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2485 Burns Façade Restoration Narrative, 12/8/21

The owners of 2485 Burns originally contacted me to estimate restoring their front porch columns and entry surround, which had suffered some rot over the years. At one point during our discussions, they made some observations (complaints) about the lack of space to stand on the entry step when the storm door swings open. It gets especially tricky when packages arrive and people still need to get in and out, and then of course potted plants, holiday decorations, and trick-or-treaters! Basically, people need to step back off the step, to allow enough space for the door to open. The existing top step is especially tight under the bases of the outside columns- there is literally no room outside of them. Also, there is no room to leisurely sit or be social with the neighbors without a front patio. The neighborhood has once again become a very walkable and close-knit community and these homeowners would like to participate in that. The house is located 2 doors down from the Waldorf School, so there is quite a bit of pedestrian traffic in the daytime.

The façade is symmetrical, and any alteration or addition should be as well, and based on the central/ door/ gate axis line. There is architectural design precedent for a semi arched patio & step shape found in the decorative transom window above the entry door. We replicated the shape and proportions of this window in our patio design. It provides more width than depth, with a subtle, central arc over two tighter arcs against the house. This allows for seating on either side of the entry on the first step/ platform, and generous room on the second, entry step/ platform.

The field material of the patio is Fendt pavers, with color consideration of the bricks found on the house, and the perimeter steps/ borders in beveled-nose limestone blocks.

The homeowners requested partitions to define the patio's outer edges and hide unsightly things like an oversized water meter on the far-right side. Also, planter boxes/ bowls would be a big plus! I proposed limestone balusters, curved railings, and newel posts with bowls atop to meet that need. These partitions don't extend very far, so as not to obstruct a central view and the terminating points correspond proportionately with the first radiating "spokes" of the transom window design. The references aren't necessarily overt, but they feel right and intentional, aesthetically and functionally.

