

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

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Property Address:	<b>231 Carroll Street, NW</b>	<b>X</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>Takoma Park Historic District</b>		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	<b>June 30, 2011</b>	<b>X</b>	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	<b>11-282</b>		Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Anne Brockett</b>	<b>X</b>	New Construction

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On behalf of Level2 Development, architect Sas Gharai of SGA Companies seeks the Board's concept review of a new apartment building with ground floor retail in the Takoma Park Historic District. The project will occupy a vacant lot adjacent to an SGA-designed apartment building approved by the Board at 235 Carroll Street.

The lot is surrounded by a 7-11 store and its parking lot to the west, a row of historic 19<sup>th</sup> century homes running north on Cedar Street, the approved project to the east (not yet constructed), and, across Carroll Avenue, a series of one- and two-story commercial buildings of varied historic significance.

**Project Description**

The project would construct a five-story apartment building designed in three distinct sections, referred to as Phase II in the plans. The primary block, facing Carroll near the corner of Cedar will be constructed of red brick in a warehouse-inspired aesthetic. Large, street level openings have brick arches and are covered by a corner canopy suspended from metal rods. The upper story windows are 6-over-6 hoppers with steel lintels and sills. To the east on Carroll, a shorter, slightly recessed "hyphen" has been designed as a glassy, open connector to 235. The side elevation along Cedar Street continues the warehouse materials and detailing of the main block and then at a setback and lower wing changes to a mix of stucco bays and hardiplank-sided recessed balconies. Along this elevation, the northernmost corner loses its top floor for a terrace, thus stepping down toward the adjacent historic home on Cedar. A roof terrace and trellis are proposed for the entire building.

The project will involve a subdivision to combine two lots and relocating an existing curb cut to the west. The new curb cut will lead between the building and the adjacent 7-11 to a partially below-grade parking area beneath the building.

**Evaluation**

The design for the building has changed dramatically in its exterior appearance since submission. Initially it was proposed to match the design of 235 Carroll, continuing its use of yellow brick with panelized bays for an entire city block. In consultation with the HPO, however, the design has been altered to alleviate this somewhat monotonous streetscape through the use of varied materials and the introduction of a recessed hyphen between the two buildings. In addition, windows and doors have been reworked, front balconies removed, and the side elevation materials and articulation have undergone reconsideration and redesign. These adjustments to materials and massing help to visually break down the large structure, both as a single building and as part of the Carroll Street streetscape. In addition, a portion of the top floor has been cropped off at the northwest corner to step down toward the historic buildings on Cedar.

The result is a visually interesting, compatibly designed addition to the historic district. The building is appropriately scaled and articulated. The materials of brick and stucco are found throughout the district

while the glass hyphen creates a modern separation frequently used to separate two masonry facades with an alleviating lightness.

As the design continues to be developed, the following refinements are recommended:

- Study the location of the penthouse to push it as far back from Carroll and Cedar Streets as possible and sheath it in brick.
- Study the trellis and roof railing locations and design, making these as non-visible as possible.
- Consider brick for the northernmost bay of the west side to continue the alternating pattern of stucco and brick and to “bookend” the building between two brick sections.
- Consider eliminating the herringbone brick between the first and second floor and continuing the rusticated brick base to alleviate the sense of verticality this brickwork encourages.
- Use clear glass or fritted glass only for the hyphen.
- Eliminate the side fence and use only brick for the retaining wall along the driveway
- Use true stucco rather than panelized EIFS

### **Recommendations**

The HPO recommends that the Board approve the project in concept, direct the applicant to work on refinements as discussed above, and to delegate final approval to the HPO.