



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

**COMMISSION FOR
HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL
PRESERVATION**

Tom Liebel, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

April 13, 2021

REQUEST: 5914 Greenspring Avenue - Carroll Hunting Lodge (Baltimore City Landmark):
Reconstruct rear ell demolished without permits

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of plans, final details to be approved at staff level

STAFF: Lauren Schiszik

APPLICANT/OWNER: Reuben Flax

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT

This stone house, named the “Carroll Hunting Lodge”, is one of the oldest in the Mount Washington/Cheswolde area, dating to about 1790. It stands on what was once a vast tract owned by Charles Carroll of Carrollton. Carroll was one of the four Maryland signers of the Declaration of Independence, a member of the General Assembly, a United States Senator, and a wealthy landowner. From 1803 to 1809, the property was owned by Bernard Sourzac, one of several French immigrants from Haiti who settled in Mount Washington in the early 1800s. Years later, in the mid-19th century, the property formed part of a light industrial complex of snuff and tobacco mills along the Western Run. The great flood of 1868 caused much damage to the mill property, and this structure is the one surviving building of that complex. By the late 1800s, it was part of the estate of Robert E. Hooper; the Hooper family owned this property into the mid-20th century. The main stone portion of the building is an excellent example of Maryland late-18th-century vernacular architecture in its symmetry and simplicity; constructed in what was then far outside of Baltimore City.

Site Conditions/Architectural Description: This property is located in the Cheswolde neighborhood on the west side of Greenspring Avenue and immediately north of the Western Run (*Map 1*). A stream runs immediately west of the house, and the property is in the regulated floodplain. At some point in the property’s recent history, the parcel on which the house sits (5914 Greenspring Ave.) was subdivided from the surrounding 2 acres of land (5900 Greenspring Ave.); the parcel with the Carroll Hunting Lodge is only accessible from the surrounding parcel of 5900 Greenspring Ave. (*Map 2*). Only the Carroll Hunting Lodge parcel is a designated Baltimore City Landmark.

The Carroll Hunting Lodge is clearly illustrated on the 1898 Bromley Atlas of Baltimore County (*Map 3*), and the 1923 Baltimore City Topographical Survey (*Map 4*), both showing the general form and details of the building.

The main stone portion of the house faces south towards the Western Run. The two story, five bay home is constructed of roughly cut ashlar stone with irregular coursing and quoins on the corners of the structure. It is approximately 44' wide and 24' deep. It has a simple brick cornice and a hipped roof, with very large chimneys on either end of the house. It features a central double door, and a one-story hipped roof porch with fluted Greek Ionic columns. The first floor features elongated 2/4 windows, and the second floor has 2/2 windows. There is no fenestration on the east elevation; the west elevation has a small basement window and basement entrance, as the topography is lower on this elevation, closer to the stream. (*Images 3-7*) According to the 1979 Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties survey report, the house as it was constructed circa 1790 would have been Federal in style, with a side gabled roof and four roof dormers, with equally-sized first and second story windows. The report determined that significant alterations occurred in the 1850s, which resulted in the replacement of the windows, the elongation of the first floor windows, and the addition of the front porch and rear frame ell.

The addition on the rear of the main block was a vernacular I-house, a style that was common in the mid-to-late 19th century in rural Maryland, but of which few examples survive today in Baltimore City; another surviving I-house is located immediately west of the property (*Images 1-2*). Constructed in the 1850s when the main block of the house was updated, the irregular 3-bay two story frame addition was clad with clapboard siding, had 2/2 windows, and a centrally-located chimney. The east elevation, facing Greenspring Ave. had a centered gable with a Carpenter Gothic window. (*Images 3-7*)

BACKGROUND

- The Carroll Hunting Lodge was designated as a Baltimore City Landmark in 1982.
- CHAP staff has approved work on this property, most notably extensive work in 2001-2003 to return the property – then condemned – to habitable condition. Work approved in that timeframe included repointing, window and porch repair, gutter installation, and construction of a new 10'x30' rear porch to replace two smaller failing porches.
- The timeline of the demolition of the rear ell without CHAP approval or a building permit is as follows:
 - March 2020 - The property was listed for sale by A.J. Billings auctioneers in as-is condition. The listing photos showed water damage and a hole in the second floor of the rear frame addition, caused by a roof leak. On March 16, CHAP staff provided information about the landmark designation to the auction company to include in the listing information, such as the types of alterations subject to CHAP review, including “replacement of materials, repair, excavation, paving, construction of additions, and demolition”, a link to the Design Guidelines and Rules and Regulations, links to federal, state, and local historic preservation tax programs, and CHAP staff’s contact information. This information was promptly added to the online listing.
 - April 2020 - Staff communicated with the applicant over the phone and via email about his interest in purchasing the property; staff shared the demolition procedures and informed the applicant about CHAP’s strict regulatory review when the applicant inquired about demolishing the rear frame addition.

