timber siding will be removed and replaced with a set of three large 3x4 pane windows.
4. Install new hardscape and landscaping. All proposed landscaping will not be visible from the Right of Way. The proposed landscaping will include:
 - a. Installing a 6' tall wood privacy fence around the perimeter of the backyard and to the side of the house.
 - b. Install a 4' tall wood picket fence in the backyard, around the lawn area and extending to the garage.
 - c. Create a courtyard in the backyard. The courtyard will be located on the rear, left corner of the property and will be enclosed by a 4' brick free standing wall. The interior of the courtyard will include pea gravel, a brick fireplace, and bluestone slab steps coming from the house and leading into the courtyard.
 - d. Removal of two trees. A birch tree located in the backyard and a hardwood tree growing into the porch foundation will be removed.
 - e. Planting of replacement trees. Four Sweetbay Magnolia trees will be planted in the courtyard area.
 5. Replace driveway. The current concrete driveway and curb will be replaced in-kind with exposed aggregate and gray grab orchard curb.
 6. Replace steppingstone path in front yard. The steppingstone pathway in the front yard will be replaced in kind with stone stepper. The location and orientation of the pathway will not be altered.

Recommendation

Approve. These proposed changes do not appear to have a substantial adverse effect on the district. This application appears to meet the guidelines and the staff recommends approval.

Relevant Guidelines

- 5.0 *Design Review Objective* (p45) - When making a material change to a structure that is in view from a public right-of-way, a higher standard is required to ensure that design changes are compatible with the architectural style of the structure and retain character-defining features. When a proposed material change to a structure is not in view from the public-right-way, the Preservation Commission may review the project with a less strict standard so as to allow the owner more flexibility. Such changes, however, shall not have a substantial adverse effect on the overall architectural character of the structure.
- 6.1.2 *Architectural Details* (p52) Guideline - Stylistic details should be maintained and treated with sensitivity. The removal of such details or application of details inappropriate to the period or style of a house is strongly discouraged. Damaged elements should be repaired rather than replaced if at all possible. Historic details that have been lost or are beyond repair may be replaced with new materials, provided that their earlier presence can be substantiated by historical documentation and that the new materials match the original in composition, design, color, and texture.
- 6.1.3 *Entrances and Porches* (p53) Guideline - Original porches and steps should be retained. Repair of porches should not result in the removal of original materials (such as balusters, columns, hand rails, brackets, and roof detailing) unless

they are seriously deteriorated. If replacement materials must be introduced, the new should match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features should be substantiated, if possible, by documentary and physical evidence.

