

Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board

Arlington County, Virginia

HALRB Case 14-30A (HP1500035)



A request by Theodore Schmitt & Rebecca Knotts, owners of 2315 North Kenmore Street in the Maywood Historic District, to amend approved CoA 14-30 to match the built conditions on the façade (west) and side (north) elevations or consider other design alternatives.

For DRC (*circle those present*): **Robert Dudka, Charles Craig, Charles Matta, Andrew Wenchel, Tova Solo, Joan Lawrence**

For Arlington County (*circle those present*): **Cynthia Liccese-Torres, Rebecca Ballo, John Liebertz**

Case # 14-30A Agenda Item # 3

Application Complete

Application Incomplete

Applicant(s):

For Applicant(s): Heidi Fitzharris

(See attached application for applicant, address, name of property and property description, drawings, photographs, and proposed scope of work.)

Design Recommendations:

1. Prefer option three pending revised option four with no reframing.

Findings:

- Return to next DRC meeting
- Send to HALRB

If sent to HALRB, recommended action is:

- Place on consent agenda
- Place on discussion agenda:
- Recommend approval of CoA, with DRC design recommendations and/or additional information provided
 - Recommend deferral of ruling on CoA (explanation):
 - Recommend denial of CoA (explanation):
 - No recommendation.

To: HALRB
From: John Liebertz, Historic Preservation Planner
Date: November 10, 2015
Subject: 2315 North Kenmore Street, CoA 14-30A, Maywood Historic District

Background Information

The dwelling at 2315 North Kenmore Street was built in 1936 in tandem with its neighbors at 2311 and 2317 North Kenmore Street. The ribbon of three minimal traditional residences with Tudor Revival-styled elements all share the same design. The Maywood *National Register Nomination* states the following regarding the house at 2315 North Kenmore Street:

The dwelling, exhibiting stretcher-bond brick on the exterior, sits on a solid brick foundation and is capped by a side-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. The dwelling, which features aluminum siding in the gable-end, is three bays in width and features a projecting central gabled entry and one-over-one vinyl-sash windows. Other details include thin aluminum surrounds and sills, an exterior-end brick chimney, and a flush aluminum cornice.

The subject house and the adjacent matching dwellings are all contributing resources in the National Register Historic District.

Approval of CoA 14-30

The HALRB approved CoA 14-30 in December 2014 for the construction of a new addition. To allow for a two-story rear addition to this modest sized dwelling, the DRC and staff recommended approval of raising the side-gable main roof line 4' and modifying the underlying setbacks on the condition that the two small front gable roofs on the façade were left unaltered (excluding new wood trim to match the adjacent residences). The DRC, staff, and the applicant studied the effect of raising the roof line on the streetscape and to the two adjacent residences. Perspective drawings and SketchUp models illustrated that minimal impact would occur by raising the roof 4'.

The staff report stated the following:

The DRC and staff discussed the appropriateness of altering the contributing resource due to lot limitations. Both DRC and staff concurred that the best course of action moving forward would be to limit alterations to the facade in favor of a rear addition.

The applicants submitted more detailed plans at the November [2014] DRC meeting. The DRC and staff reaffirmed that the main facade should remain largely unaltered, but consented to raising the roof to construct a two-story rear addition. To preserve the character-defining aspects of the facade that contribute to the historic district's streetscape, the DRC agreed to ask the HALRB to provide a letter to the Zoning Administrator to modify the underlying rear and side setbacks for the proposed two-story addition.

Proposed Amendment to CoA 14-30

The current after-the-fact proposal calls for an amendment to CoA 14-30. A number of items were not built as approved by the HALRB. These include:

Building Element	HALRB Approved	Current Condition
Main front-gable roof – height and pitch	No alteration to the height or pitch	Increase of the roof height by 5” and change in pitch (by approximately 5 degrees).
Small front-gable roof over main entry - height	No alteration to the height or pitch	Increase of the roof height by 10” resulting in a steeper pitch. This required the addition of new brick to the upper gable end.
Wood fascia trim (labeled as skirt board in drawings)	A single trim piece, 8” in height	Two piece wood fascia trim totaling 17” in height (10” and 7” respectively).

The applicant has presented a number of design solutions ranging from retaining the current (as-built) construction to rebuilding both gable roofs and removing elements of the two-piece fascia trim.

DRC Review

At the November 2015 DRC meeting, the DRC and staff reviewed the proposed options. Staff recommended the reframing of the two front-gable roofs in order to match the approved set of drawings to the greatest possible extent. The DRC concurred with the staff’s position, but suggested that the applicant consider an alternative that included the removal of one of the fascia trim boards and lowering the front gable roof. Theodore Schmitt, the home owner, noted concerns regarding the timing of inspections relative to the raising of the issue by staff and the time/money involved with rebuilding two primarily completed sections of the house. The DRC recommended that this application be placed on the Discussion Agenda for the November 18, 2015, HALRB meeting. The committee recommended approval of Option 3 (presently Option D) pending the submission of additional options that examined lowering the small front-gable roof over the main entry.

Staff Recommendation

The DRC, HALRB, and Historic Preservation staff have been flexible in the review of the contributing dwelling. Both the DRC and staff recommended approval of a design that increased the pitch of the main roof over 4’ and allowed setback variances. Through multiple reviews, all parties created a design that retained the appearance of the façade, but allowed for an obscured two-story addition to the rear. However, the as-built pitch and height of the two front-gable roofs is now noticeably different compared to the adjacent matching dwellings of the same design. Therefore, staff recommends the approval of Option D (for the west elevation) as it meets Chapter 5: Exterior Renovation and Chapter 6: New Addition of the *Maywood Design Guidelines*. While this option fails to completely return the building to the original design approved by the HALRB, it retains the intent of preserving the façade to the greatest possible extent.

In the future, the HALRB and HP staff should take careful consideration while reviewing alterations to the historic roofs of contributing dwellings in the Maywood Historic District. Alterations to allow for greater living space may create unforeseen construction challenges that dictate changes to the overall design of the dwelling. As shown in this precedent setting case, field issues negatively impacted the overall character defining design elements of the building's facade. Therefore, review of all contributing buildings (regardless of the perceived lack of massing or height) moving forward should be required to retain its current design. Architects and home owners should design additions and other alterations that respect the existing conditions of the historic house as built.

Staff supports the installation of new concrete drive strips. This aspect of the project was not discussed (but noted on the proposal) at the November DRC meeting.