- May 2020 - After purchasing the property on May 7, the applicant promptly submitted an ATP for replacing the slate roof in kind on the entire roof including the rear addition, replacing the gutters, and repointing the chimneys. On May 18, 2020, via email, the ATP for the roof work was issued, staff advised the applicant about the permit requirements for the work, and the applicant stated that he was no longer planning on demolishing the rear addition.
- October 2020 – On October 13, the applicant emailed CHAP staff, stating that the rear addition of the house needed to be rebuilt. Staff provided information about the required submission items for a demolition proposal, and after some email correspondence, the applicant informed staff on a phone call on October 16, 2020 that the rear addition had already been demolished.
- October 22, 2020 - a Housing Enforcement Inspector of the Department of Housing and Community Development posted a Stop Work Order on the property, and a surcharge for the demolition without permits was issued.
- This parcel is in the floodplain, and some scopes of work, including the reconstruction of the rear addition, is subject to Baltimore City Floodplain regulations. In cases where a property must comply with both CHAP regulations and floodplain regulations, staff works collaboratively. The applicant has not started the floodplain review process, and it is currently unknown if the floodplain regulations will require alterations to the construction proposal submitted to CHAP.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to reconstruct the two and half story rear frame addition. The original footprint of the addition was approximately 30' long and 16' wide with a 10' wide porch on the west elevation, based on photogrammetry measurements and building permits. The applicant is proposing to construct an addition that is 32' long and 24' wide, with no side porch, in approximately the same footprint. The height of the addition will replicate that of the previous addition. The proposed reconstruction will be larger to accommodate a kosher kitchen for the family. The east and north elevations, which are visible from Greenspring Ave. will replicate the former addition in fenestration and details. The west elevation, which is not visible from the street, will not replicate the former elevation. The foundation will be constructed with concrete, the siding will be wooden clapboard, the doors will be four-panel wooden doors. The windows will be wood and will replicate the historic 2/2 windows in the main portion of the Carroll Hunting Lodge in details and dimensions. The roof will be slate to match the existing replacement slate roof on the main portion of the Carroll Hunting Lodge.

APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

The proposed alterations are being considered under the Baltimore City Historic Preservation Design Guidelines *Chapter 1: Design Guidelines for Building Exteriors*, Section 1.17 Alterations and Additions and *Chapter 2: Design Guidelines for Additions, New Construction, and Non-Contributing Buildings*.

Conformity to Guidelines

- *1.17 Alterations and Additions:* The plan meets the design guidelines in that the new construction is compatible to the historic building.
- *2.1 Guiding Principles for New Construction:* The guideline says, “Avoid demolishing historic buildings...when designing new construction projects.” This historic addition was demolished by the applicant. While there is evidence from the listing photos that the rear portion of the structure had been damaged due to water damage, no documentation was provided to demonstrate that it was deteriorated beyond repair.
- *2.2 Site Design:* The plan meets the design guideline in that the construction is very close to the previous footprint of the addition.
- *2.3 Scale and Form:* The plans maintain the scale and form of the historic house, and the roofline is compatible with the main block of the house.
- *2.4.1 Building Entrances:* The entrances replicate those on the previous addition.
- *2.4.5 Roofs:* The proposed roof of the addition compliments the pitch of roof on the main block.
- *2.5.1 Doors and Windows:* The doors and windows will be replicated from the extant mid-19th century door and windows in the main block of the house, which matched those on the addition (as the installation of the extant windows in the main block likely occurred at the same time as the addition was constructed).
- *2.5.2 Materials:* The proposed materials for the addition – siding, roofing, windows, and doors, will adequately replicate what was there.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

This property is not located within a CHAP district; therefore, comments from an Architectural Review Committee are not applicable.

ANALYSIS

This building has suffered from a lack of maintenance twice in the past two decades, first in the late 1990s/early 2000s, and again during the past few years. The current owner has completed work without permits, including the demolition of this rear historic frame addition. The Code Enforcement section of the Department of Housing and Community Development will handle the violations and fines associated with these recent unpermitted actions. CHAP’s role is to review the plans the owner has submitted to replace what was demolished. CHAP staff finds that the proposed new construction meets the design guidelines.

