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

Property Address:	934 N Street NW	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Landmark/District:	Shaw Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent Calendar
ANC:	2F	<input type="checkbox"/> Denial Calendar
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept Review
Meeting Date:	October 27, 2011	<input type="checkbox"/> Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	#11-524	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Brendan Meyer	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

The applicant, owner Gerry Coates, seeks concept approval for a new three-story, limestone panel 2-unit flat building at 934 N Street NW in the Shaw Historic District. Plans were prepared by Studio T10.

Property Description and Context

The existing lot at 934 N Street is a vacant lot between a two-story brick apartment building (contributing, circa 1915) to the west and a one-story commercial building (non-contributing, circa 1950) to the east. The 900 block of N Street shows a variation of building styles, construction dates and building types. It is a common context in the Shaw Historic District where development took place over a long period of time and by builders constructing projects mostly one or two at a time. No one style, builder, or type dominates. This block features brick rowhouses, both flat front and projecting, four- and five-story apartment buildings, and several heights, roof forms, gaps and setbacks in street face.

Proposal

The proposed flats would take the form of a traditional projecting bay rowhouse. Three stories tall and three bays wide, it would be clad in limestone panels of large coursing dimension. A two story projection bay of limestone and composite panel would provide a balcony space for the third floor. The façade cap is a collection of simple flat runs. At grade, a shallow areaway will provide light and egress for the basement rooms. A small penthouse, setback 20 feet from the front parapet, would provide access to rooftop decks both front and back.

Evaluation and Recommendation

The HPO is generally quite satisfied with the concept design. The form and massing of the building, as proposed, is typical in dimension and proportion to a Washington projecting bay rowhouse from about c. 1900. As a new shape on the street, it fits in suitably. The material selection of limestone panels is somewhat bolder than a red brick pallet, but the limestone is not out of place here. The variety of style and material on this block leaves the opportunity to pick from a wide variety of material, and directly across the street is a fine historic model: a three story limestone and brick Richardsonian rowhouse.

Small matters of detail can be worked out into a better complement to the overall design. The most significant is important enough to be conditional and that is the cornices at the top of the building and projection. Both should be revised proportionally as well as in section so that some amount of curve and profile is incorporated into the cornice.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept for a new three-story limestone panel rowhouse at 934 N Street NW as consistent with the purposes of the preservation act on the condition that:

1. The façade and projection cornices be revised to include curved sections, and delegate final approval to staff.

No part of this recommendation shall be construed as a recommendation for approval or disapproval for any necessary zoning relief or interpretation.