

DeKalb County Historic Preservation Commission

Tuesday, January 16th, 2024 - 6:00 P.M.

Staff Report

Consent Agenda

F. 1209 North Decatur Road, Alice Johnson Design. Modify previously approved COA to construct detached accessory structure, install pool with deck and terrace, and landscape back yard. **1246818.**

Built 1927 (18 055 05 006)

This property is not located in a defined character area or in a Historic National Register District.

- 11-00 1209 North Decatur Road (DH), Katharine Larkin. Modify front dormer and rear. **Approved.**
03-03 1209 North Decatur Road (DH), Jennifer & Howard Page. Add porch cochere at rear, replace concrete paving behind the house with pavers set in sand, and enclose the backyard with a four-foot-high fence. **Approved.**
05-22 1209 North Decatur Road, Alice Johnson Design. Build a retaining wall along the sidewalk, build an accessory building, and install a lap pool. 1245757. **Part approved with modification; part denied.**

Summary

The applicant proposes amending a Certificate of Appropriateness that was approved and issued in May of 2022, to construct a detached accessory structure, install a lap pool with sauna, and complete extensive landscaping to the back yard. The proposed design and materials of the approved accessory structure and pool have not changed; however, the pool will be reduced in length and will no longer include a jacuzzi element.

The amended application proposes orienting the accessory structure parallel to the house, parallel to the east property line, and the pool perpendicular to the house, parallel to the rear property line. Both the accessory structure and pool will not be visible from the right of way.

The previously approved application proposed expanding an existing rear wood-deck, however, the amended application proposes demolishing the deck. The amended application proposes constructing a stone lounge terrace and a gravel dining terrace in the current location of the original wood-deck.

Recommendation

Approve. These proposed changes do not appear to have a substantial adverse effect on 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.

6.1.3 *Entrances and Porches* (p53) *Guideline* - Original porches and steps should be retained. Repair of porches should not result in the removal of original materials (such as balusters, columns, hand rails, brackets, and roof detailing) unless

they are seriously deteriorated. If replacement materials must be introduced, the new should match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features should be substantiated, if possible, by documentary and physical evidence.

- 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.

- 7.2.4 *Massing* (p69) Guideline - The massing of a new building should be consistent with dominant massing patterns of existing buildings in the area of influence, if such patterns are present.
- 7.2.5 *Proportion* (p70) Guideline - The proportions of a new building should be consistent with dominant patterns of proportion of existing buildings in the area of influence, if such patterns are present.
- 7.2.6 *Rhythm* (p71) Guideline - New construction in a historic area should respect and not disrupt existing rhythmic patterns in the area of influence, if such patterns are present.
- 7.2.7 *Scale/Height* (p72) Guideline - New construction in historic areas should be consistent with dominant patterns of scale within the area of influence, if such patterns are present. Additions to historic buildings should not appear to overwhelm the existing building.
- 7.2.7 *Scale/Height* (p72) Guideline - A proposed new building should appear to conform to the floor-to-floor heights of existing structures if there is a dominant pattern within the established area of influence. Dominant patterns of cornice lines, string courses, and water tables can be referenced to help create a consistent appearance.
- 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.
- 8.2 *Trees* (p78) Recommendation - The mature hardwood forest within the Druid Hills Local Historic District should be perpetuated through a district-wide replanting program. Trees should be replaced when mature trees are lost to age or damage or are removed for safety reasons. Replacement trees should be of identical or similar varieties to the original trees. A diversity of tree types is recommended to perpetuate the existing character of most tree groupings. Replacement trees of adequate size (1.5" caliper minimum) are recommended. Existing ordinances that provide for the protection and replacement of the district's tree resources should be applied to development activities within Druid Hills.
- 9.6 *Accessory Buildings* (p91) Guideline - New accessory buildings, such as garages and storage houses, are to be located in rear yard spaces and visually buffered from adjacent property owners and the public right-of-way. Accessory buildings that complement the architecture of the adjacent residence do not require the same level of buffering and may remain more visible within the local district. If the new building will be visible from the street, it should respect the established setbacks and orientations of the historic buildings in the area.