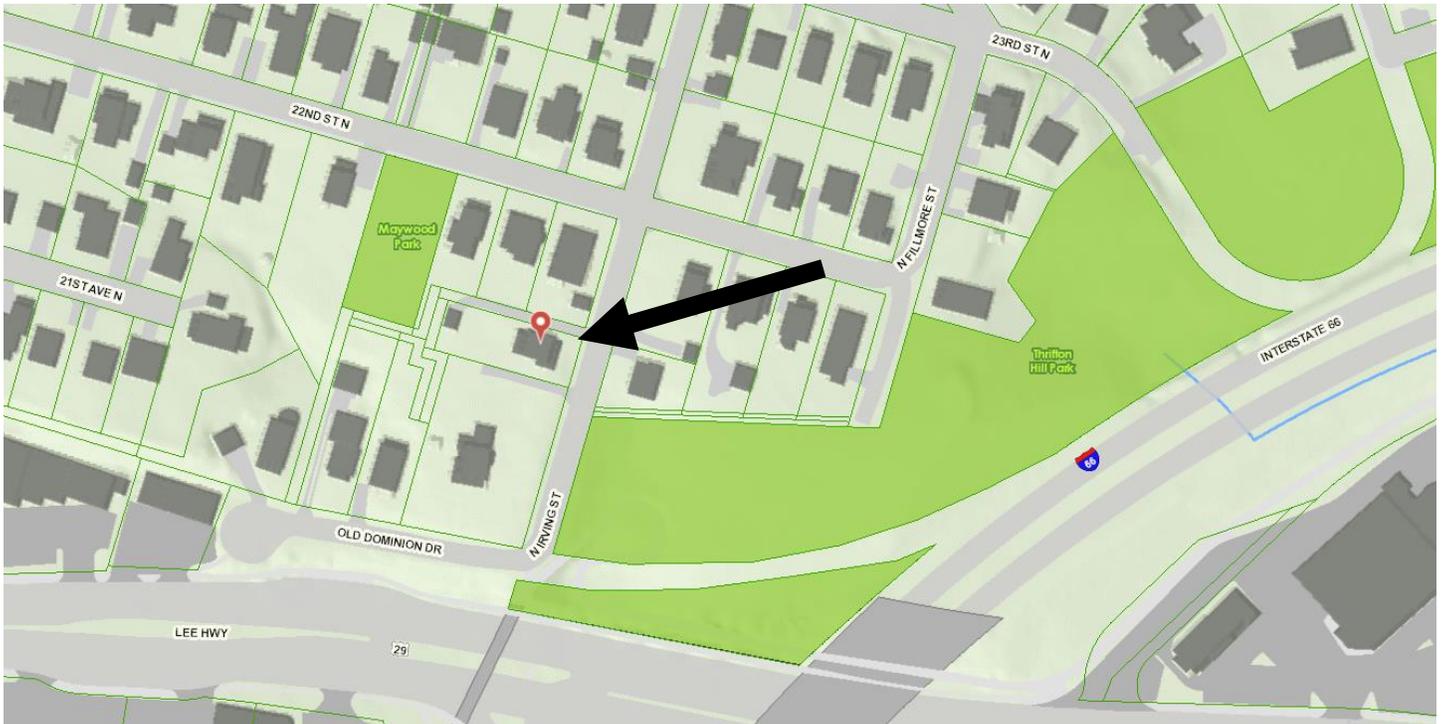


# Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board

Arlington County, Virginia

HALRB Case 16-06 (HP1600017)



A request by Diane & Hugh Schratwieser, owners of 2102 North Irving Street in the Maywood Neighborhood Historic District, to demolish an existing garage.

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**

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Case # 16-06 Agenda Item # 8

Application Complete

Application Incomplete

Applicant(s): Diane & Hugh Schratwieser

For Applicant(s): John Liebertz

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

Design Recommendations:

1. DRC recommends conditional approval:
  - a. Any new garage to be based on this design (single car)
    - i. New garage should not exceed 13.5' x 20' footprint, match the existing rusticated block and roof/fascia detailing, omit an overhead door, and have a roof slope consistent with the existing garage.
  - b. Existing block should be salvaged.

