

DeKalb County Historic Preservation Commission

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

Staff Report

Consent Agenda

D. 1449 Cornell Road, Jesse Kaba. Install a pool and fencing on the rear of a historic property.
1248308.

Built in 1925 (18 054 09 004)

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

- 04-13 1449 Cornell Road (DH), Charles & Brooke Wheelock. Raise roof. 18548 **For comment only**
05-13 1449 Cornell Road (DH), Charles & Brooke Wheelock. Raise roof. 18599 **Approved with modifications.**
12-13 1449 Cornell Road (DH), Charles & Brooke Wheelock. Modify previously approved CoA to build fence around backyard, add a gate across the driveway, repave the driveway behind the house and modify a retaining wall at the back of the house. 18986 **Approved**
07-20 1449 Cornell Road (SR), Karen Soorikian. Build a garage in the backyard. 1244100 **Approved**
01-25 1449 Cornell Road, Hammer Smith Inc. Reapprove and revise a previously approved COA to construct a garage and accessory dwelling unit, install landscaping, and extend a covered porch in the backyard. 1247378. **Approved with Modifications.**
10-25 1449 Cornell Road, Jesse Kaba. Replace windows of an enclosed sunporch on a historic house. 1247800. **Denied.**
06-26 1449 Cornell Road, Jesse and Danielle Kaba. Enclose a covered porch on the front of a historic house. 1248162. **Approved.**

Summary

The applicant proposes installing a swimming pool and fencing in the rear yard of a historic house.

Recommendation

Staff requests that this application be moved to the regular agenda.

Defer. Staff recommends deferring the application, in order to further clarify the scope of work of the application and for the applicant to provide documentation including a site plan and list of materials.

If the applicant does not consent to a deferral¹, then staff recommends that the Commission **deny** the application in accordance with Section 13.5-8(1)² and Section 13.5-8(3)³ of the DeKalb County Code of Ordinances, as the applicant has not provided sufficient information for the Preservation Commission to approve the application.

¹ **Section 13.5-8(7) of DeKalb County Code of Ordinances** – "The preservation commission shall approve, approve with modifications or deny an application for a certificate of appropriateness within forty-five (45) days after the filing thereof by the applicant unless an extension is requested by the applicant and granted by the preservation commission."

² **Sec. 13.5-8(1)** - Owners of historic property or of property in a historic district, or their duly authorized agents, must make application for a certificate of appropriateness on forms and according to procedures promulgated by the preservation commission for such purpose. All applications for certificates of appropriateness shall be accompanied by drawings, photographs, plans and documentation as required by the preservation commission. Notarized authorization of the property owner shall be required if the applicant is not the owner of record.

³ **Sec. 13.5-8(3)** - When reviewing applications for certificates of appropriateness, the preservation commission shall consider, in addition to any other pertinent factors, the historical and architectural value and significance; architectural style; scale, height, setback, landscaping; general design; arrangement, texture and materials of the architectural features involved and the relationship thereof to the exterior architectural style and pertinent features of other properties in the immediate neighborhood. When considering applications for existing buildings, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects, including the Standards for Rehabilitation shall be used as a guideline.

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.
- 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. In the review of the installation of fencing, the front yard shall be defined as the portion of land between the front entrance of the main structure on the property and the Right of Way of which the property is addressed.
- 9.4 *Enclosures and Walls* (p90) Guideline – The plantings of shrubbery to create a hedge is considered fencing and will require review by the preservation commission.
- 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.
- 9.7 *Residential Landscape Design* (p91) Recommendation - For residential yards, created without the assistance of landscape designers, historic landscape plans for other residential lots within the district should be used for guidance. These plans can be interpreted to create a new landscape plan that is based on historic traditions. Care should be taken to select designs for yards of similar size containing houses of similar style and scale.
- 9.7 *Residential Landscape Design* (p92) Recommendation - Residential yards, originally created by noted landscape designers, will require special attention. Original plans and specifications should be used, if they can be located, in updating plantings. Suggested steps to follow in the redesign of residential landscapes are noted below:
- 1) Understand the original landscape design through historic research; for example, try to locate original plans and specifications and historic photographs;
 - 2) Compare the existing landscape with the documented historic landscape;
 - 3) Identify any features that are part of the historic landscape;
 - 4) Be sensitive to the potential of archaeological features (Refer to Chapter 10.0: Archeology);
 - 5) Identify site needs, develop a program for the site (circulation versus planting zone); and
 - 6) Develop an updated plan for the landscape that retains as much historic material, as possible, and accommodates today's functional needs in a manner that is in the spirit of the historic design.
- 9.7 *Residential Landscape Design* (p92) Guideline – The plantings of individual trees, shrubs, annuals, perennials, and ground covers that are not a part of a landscaping project will not require review by the preservation commission.