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

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Landmark/District:	<b>Capitol Hill Historic District</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	<b>221 10<sup>th</sup> Street, SE</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	<b>June 28, 2012</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	<b>12-350</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Amanda Molson</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

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Owners Charles and Kristi Cooper, with plans prepared by Jennifer Fowler, AIA, request concept approval for a rooftop addition to 221 10<sup>th</sup> Street, SE in the Capitol Hill Historic District.

### **Property Description**

Constructed in 1964 with its mate next door, 221 10<sup>th</sup> Street, SE is a non-contributing building to the Capitol Hill Historic District. Consistent with many infill projects constructed on Capitol Hill during the 1960s and 1970s, this two-story masonry house is of a simple design, with a brick course at the cornice line, brick window sills, and a vaguely Colonial Revival style door surround. The first and second floors are recessed on the left side, resulting in a street-facing elevation that reads as two bays in width rather than three. At the rear, the property opens into north-south alley occupied by a number of garages and carriage houses of both one-story and two-stories in height.

### **Proposal**

The applicants propose to vertically extend the existing footprint of the building to create a third floor, resulting in an increase in height of approximately 10', which is still roughly 5' lower than that of the three-story historic house next door at 219. Because the already rather low ceiling heights on the first and second floors will be carried to the new third floor in order to maintain a sense of proportion on the exterior, the applicants propose a slightly raised ceiling height in the new rear (master) bedroom. This would be accomplished by raising a small section of the roof 8" above the height of the parapet wall. Set back substantially from the front wall and pulled in several feet from the rear wall and side walls, this area will not be visible in views from 10<sup>th</sup> Street and will be unobtrusive in any views from the alley. Modifications to the existing block include the installation of brick window headers, which will arguably improve the present condition.

### **Evaluation**

The period of significance for the Capitol Hill Historic District extends through 1945, ending nearly twenty years before construction of 221 10<sup>th</sup> Street, SE. As a non-contributing building to the Capitol Hill Historic District, the subject property does not add to our understanding of historically significant architectural qualities and development patterns in this neighborhood. As a result, the proposal should be evaluated for its general compatibility with the immediate context and with the character of the

historic district, rather than its effect on character-defining features of the building or the potential to otherwise alter the appearance of a historic structure.

Considering the non-contributing status of this building, strategies of setting back the rooftop addition to preserve the original roof height and slope, or changing materials to differentiate old from new fabric, are generally not necessary. The Board has previously approved the construction of visible rooftop additions to non-contributing buildings, provided that the alterations are compatible with the streetscape and the general character of the historic district. Most analogous to this case is a now-completed project at 326 9th Street, SE (HPA #08-361), where the Board approved a flush third-story rooftop addition to a non-contributing brick house constructed in the 1960s. Other similar cases in the Capitol Hill Historic District include 1126 I Street, SE (HPA #10-263), where the Board approved the addition of a third story in the form of a mansard roof to a non-contributing building constructed in the 1970s. At 629 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE (HPA #12-028), the Board approved raising the height of an existing attic to accommodate a full second floor at a modestly-designed building that was constructed very late in the period of significance. At 524 8<sup>th</sup> Street SE (HPA #11-197), the Board approved a visible rooftop addition to the non-contributing portion of a historic commercial building on Barracks Row.

The proposed increase in height is compatible with the character of the streetscape. While the opposite side (east side) of the 200 block of 10th Street is quite uniform (a lengthy row of brick bayfronts, followed by a lengthy row of 1920s porchfronts), this side (west side) features quite a bit of variety in height, roof form, materials, architectural style, and eras of construction. There are already several three-story houses on this side, including non-contributing buildings from the 60s/70s (237 and 239 10th), the contributing frame house immediately next door (219 10th), a three-story with mansard roof (243 10th), and a tall two-story house with raised basement and attic (217 10th) that will be roughly comparable in height to 221 when completed. Of the remaining two-story buildings on this row, there are “ebbs and flows” in height, ranging from the at-grade frame and masonry houses (i.e. 203, 205, 209, 211 10th), to above-grade frame (207 10th) and masonry (231 10th) houses with raised basements, to brick houses with prominent turrets (227 10th and 922 C on the corner), and a bayfront with a peaked roof (241 10th).

In considering alterations to non-contributing buildings, the Board has also been mindful that these changes should be reasonably appropriate for the design of the subject property and should not result in a building that becomes a focal point of the overall streetscape. In assessing the design, this new addition would simply replicate the existing footprint of the house, creating a three-story house not unlike others constructed on Capitol Hill during the 1960s and 1970s (including two on this very block at 237 and 239 10th Street, SE). The new third story, which is simple in design and materials, will fit comfortably into this varied row and will not serve as a distraction.

Considering the non-contributing nature of this building, the overall proposal is compatible with the character of the historic district and with this block characterized by variations in height and design. The proposal is consistent with the design of the subject house and with the massing of other Capitol Hill buildings of this later generation.

### **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.