CHAP staff has reviewed the submission and finds that the proposal meets CHAP guidelines. The proposed addition, while possessing a larger footprint than the historic addition, is appropriate in massing, scale, and replication of details.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of plans, final details to be approved at staff level

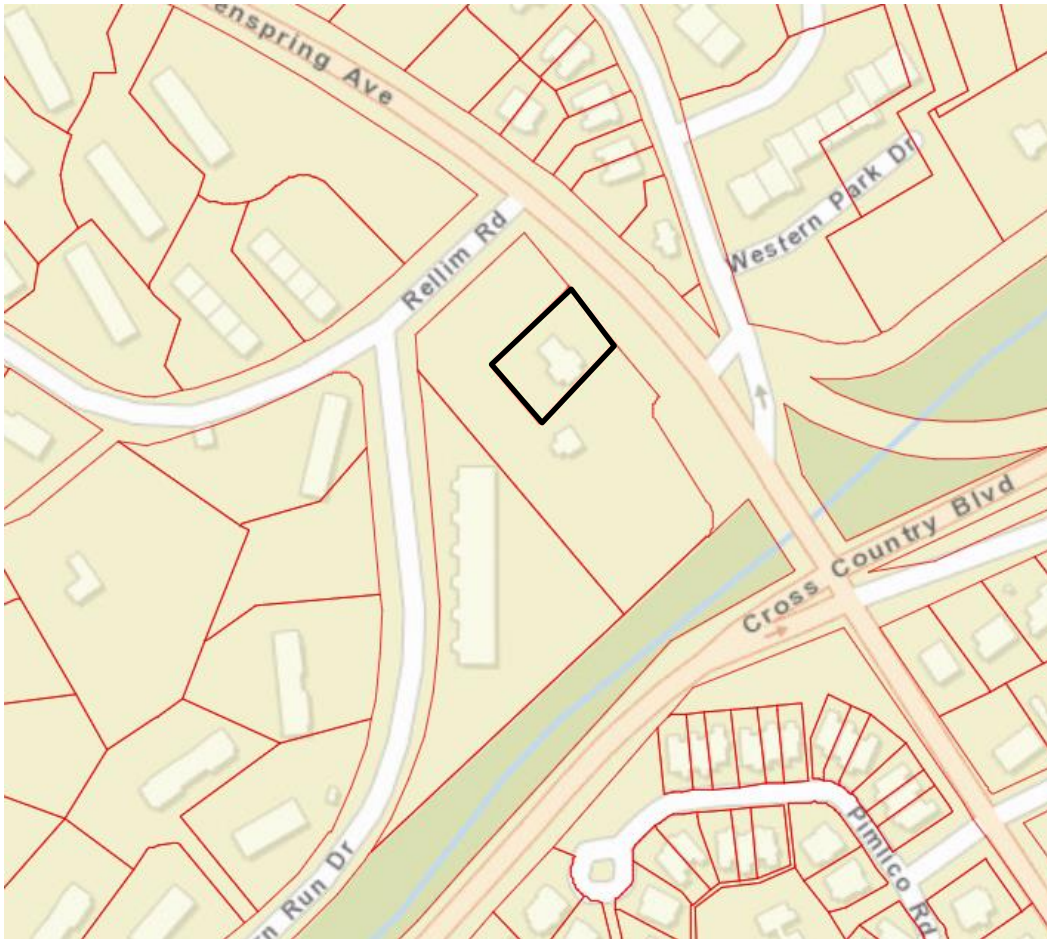


Eric Holcomb
Executive Director

MAPS AND IMAGES



Map 1: Location of the Carroll Hunting Lodge, 5914 Greenspring Ave. marked with red star.



Map 2: Detailed location map of the 5914 Greenspring Avenue, with the property outlined in black.



Map 3: 1898 Bromley Atlas (Plate 15, Parts of 2nd and 3rd Districts) shows the Robert E. Hooper estate including the Carroll Hunting Lodge, with the rear frame addition depicted in yellow, an adjacent (and still extant) stone building – which was the Hooper Mansion, and a frame structure that was likely a barn. The stream is on the opposite side of Lodge from where it is located today; either the stream was redirected, or more likely is incorrectly drawn on this map.



Map 4: 1923 Baltimore City Topographical map (Sheet 5W4W) again depicts the Robert E. Hooper estate including the Carroll Hunting Lodge, but in greater detail.



Image 1: December 2019 Aerial view from east; note the comparable vernacular I-house across the street (ConnectExplorer, December 7, 2019)



Image 2: December 2020 Aerial view from east (ConnectExplorer, December 13, 2020)



Image 3: Façade of Carroll Hunting Lodge (4/7/2021).



Image 4: View from Greenspring Ave. (2020 listing photo)



Image 5: View of east elevation (2020 listing photo)



Image 6: View of north elevation (2020 listing photo)



Image 7: View of west elevation (2020 listing photo)



Image 8: View of north elevation (4/7/2021)



Image 9: View of north elevation (4/7/2021)



Image 10: View of east elevation (4/7/2021)



Image 11: View of west elevation (4/7/2021)