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

Property Address:	1600-1602 7th Street, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Shaw Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	November 20/December 4, 2014	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	14-714	X	Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	Steve Callcott		New Construction
			Demolition
		X	Subdivision

Architect Will Couch, representing Daci Enterprises, seeks conceptual design review for renovation and additions to the rear and side of 1602 7th Street, NW. The building would become an indoor bar for the beer garden located on the adjacent vacant corner lot. The Board reviewed several iterations for construction of a two-story building and site improvements on that vacant lot last year; this project is proposed in lieu of that plan.

Property History and Description

The three-story brick building at 1602 was constructed as a dwelling and store between 1864 and 1873 by a government bookbinder named George D. Burch. Based on census research, Burch’s wife Margaret ran a “fancy goods” store on the first floor. The storefront window and several rear additions were added in the 1880s, and a two-story frame stable was built at the rear of the lot in 1891. The rear stable building was replaced early on with a storage shed (also since removed), and the rear additions underwent a variety of alterations to their form, fenestration and exterior cladding over the 20th century as the building served a variety of commercial uses. The composition of the front elevation remains largely intact, with distinctive Italianate iron window hoods and a prominent bracketed wood cornice.

Proposal

The project calls for rehabilitating the façade with new wood windows to fill the original openings, a new multi-light entrance door, and a new multi-light projecting storefront. The two-story rear ell-wing of the building would be removed and replaced with a three-story addition clad in brick and fenestrated with large industrial sash metal windows facing to the vacant lot to the south. An elevated wood deck with perimeter plantings would be constructed along the south elevation of the addition, serving as a covered bar area below for the beer garden.

The applicants propose to retain the existing iron fence around the perimeter of the vacant corner site. As the building at 1602 will now provide a strong street face and commercial presence, the applicants are not seeking to erect a more prominent gate element on the vacant site, as was previously proposed.

Evaluation

The incorporation of the building at 1602 7th establishes the strong orientation to and presence along 7th Street that was the result of discussion in the previous proposals. As was first started by painting of the large Elizabeth Taylor mural, the orientation of the addition and the deck south toward Q Street completes the conversion of 1602 to what would be in essence a corner building.

The proposed height, footprint and earth-toned masonry palette of the addition are compatible with the character of the building and historic district. While roughly equal in size and mass to the existing building, the composition of the addition is broken down somewhat by the use of a small transparent connecting link to the east and a slightly recessed lower portion on the west. The sculpted wood deck, which includes an integral perimeter planter, is an unusual form for the district but is consistent with the garden imagery that was discussed at length in the previous reviews. The intent of folding the deck higher in the rear is not only to provide visual interest to this shaped element but to serve as a sound barrier for the residential properties to the west. While the extent of glazing in the addition is greater than is typical of the historic district –even in the commercial areas where it tends to be higher than in the residential blocks – its scale is somewhat mitigated by the multi-light industrial window vocabulary.

The replacement storefront window on 1602 should be revised to better relate to the plate glass character of commercial windows in the historic district. Similarly, the replacement front door should be developed to relate to the character of the historic building rather than the character of the proposed addition.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Review Board find the addition and alterations generally compatible with the character of the historic district and that the applicants continue to develop the plan in consultation with staff.