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

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Landmark/District: **Anacostia Historic District** (x) Agenda  
Address: **2216 Chester Street SE**  
Meeting Date: **March 22, 2018** (x) Concept  
Case Number: **18-105** (x) New Construction

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**Property Description**

The applicant, Ram Design, on behalf of owner District Properties, is returning to the Board with revised drawings for the review of a conceptual application to construct a two-story frame house with a cellar on a vacant lot. The property would have a twelve-foot side yard on the west and an eight-foot side yard on the east. The depth of the building would be 42 feet. The house would be sided with wood and have a two-story bay and a flat roof. The design of the project is influenced by the two-story frame houses on Chester Street, but this project is substantially wider than the typical Chester Street home, as it responds to its 53-foot-wide lot.

**Proposal**

A project proposes a 33-foot-deep building with a eleven-foot-wide bay projection and porch. The design calls for a dentilled wood cornice that wraps the facade, continuing as a plain cornice on the west and east elevations. The windows will be double-hung wood with wood header and wood sill. The bay and porch will be supported by a brick foundation and piers. The porch has been updated to reflect a flat roof with wood post on a concrete landing and wood guardrail. The entryway will have brick steps. The rear elevation will have aluminum double-hung windows with a deck along the second story and patio at the ground level. The side elevations will have double-hung windows toward the rear.

**Evaluation**

Although they are nearly all Italianate, Chester Street has a sufficient variety of attached and detached porch-fronted houses to justify an approach to new construction that evokes the style and construction methods of the historic houses while adapting to a broader lot. Although the house is wide, it is not out of line with the scale of the framed rowhouses and semi-detached properties along the street.

The applicant has addressed the Board's comments on redesigning the bay fenestration, provided depth to the window and door casings, removed the projection, added new porch details such as turned posts, and removed the shutters. In addition to those changes, staff recommends the applicant provide the details of the cornice product; revise and detail the porch eave; and provide materials samples.

The drawings depict a flat roof, but the roof naturally has to be sloped in order to drain properly. So, a drawing of a flat roof raises some questions. The roof would presumably drain rearward, like most similarly situated buildings. What is the relationship between the roof and the cornice that wraps the entire house? What is the difference in their elevations, and how is the cornice flashed on the rear? How is the roof drained over or through the rear cornice at rear (and should there even be a cornice at rear)? Finally, if the roof has to be sloped, then does the façade get taller or the rear wall get shorter to accommodate that slope (and how does that affect the design)?

With its sides visible from the street view, the sides of the building should be carefully designed. The rooftop HVAC unit, which is not shown, should not be visible from the street.

There are enough details unresolved—and there has been enough experience with other projects in the neighborhood—that this project should return to the Board when the design and details are more fully developed.

**Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends approval of the concept as not incompatible with the character of the historic district, and that the project return to the Board for review of the permit application.*

Staff Contact: Imania Price