

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

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Property Address:	<b>1226 Pleasant Street NW</b>	<b>X</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>Anacostia Historic District</b>		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	<b>October 4, 2018</b>	<b>X</b>	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	<b>18-617</b>	<b>X</b>	Alteration

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**Property Description**

The applicant, architect Harry Ross Jr. AIA, requests the Board’s review of a concept to construct a freestanding two-story accessory structure to accommodate an accessory apartment and garage. The structure would stand at the rear of the lot, on what is now a concrete slab. The building would have a metal shed roof, metal panels on the second floor, and sided with brick-faced CMU on the ground level. The applicant also proposes a metal roof deck on the rear of the historic two-story detached frame house, to be reached by an exterior stair.

**Accessory structure**

As the Anacostia Historic District guidelines state, larger carriage houses and accessory dwellings, common in some neighborhoods, are not typically found in Anacostia. Accessory dwellings should be compatible with the existing buildings and neither overwhelm nor detract from the character of the property.



*Most Historic Anacostia outbuildings are modest and utilitarian in character.*

The structure would be visible from both the alley and the street. A visible secondary structure is acceptable in the historic district if it is compatible with historic character. The applicant has reduced the height to 16 feet, to make it significantly lower than the house.

There are two particular compatibility issues with this design: the roof form and the materials do not relate much to the historic fabric of the district. First, the irregular gable roof is atypical of the few historic carriage houses or garages that exist. The proposal to set the second story in for a roof deck reduces the massing of the dwelling, but complicates the massing of what should be a quiet, secondary building. A lower roof—flat, gabled or hipped— is more compatible with a district that contains plenty of each. Also, the zoning regulations do not permit roof decks at accessory apartments within accessory structures (11 DCMR § 253.8(e)).

Second, the materials are too varied and, with the exception of the brick base, do not relate to the historic materials of primary or secondary structures in the historic district. The mixture of metal cladding and cooper roof paneling, brick and concrete footing and glass and wood materials makes the design appear busy and not in character with other modest accessory buildings in Anacostia. The guidelines state the use of frame construction with wood and fiber-cement siding is generally encouraged.



### **Roof deck**

In recognition of the specific characteristics of Anacostia—the fact that nearly all homes are two stories tall and detached,<sup>1</sup> that many have highly pitched roofs, and that they have historically lacked decks on the principal roofs—the historic design guidelines for the historic district state that:

Roof additions and decks are not appropriate for the predominately two-story houses in the Anacostia Historic District. These types of additions would visibly alter the proportions, massing, and rooflines of the underlying historic building in a manner inconsistent with the character of the historic district and with the building's immediate context. Roof additions also frequently do significant harm to the physical fabric of the underlying building.

The Board has been particularly careful with retaining the character of rows that are of a consistent height and massing, not having been disturbed with substantial additions. Because there is not a wide variety of heights in Anacostia nor are there abrupt grade changes house to house, there is relatively little chance to hide a roof addition among taller or stepped buildings. The many gaps between buildings further expose sides and rears of buildings to views from many perspectives.

### **Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Board find the metal roof deck incompatible with the historic district and inconsistent with the purposes of the preservation act. The HPO recommends that the Board find some accessory dwelling unit compatible if the massing and materials are revised.*

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<sup>1</sup> The fact that they are usually detached means both that decks would likely to be visible even on low-pitched roofs and that homes generally have sufficient outdoor space without adding roof decks. Thus are roof decks more associated with predominantly rowhouse neighborhoods with taller, and often deeper, nearly flat-roofed houses.