
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill Historic District	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	327-331 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	September 22, 2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	11-475	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Amanda Molson	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Restaurant owner Xavier Cervera, with drawings prepared by Orestes del Castillo, requests concept approval for storefront and fenestration modifications at 327-331 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE in the Capitol Hill Historic District.

Property Description

Designed as three separate buildings, 327-331 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE appear on historic maps as early as 1888. Although permit data is not available, the frame construction at 327 and the bracketed cornices at all three properties suggest the buildings may date to the 1870s. Map research and a continuous masonry façade suggest that 331 originally included the building next door as well (now the Tune Inn restaurant and bar), with the expanse now divided into two narrower buildings. Photographic evidence shows that the existing projecting storefront at 327 pre-dated the 1960s changes, and the side court shown in the photo also evidences that this narrow passageway has long been open.



327 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE (date unknown). Courtesy Hawk 'n' Dove.

The three buildings were remodeled in the late 1960s, work that included adding the projecting storefronts to 329 and 331. The buildings are connected internally and have housed the Hawk 'n' Dove, a restaurant and bar, since 1967. The business has been sold to a new restaurant operator, who plans to undertake interior and exterior rehabilitation of the buildings before reopening.

Proposal

Changes to the exterior of 327 will be minimal, leaving the side court open and replacing the two front windows and door. It may also be necessary to replace in-kind any wood siding or wood trim that has deteriorated, and the missing left-hand bracket below the storefront cornice will be fabricated and installed. The storefront glass will be replaced with a more appropriate single pane, and the security bars removed from the second story.

Most of the alterations will be concentrated at 329-331, where the applicants would replace the existing storefronts, relocate signage, insert a set of centered double doors flanked by sidelights, and introduce five new window openings on the second story. In-kind repair to masonry and the wood cornice will be needed. At 329, a flush storefront will replace the existing projection and side door. Taking some moulding cues from 327 but simplifying the details, the storefront will continue the height of that building's canopy projection across the face of all three buildings. A new signboard will be placed over the new entry doors, with three double-hung, two-over-two windows added above. At 331, the projecting storefront and side door will be replaced with a wider storefront window that again picks up on design cues from the storefront at 327. Because 331 is narrower than 329, two double-hung, two-over-two windows will be inserted here, rather than three.

Evaluation

The applicants have worked closely with the HPO to develop a proposal that respects the individuality of these three buildings while still recognizing their unification as an internally connected business for over forty years. Although the buildings are comparatively small when considered in the breadth of grander buildings along the 200 and 300 blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, it is the rarity of their small stature in these blocks, their remaining decorative details, and their ability to survive along a busy commercial corridor that make careful treatment important.

Although 329 and 331 currently have no windows on the second floor, sections of brick infill make clear that some openings of unknown dimensions once existed. Absent original transom openings or other clues, it is unclear where original doors were located on these two buildings, especially since 331 once included the building next door. It is not known if these two buildings ever had projecting storefronts, though we know that the existing projections themselves are not original. Given this somewhat vague evidence and the alterations that have already been made to these two buildings, some change is appropriate if the work is compatible. The alterations proposed are consistent with the overall character of the buildings. In particular, the new window openings will be a positive contribution to the streetscape.

At present, a large meter box is sited between the projections at 329 and 331. Given the expansive scope of interior demolition and reconstruction planned, any meter boxes should be moved to the interior of the buildings or to the side court next to 327.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept as consistent with the purposes of the preservation act and delegate final approval to staff.