**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.

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, Rebekkah Ballo, John Liebertz**

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Case # 16-06 Agenda Item # 4

Application Complete

Application Incomplete

Applicant(s): Diane & Hugh Schratwieser

For Applicant(s):

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

Design Recommendations:

1. No recommendation

**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.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS STAFF REPORT**

**To:** HALRB  
**From:** John Liebertz, Historic Preservation Planner  
**Date:** June 6, 2016  
**Subject:** 2102 North Irving Street, CoA 16-06, Maywood Historic District

**Background Information**

The house is a Queen Anne style farmhouse that was constructed prior to 1923. The *Maywood National Register Nomination* describes the house as a “two-bay-wide, wood-frame dwelling rest[ing] on a solid rock-face concrete-block foundation. It is clad in narrow lapped wood siding and has a front-gable roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. It has a one-story, three-bay, wood-frame wrap-around front porch on Tuscan columns.... Windows are one-over-one wood-sash windows, with a single-sash craftsman-style replacement window in the gable end. Window and door surrounds are unmitered and with a projecting sill and molded lintel. Other notable features include two gable-roof dormers on the side elevations, wide, overhanging eaves, a three-faceted bay window on the south elevation, diamond-shaped wood shingles and molded gable returns in the gable end, and a new copper standing-seam metal roof on the porch.” The house and the Cherrydale block garage on the property are both listed as contributing buildings in the *National Register Nomination*.

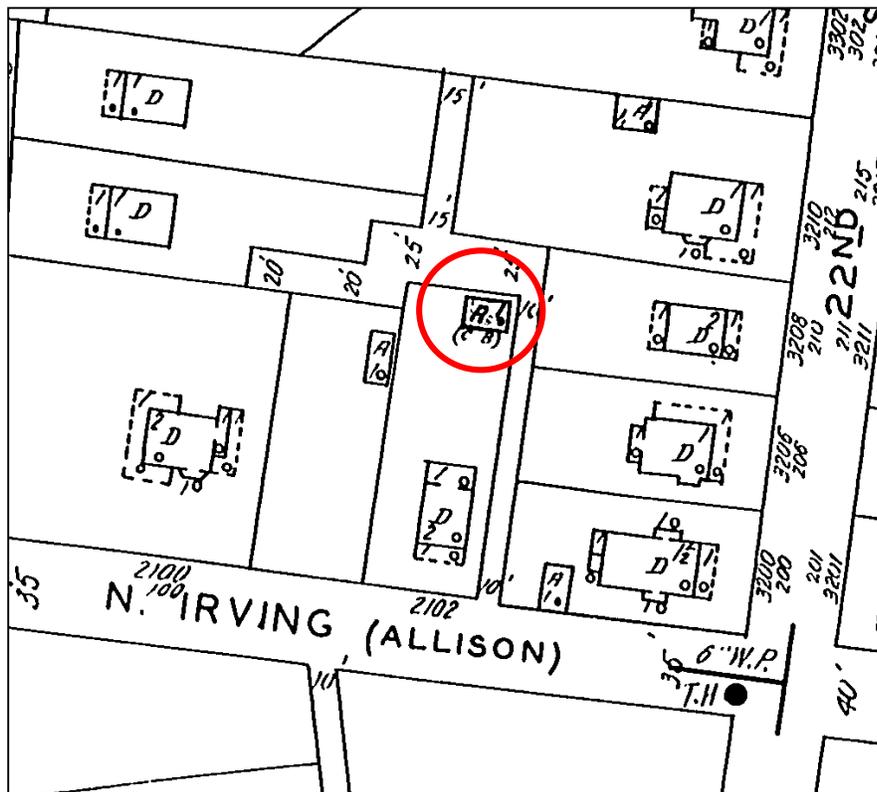


Figure 1: 1936 Sanborn Map showing block garage in red circle.

The existing block garage is a contributing structure in the National Register District. It is one of six remaining historic concrete block garages in Maywood. It does not appear on the 1929 Sanborn map, but is shown on the 1936 map (see image above). The interior of the garage measures approximately 12' wide by 15' long. It has a front gable roof with board and batten wood siding in the gable end. It has a non-historic wood paneled over-head garage door and one single-leaf wood door on the side elevation.

The garage is in poor structural condition. The roof and joists are rotted and collapsing. The block structure itself is also failing, as the large white oak adjacent to it has begun to heave against the blocks. There are large vertical cracks in the blocks where the tree has damaged it. In 2011, the County Forester assessed the tree and determined it was in very good health. There are no indications that the health of the tree has declined. The forester recommended, however, that the existing location of the garage would eventually be detrimental to the tree. The garage is currently unusable and is an unsafe structure. The tree will presumably continue to grow into it and will continue to split the walls apart. Coupled with the failure of the roof, the structure will eventually collapse if left in place.

### **Proposal**

The subject proposal calls for the demolition of the garage.

