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

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Property Address:	<b>910 and 912 S Street, NW</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>U Street Historic District</b>	<b>X</b> Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	<b>January 26, 2012</b>	<b>X</b> Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	<b>12-140</b>	Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Steve Callcott</b>	<b>X</b> New Construction
		Demolition
		Subdivision

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Architect Kim Jones, representing Capital City Real Estate, seeks conceptual design review for a pair of three-story rowhouses in the U Street Historic District. The two lots, measuring 20' x 95' each, were recently sold as excess property by the DC Department of Housing and Community Development. The lots were once improved with a warehouse at 910 (constructed in 1918) and a rowhouse (1886) on 912. The sites have been vacant and used as a small community playground since the 1970s.

The block is characterized by rows of substantial three-story, bay-fronted, brick rowhouses dating from the 1880s. The houses have a strong sense of unity, albeit with variety in their brick detailing, door and window surrounds, and picturesque roof features.

**Proposal**

The proposal has been developed to relate closely to the architectural character of houses on the block. The two new structures would be three-stories in height with the third floor treated as a roof form, and the building heights and floors would align with the surrounding buildings. Each house would have a square projecting bay with chamfered corners, a prominent primary door slightly raised off the street, and punched windows in a variety of shapes and sizes. Brick and stone detailing would be used to articulate and organize the facades. Roof decks set back from the front façades would be accessed by small access rooms that would be clad in fibercement siding.

**Evaluation and Recommendation**

The proposed designs are compatible with the rowhouse character of this block in their height, mass, façade compositions, architectural character and use of materials. As with any traditional design inserted immediately adjacent to historic properties, the ultimate success will depend on execution, materials, and detailing. As the designs are further refined, the front doors and door surrounds should be further developed, slight refinements made to the fenestration (such as reducing the size of the top floor windows, which are too large for an attic story), and the roof deck and stair enclosure should be reduced to the minimum height possible and set back sufficiently to ensure that they will not be visible from the street. The applicants should continue to coordinate closely with staff as the project continues through design development.

**Recommendation**

The HPO recommends that the HPRB determine the proposed conceptual design to be not incompatible with the character of the U Street Historic District and consistent with the purposes of the preservation act, and delegate final approval to staff.

