



**LEESBURG BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT**

**PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING: 17 SEPTEMBER 2012
AGENDA ITEM 8a**

BAR Case No. THLP-2012-0082: Replace front deck, railings, stairs and rear deck

Reviewer: Kim K. Del Rance, LEED AP
Address: **201-203 Loudoun St SW**
Zoning: B-1, H-1 Overlay District
Applicant/Owner: Janine Hussey

Site Description: The first structure at 201 Loudoun Street was built in the late 18th century, circa 1800 and is set back from Loudoun Street. The Greek Revival addition in front was built in 1850 with small six-over-six windows, a flat roof portico with a plain entablature and fluted columns. The wood railing runs between the columns and the building, the rest was added later. The oversize addition was built circa 1990 with more modern detailing and proportions and a wood railing that emulates the flat cut outs of the original railing on the house. The front deck and stairs are wood with some white plastic lattice under the stairs. The railings on the deck are in poor condition with safety requiring some additional support added until its replacement can be approved.

Context: The original structure is associated with the first phase of growth from 1758 to 1830. The building is a contributing structure in the National Register Historic District and the town. The addition is part of the contributing structure, but its features are compatible with but distinct from the original structure. While its mass and proportion are in harmony with the historic district, it is less than fifty years old and would likely not be considered historic even though it contributes to the streetscape. For this reason the deck and railings for the addition will not be treated as a historic structure with regards to details, but as the addition it is.

Description of Proposal: Applicant requests to replace the wood deck, railings and stairs with something that will require less maintenance and be less expensive than the custom cut railings around the deck. The applicant also requests to replace the wood wheelchair ramp in the rear of the structure with a composite material that cannot be seen from Loudoun Street and is partially visible from the side street.

Site Development/Zoning Issues: None.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

OHD Design Guidelines:

CH. II A. PRESERVATION APPROACHES

“Preservation focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property’s form as it has evolved over time”.

Repair of the original railings between the fluted columns and the building at 201 Loudoun Street SW is appropriate. The existing railing may need to have the wood supports beneath the railing infill panels,

however, the infill panels themselves have many layers of paint and should not necessarily be stripped of all paint, but rather be handled with care and preserved.

“Rehabilitation acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property’s historic character...however, these repairs and alterations must not damage or destroy materials, features or finishes that are important in defining the building’s historic character.”

On the building at 201 Loudoun Street SW, the railings that extend from the fluted columns and the railings around the addition’s deck has been added to meet modern building code requirements and is not a copy of the original railing, but is compatible and appropriate. It is not necessary to replace this railing with the exact same pattern as it has no historic significance, but any replacement should also be compatible with the historic railing and not a copy of it. The proposed railing pattern to be used is appropriate in scale and has a similar proportion of opening to solids as the original railing on 201.

CH. VI GUIDELINES FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MODIFICATION OF EXISTING STRUCTURES: MATERIALS

“Proposed changes to materials on non-contributing buildings are evaluated according to the context of the building and its location rather than historic significance and architectural style.”

CH. VII P. MATERIALS, TEXTURE AND COLOR

“...the BAR will evaluate the appropriateness of any new material based on the ability of those materials to convey a traditional appearance or character. The BAR will evaluate new materials considering the following factors: dimension, texture and ability to convey traditional construction techniques” and “The applicant will be required to provide samples of the materials and other supporting documentation.”

Regarding the railings on the front deck addition on the front of 203 Loudoun Street SW, the location is highly visible and its proximity to the historic 201 entrance demand the materials on this addition are considered carefully. If the board finds the sample materials can convey a traditional appearance than they may be approved, however, the samples have not been made available as of the writing of this report. In their absence, wood is an appropriate replacement material in the new pattern shown with the application.

CH. IV F. ACCESSIBILITY

“2. Design wheelchair ramps to have the least visual effect on the building and or setting. 3. Materials and design details used for ramps should be compatible with existing material on the building.”

The existing wheelchair ramp in the rear is not visible from Loudoun Street and partially visible from Liberty Street once past the building moving south or approaching from the south. Since the visibility of the materials is much less than the front deck, materials that are compatible with the existing building may be appropriate.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION/DRAFT MOTION

(Based on the BAR’s discussion at the meeting, any changes to the language of either part of the motion should be incorporated as necessary.)

Based on the findings that:

- Material samples are to be provided at the meeting and if the board finds them to convey a traditional appearance they may be appropriate for the front of the building and if they are compatible they may be appropriate for the rear of the building for the wheelchair ramp.

Staff recommends approval of TLHP-2012-0082 subject to the plans, photographs and materials submitted as part of this application material set August 15, 2012 and subject to the following condition:

- The historic railing between the fluted columns and the building are to be repaired
- The deck and other railings in the front of the building in the pattern submitted are approved in a material that conveys a traditional appearance.
- The wheelchair ramp may be replaced with a material that is compatible with the existing materials on the building.

DRAFT MOTION

I move that TLHP-2012-0082 be approved subject to the application submitted by Janine Hussey on August 15, 2012 and subject to the findings and conditions of approval as stated in the September 17, 2012 Staff Report (or as amended by the BAR on September 17, 2012).