### **DRC Review**

The DRC heard this case at its May and June 2016 meetings (the applicant was not present at the May 2016 DRC hearing). At the May DRC meeting, staff recommend approval of the demolition of the garage and stated that the HALRB could consider conditions for any future garages on the site to mitigate the loss of the historic resource. Conditions could address scale, massing, roof form, material, etc. The committee recommended approval of the application with the following conditions: 1) any new design be based on the design of the contributing garage; 2) the new garage should not exceed 13'5" x 20'; 3) match the existing Cherrydale (rusticated) block and roof/fascia details; 4) omit the non-historic overhead door; and 5) create a roof slope consistent with the existing garage. The case was placed on the May HALRB agenda, but was subsequently removed at the request of the applicant.

The applicant returned to the June 2016 DRC meeting to object to any conditions as part of the DRC recommendation to the HALRB. The DRC removed the conditions from their recommendation with the understanding that a future HALRB could simply require a later applicant to consider the conditions listed above irrespective of listing conditions as part of this approval. The DRC made no recommendation and placed this case on the discussion agenda for the June 15, 2016, HALRB meeting.

### **Discussion and Recommendation**

Per the *Maywood Historic District Design Guidelines* and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, the demolition of a contributing resource is not recommended. These policy documents do not differentiate between historic houses and outbuildings; however, in past decisions the HALRB has placed primacy on the preservation of contributing dwellings over other protected elements.

In this case, there is also consideration of the sizeable white oak tree located adjacent to the garage. Large trees are protected by the *Maywood Historic Design Guidelines* as they are considered an integral part of the neighborhood's landscape that contributes to the historic significance of the neighborhood. The HALRB will need to consider the benefits of retaining the healthy white oak tree in lieu of a historic garage with impacted integrity of materials, design, and workmanship, when considering the protection of the historic character of the overall neighborhood. Rehabilitating or rebuilding the contributing garage in the same location would require removal of the white oak tree or irreparably damage the tree.

The HALRB should also discuss the integrity and structural stability of the garage. The deteriorated building elements and unsafe conditions of the garage have been well-documented by the County architect. In §11.3.5. General maintenance; ordinary maintenance allowed; public safety (subheading of §11.3 Historic Preservation Overlay District) of the *Arlington County Zoning Ordinance* states the following regarding unsafe and dangerous buildings:

Nothing in this section [Historic Preservation Overlay District] shall prevent the construction, reconstruction, alteration, restoration or demolition of any such feature which the building official shall certify is required to maintain and uphold public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition that cannot otherwise be remedied and that is not the result, either directly or indirectly, of the owner's negligence.

The deterioration of the garage stems from numerous issues, many of which potentially predate the creation of the Maywood Local Historic District. These issues include, but are not limited to the following: 1) the white oak tree existed at the time of the local historic district designation; 2) damage to the garage caused by the tree may have been a pre-existing condition; and 3) for a period of time there were questions regarding the vacation of county rights-of-ways in regard to the alleys accessing the garage calling into questions its future feasibility or use.

Staff and the DRC discussed conditions for the demolition of the garage to mitigate the loss of the historic resource. Placing conditions on the demolition would ensure that a future applicant and board consider retaining historically significant characteristics of this contributing resource. The HALRB would retain the authority to implement or dismiss these conditions at a future date.

The HALRB is required to determine whether an application meets the requirement of the *Maywood Historic District Design Guidelines* in order to determine if the proposal is appropriate or not appropriate for the site and historic district. At this location, there are numerous potential garage designs that would be appropriate for the historic house and district. As always, historic preservation staff, the DRC, and HALRB would be able to make recommendations to a future applicant on what materials, massing, fenestration, etc. would be appropriate for a new garage, but could not require the use of particular elements (such as rusticated block walls or matching the existing roof fascia) without preexisting conditions on the demolition of this contributing garage. Recent HALRB discussions requiring conditions on the design of future construction as a condition for demolition should also be taken into account so that uniform standards and expectations on property owners are fairly applied in the local historic district.

Staff has no recommendation regarding this application. Neither the *Maywood Design Guidelines* nor the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* expressly allows for the demolition of a contributing resource. The section of the *Arlington County Zoning Ordinance* referenced above, however, discusses buildings in historic districts that are a public safety issue. The HALRB will need to consider and weigh the various factors of this unique case, including the protection of the existing tree, precedent for demolishing contributing structures, the utility of conditions when approving demolitions, and the interests of public safety within the historic district. The HALRB's findings must reference the following documents: *Arlington County Zoning Ordinance*, *Maywood Historic District Design Guidelines*, and/or the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*.