

## CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB)  
**FROM:** Serena Bolliger, Historic Preservation Planner  
**DATE:** April 8, 2021  
**SUBJECT:** 3501 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue North, CoA 21-05, Maywood Local Historic District

### **Background Information**

The dwelling at 3501 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue North was constructed before 1923 and is listed as a contributing resource in the *Maywood National Register Nomination*. The description is as follows:

The two-bay-wide, wood-frame dwelling rests on a solid brick stretcher foundation. It is clad in weatherboard and has a hipped roof sheathed in pressed metal shingles. It has a one-story, three-bay, wood-frame front porch on Tuscan columns and one-over-one paired wood-sash windows. Window and door surrounds have a molded lintel. Other notable features include a hip-roof dormer and wide, overhanging eaves.

### **Proposal**

The applicant is requesting multiple modifications, including: 1) construction of a new shed in the rear yard; 2) adding two dormers on each side of the front of the house to allow additional height in the attic; and 3) removal of the original stamped tin shingle roof on the historic house and replacement with a standing seam metal roof.

The proposed shed is an 8'x12' one-story structure which would be located 2'1" from the west fence line and 3' from the northern fence line. Its south (front) elevation has a fir wood double door with tempered glass, smooth cementitious 5" exposure siding, and Azek trim boards. The roof would be clad in asphalt shingles with a shed overhang over the door. The east elevation has a single 2-over-2 lite wood window, but the other elevations have no openings.

The proposed hipped dormers on the east and west roof elevations of the historic house would be 10'4" wide with one set over the existing stair well to increase the interior ceiling height, and the other installed for symmetry from the right-of-way. Each dormer would have two fixed wood windows to match those on the existing dormer.

Lastly, the applicant is proposing to remove approximately 630 s.f. of historic stamped tin shingle roofing material and replace it with standing seam metal roofing to match the standing seam on the front porch.

## **DRC Review**

Due to the public health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Design Review Committee (DRC) has not been able to convene since the owners submitted their CoA application. This item therefore has been placed on the April 21, 2021, HALRB agenda as a discussion item.

## **Recommendation**

The Historic Preservation staff recommends approval of the design of the proposed new shed. The 1936 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map indicates that the property once had an accessory building (the use is not clear but its small size indicates a shed), although it was closer to the house than the proposed location. The design of the new shed, including its size, massing, and materials, could be approved by an Administrative CoA according to Appendix G of the *Maywood Design Guidelines*. However, the proposed setback is closer to the east fence than fire code recommends for a corner lot and therefore must be considered by the HALRB as a CoA item. The setback modification provision in Section 15.7.4 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance mainly was intended for character-defining streetscape elements of the Maywood Local Historic District (LHD), like front porch setbacks and detached garages. Thus, staff cannot recommend approval of the proposed shed location through this setback modification provision since the new shed will be considered a non-contributing element in the rear yard rather than a character-defining feature of the property. The applicants must seek approval from the appropriate County departments for the requested setback modification.

Staff also recommends approval of the proposed new dormers on the front portion of the main dwelling. The addition of dormers in this location has been approved by the HALRB in the Maywood LHD in the past (CoA 03-23 at 3623 22<sup>nd</sup> St. N.). The *Maywood Design Guidelines* indicate that the use of dormers is a more traditional way to add space, and that only skylights are inappropriate on the front of historic dwellings. The existing main roof already has a historic dormer, and the proposed construction of additional dormers would be a more appropriate way to convert the attic into usable living space than to construct an addition or raise the roof.

Regarding the proposed replacement of the original tin shingle roof, the HALRB's policy for more than a decade has been to repair and/or replace metal roofs in-kind. The board's policy follows the *Maywood Design Guidelines* (Chapter 5: Exterior Renovation), as well as guidance provided by the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, specifically Standards #2, #5, and #6:

Standard 2 – The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

Standard 5 – Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

Standard 6 – Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.

Chapter 5: Exterior Renovation of the *Maywood Design Guidelines* states the following:

Introduction of new materials should normally be avoided.... The HALRB strongly supports replacing metal roofs with the same materials.

The deterioration of the existing stamped tin shingle roof is evident, but the HALRB should continue its existing policy to replace this original architectural feature in-kind as per the *Maywood Design Guidelines* and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. As part of the National Park Service guidance for evaluating when replacement materials should be used, there is consideration given if the original material is no longer available or is made of hazardous materials (e.g., asbestos shingle siding, etc.). However, there have been numerous tin shingle roof replacements in Maywood over the past decade; tin shingle roofs remain available from roofing companies and have been installed successfully in the Maywood LHD. Therefore, staff recommends that the HALRB deny the replacement of the existing stamped tin shingle roof with an architectural asphalt shingle roof.

The *Maywood Design Guidelines* list stamped metal roofs as character defining to the district, and there are only nine such remaining roofs in the LHD. The existing stamped metal roof is original to the house and thereby considered a character-defining feature to this home and to the district. The County's historic Real Estate Assessment card for the property lists metal as the original roof material, as does the 1936 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. The Arlington County House Card for the property (with older building permit information) does not list any changes to the roof, indicating that the roof material has not changed and is original.

Several CoA applications to replace original stamped metal roofs in Maywood with alternate materials have been denied throughout the HALRB's tenure, including CoA 08-09 in 2008 (3201 23<sup>rd</sup> St. N.), CoA 13-32 in 2013 (2301 N. Fillmore St.), and most recently CoA 17-04 in 2017 (3501 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue N.), a decision which was upheld by both the County Board and the Arlington County Circuit Court when the owners appealed the denial. The existing tin roof shingles on the subject property appear to be the Horseshoe Stamp Victorian shingle, which is still available via a number of retailers and installers. As an in-kind roof replacement may qualify for the 25% state rehabilitation tax credit, the owners may want to consider pursuing tax credits through the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to help offset the cost of replacing the original roof in-kind.