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

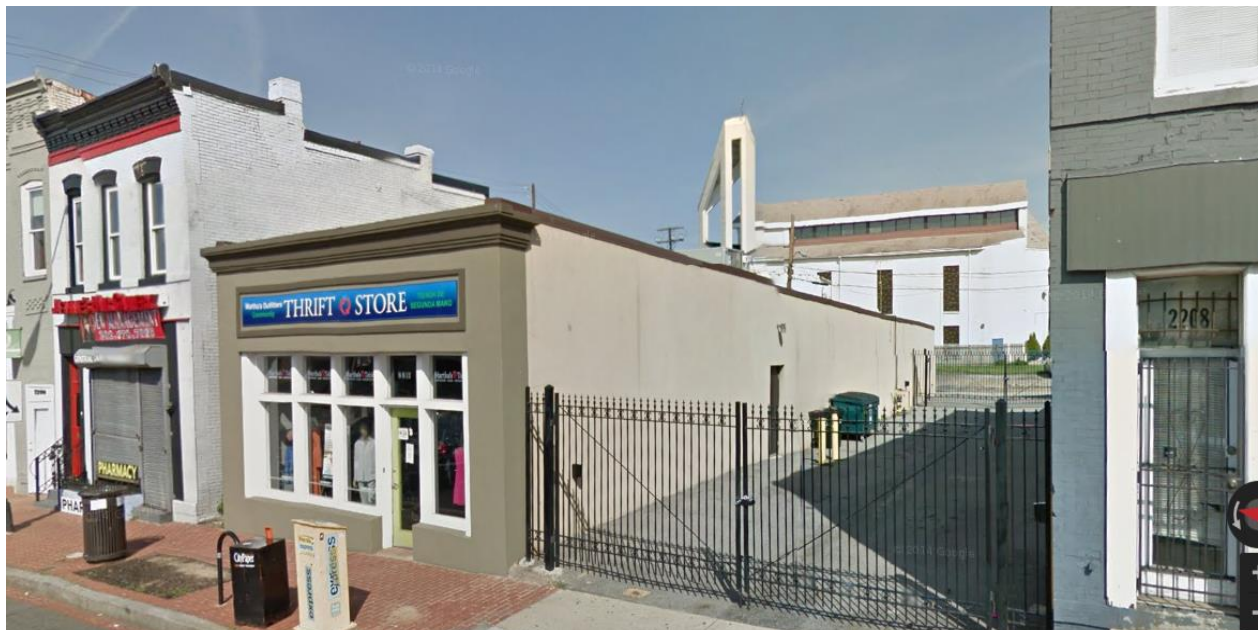
Landmark/District: **Anacostia Historic District** (x) Agenda
Address: **2204-2206 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE**

Meeting Date: **September 24, 2015** (x) Addition
Case Number: **15-463** (x) New construction

Staff Reviewer: **Tim Dennée** (x) Revised concept

The applicant, Four Points LLC (Stan Voudrie), agent for property owner Curtis Homes of Maryland, Inc., seeks concept review for a three-story building that would connect to and extend atop an existing one-story building.

The one-story building was constructed 1916-1917 for George Bury. It was first “Bury’s Garage” for auto repairs, but after he was injured in an accident, it became Dering’s Garage for about a year. Bury returned and started selling second-hand cars to supplement the repair business before again it renting out. By 1923, it was auto parts) until the the I.F. Bury Motor Company, first selling Chevrolets and then Buicks (plus 1930s. Subsequently, it was Richardson Brothers, a Packard dealer, and then National Motor Company, selling DeSotos. The vacant lot beside the building was presumably used to park the stock, while the garage became the office, service bay, and perhaps showroom (which probably explains the vehicular door that remained in the side of the building until a decade ago or so). Auto sales ceased during World War II, and later uses included awning fabrication, a church, and other uses.



Previous review

In its July review of this project, the Board supported the idea of three-story new construction on the vacant half of the lot but requested revision of the project so that:

- (1) the addition to the historic garage is more compatible with the underlying building;
- (2) the new construction next to the garage becomes a simpler, more unified composition;
- (3) the expression of the adjacent new construction is distinguished from that of the roof addition; and
- (4) the whole is quieter and more deferential to the rest of the block.

Evaluation

New construction

While this block of Martin Luther King contains only one- and two-story commercial buildings, a three-story building would not be out of place because such a height is in no way overwhelming and there is some greater variety in heights on the avenue. The Board has permitted new buildings to have a bit more height, but there are other issues with the particular design that require resolution.

The success of new construction lies in part in being compatible with its immediate context and in part in being a worthy composition in itself. The revisions have created a more unitary composition, distinct from the upward addition to the adjacent garage. The recesses in the façade, and especially the ground-floor entrance to the upper floors, are unusual.

Roof addition

At about twenty feet back, the proposed addition is still problematic, because it is an intermediate location that neither fully incorporates the underlying building nor gives the impression it is standing behind it. Its two stories remain prominently visible but proportionally much taller than an attic or penthouse. The combination of height and depth creates an odd massing that overwhelms but doesn't really relate to the old. There is no opportunity to make a third story disappear no matter the setback, so the alternative to adding a single story would be to set the addition back far enough for the garage to read as a whole building. The Board has often cited forty feet as an appropriate minimum setback for additional floors, which is less than half the depth of the garage. But at twenty or forty feet back, the mass sticks up awkwardly in the midst of lower buildings. A more compatible solution would be a lightly framed *single*-story roof addition but with substantially less setback than shown.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept and delegate to staff further review with the condition that the roof addition be one story, set back at least five feet from the plane of the present front wall.