

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

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Property Address:	<b>2325 Porter St, NW,</b>	<b>X</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>Greystone Enclave / Cleveland Park HD</b>	<b>X</b>	Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	<b>September, 2012</b>		Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	<b>12-531</b>	<b>X</b>	Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Kim Elliott</b>		New Construction

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Owner Thomas Gibian and Standard Solar seek concept review to install solar panels on a pergola located in the side yard of the Greystone mansion, one of four properties within the Greystone Enclave, a composition of four properties situated along Rock Creek Park designated as a landmark. The Greystone mansion property is composed of a 2-1/2 story stone house built by architect Waddy B. Wood in 1913, with a pergola and a tennis court; the property opens onto a large wooded landscape set back from Porter Street.

**Proposal**

The proposal calls for installing 42 black photovoltaic solar panels each measuring 39.1” x 66.6” x 1.8” on the stone-piered, wood pergola. All 42 panels are proposed on the flat wood frame structure of the pergola. The panels would be mounted on the existing wood beams set in approximately 6” from the edge of the original stone piers with no overhang of the existing structure. The panels would sit approximately 4” above the wood beams and would not be attached to the central dome structure.

**Evaluation**

The Board’s adopted Guidelines *Roofs on Historic Buildings* addresses the addition of solar panels: “If installed on a flat roof, solar panels should be located so they are not visible from the public street. If located on a sloping roof building, they should only be installed on rear slopes that are not visible from a public street.”

The solar panels at 2325 Porter Street will lie flat on the pergola structure, resulting in virtually no change to its appearance or profile. The installation will not be visible from the street and is set far from other neighboring properties. The conduit and electrical boxes will be minimal, running down one single pier, and at the main house will be paired with the existing electrical meter at the rear elevation. While the pergola is an important architectural feature of Greystone’s formal site design, the installation will not significantly alter its appearance or relationship to the site.

In contrast, in a recent case at 3215 Newark Street, NW, a solar panel installation was proposed on the sloped main roof and would have been prominently visible from the street. The Board found the placement of solar panels on the original roof incompatible with the character of the historic district and not consistent with the preservation act.

This solar installation on the pergola is consistent with the Board’s guidelines in having a low profile, not altering the appearance of a primary roof form, and will not be visible from a public street.

**Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Review Board:*

- *Approve the placement of the solar panels flat on the pergola and accompanying electrical wiring as per drawings*
- *Delegate permit approval to the HPO*