- 6.1.3 *Entrances and Porches* (p53) Guideline - The enclosure of front porches and side porches visible from a right-of-way should utilize transparent materials, such as screen or glass, which will help maintain the original open character of the design.
- 6.1.3 *Entrances and Porches* (p54) Guideline - Original doors should be retained unless deteriorated beyond repair. Screen and storm doors should not detract from the character of the house and should be designed to be compatible with original doors. In the case of a replacement for a deteriorated door, the new door should be similar to the original in design and materials.
- 6.1.4 *Windows* (p55) Guideline - Existing windows, including sashes, lights, lintels, sills, frames, molding, shutters, and all hardware should be retained and repaired through routine maintenance whenever possible. When deteriorated elements must be replaced, new elements should be compatible with the original in terms of material, design and hardware. Should it be necessary to replace an entire window, the replacement should be sized to the original opening and should duplicate all proportions and configurations of the original window.
- 6.1.5 *Roofs, Chimneys, and Dormers* (p56) Guideline - The original roof form should be retained to the greatest extent possible. No addition to a house should greatly alter the original form of a roof or render that form unrecognizable. Original or historic roof dormers should also be retained. Skylights should be installed so as to be as unobtrusive as possible. If additional upper-story space is required, consider using dormers placed out-of-view of public right-of-way—to create this space.
- 6.1.5 *Roofs, Chimneys, and Dormers* (p56) Guideline - Historic roofing materials, such as clay tile and slate, should be repaired rather than replaced, if at all possible. While repair or replacement with like materials is often considered to be cost prohibitive, it should be remembered that life expectancies of these roofs (slate, 60 to 125 years and longer; clay tile, 100+ years) is considerably greater than most replacement materials. Clay tile and slate roofs are always character-defining features of their buildings; therefore, if replacement is necessary, new materials should match as closely as possible the scale, texture, and coloration of the historic roofing material.
- 6.1.5 *Roofs, Chimneys, and Dormers* (p57) Guideline - Original chimneys often add to the character of historic houses and should be properly maintained; they should not be covered with stucco or any other material, unless historically covered. A chimney that is no longer in use still functions as an important element in the overall composition of a house and should not be covered, partially or completely removed, or replaced.
- 7.0 Additions & New Construction - Preserving Form & Layout The Druid Hills Local Historic District continues to change and evolve over time. For this area to meet contemporary needs, additions are built, uses change, and new buildings are constructed. The challenge is not to prevent change but to ensure that, when it does inevitably happen, it is compatible with the historic character of the area.
- 7.3.1 *Additions* (p74) Guideline - Additions should not be added to the main facade of the building and should not appear to dominate the original structure. It is preferable to build new additions to the rear of a historic building, where it will have little or no impact on the streetscape facade. Design and materials should be compatible with the existing building. Avoid obscuring character-defining features of the historic building with the addition.
- 7.3.1 *Additions* (p74) Guideline - Additional stories should be set well back from the roof edge to ensure that the historic building's proportions and profile are not radically changed.
- 7.3.1 *Additions* (p74) Recommendation - The Secretary of the Interior's Standards recommend that an addition be designed so that at a later date it can be removed without compromising the historic character of the building.
- 7.3.1 *Additions* (p74) Recommendation - While an addition should be compatible, it is acceptable and appropriate for it to be clearly discernible as an addition rather than appearing to be an original part of the building. Consider providing some differentiation in material, color, and/or detailing and setting additions back from the historic building's wall plane.

- 7.3.1 *Additions* (p74) Recommendation - These guidelines do not recommend adding false historical details to a noncontributing building in an effort to make it more compatible with surrounding historic buildings. Every effort should be made, however, to ensure that additions and alterations to the property do not detract further from the character of the historic environment, keeping in mind the design concepts discussed in Section 7.2.
- 9.3 *Vegetation* (p83) Recommendation – The plant list is intended to assist in the selection of appropriate plant materials. Olmsted’s list and the list from the Georgia Landscapes Project provide guidance in selecting materials appropriate for historic landscape projects. There are other sources that can be consulted to identify additional plants used by Olmsted in Druid Hills, such as historic planting plans and particularly the archival record at the Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline, Massachusetts. The Olmsted list presented in this document should be considered a beginning. Residents of Druid Hills are encouraged to add to this list with historic plants that can be documented as having been used by Olmsted. The native list should be used for natural areas within the district, such as creek corridors and drainage ways. Places within the district where the retention of healthy ecological environments is critical are best landscaped with native varieties. Since native plants have been available since the colony of Georgia was established in 1733, native plants are also appropriate for historic landscapes.
- 9.4 *Enclosures and Walls* (p90) Guideline - Fences and walls should not be built in front yard spaces and are strongly discouraged from corner lot side yard spaces. Retaining walls should only be used in situations where topography requires their use.
- 9.4 *Enclosures and Walls* (p90) Recommendation - Fences are appropriate in rear yard spaces. Rear yard fences should be coordinated with existing county codes. Suggested materials include wood and chain link. Vinyl- covered chain link fencing, typically in bronze, brown, or black, assist in making fences less obtrusive. Vines are suggested to “soften” the appearance of metal chain link fencing. If wood fencing is used, the paint color and design should be compatible with the architecture of the adjacent residence. Fence heights can range from 4' to 6' depending on the reason for the enclosure.
- 9.5 *Parking* (p90) Guideline - Curb cuts should not be added or expanded in order to protect the character of the district’s streets.
- 9.5 *Parking* (p90) Recommendation - In surfacing new parking areas, the use of impervious paving materials is discouraged. The intent is to limit the amount of run-off within the district’s watershed. Consideration should be given to the use of porous materials that allow water penetration and preserve the open character of the landscape.