

DeKalb County Historic Preservation Commission

Monday, October 19, 2026- 6:00 P.M.

Staff Report

Consent Agenda

- B. 1225 Cameron Court, Richard Feis. Construct a rear deck and a retroactively approve construction of a rear addition, restoration, and landscaping on a historic property. **1248334.**

Built in 1928 (18 001 08 035)

This property is in the Druid Hills Character Area #1 and the Cameron Court National Register Historic District.

08-26 1225 Cameron Court, Richard Feis. Retroactive application to construct a second-story addition and deck on the rear of a historic house. 1248236. **Denied.**

Summary

The applicant proposes the following scope of work:

1. Submit a retroactive application for the construction of a partial second-story addition. The second-story addition was constructed on the rear, right-hand corner of the house, near the Western property line. The addition was constructed as a nesting dormer with flat roofs, plank siding, and double-hung windows. The addition measures approximately 24' from grade to roof-ridge, below the height of the roof ridge of the main historic house which measures roughly 25' in height from grade to roof-ridge. The addition is not visible from the front elevation of the property or from the Right of Way.
2. Submit a retroactive application to landscape the front yard of a historic property. The applicant has removed debris and overgrowth from the front yard of the property and installed new landscaping including plant beds and walkways.
3. Submit a retroactive application to restore a historic house.
4. Construct a deck on the rear of a historic house. A 19'x15' wood deck was constructed on the rear of the lower level of the historic house, leading out onto the backyard; a set of wood stairs was constructed to the side of the deck, towards the Eastern property line.

Recommendation

Approve. The proposed changes do not appear to have a substantial adverse effect on the property or 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.
- 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.

A new building is compatible with its historic setting when it borrows design characteristics and materials from adjacent buildings and integrates them into a modern expression. Before undertaking new development, be it a new building or changes or additions to existing buildings, take time to evaluate what makes the property and the neighborhood distinctive. Evaluate what type of impact the new development will have on the property and neighborhood. Decide how the development can best be designed to complement the property and area.

The underlying guideline for new construction and additions is to consider one's neighbors and nearby structures and reinforce the existing historic character through sensitive, compatible design.

Note that many of these guidelines refer to new development or new construction but are equally applicable to additions to existing buildings.

- 7.1 *Defining the Area of Influence* (p64) Guideline - In considering the appropriateness of a design for a new building or addition in a historic district, it is important to determine the area of influence. This area should be that which will be visually influenced by the building, i.e. the area in which visual relationships will occur between historic and new construction.
- 7.2 *Recognizing the Prevailing Character of Existing Development* (p65) Guideline - When looking at a series of historic buildings in the area of influence, patterns of similarities may emerge that help define the predominant physical and developmental characteristics of the area. These patterns must be identified and respected in the design of additions and new construction.
- 7.2.8 *Individual Architectural Elements* (p73) Guideline - New construction and additions should be compatible and not conflict with the predominant site and architectural elements—and their design relationships—of existing properties in the area of influence.
- 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.