

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

Property Address:	2412 Martin Luther King Jr.	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Anacostia Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	September 29, 2022	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	HP 22- 446	X	Alteration Subdivision

Ronnie McGhee and Associates Architects, representing property owner Wanda Henderson, seeks concept review for renovation and a two-story roof addition on a two-story contributing brick building in the Anacostia Historic District. It was originally constructed in 1925 as a rowhouse and consists of a main block with a rear ell wing. The property retains much of its original appearance and features a gabled roof with dormers flanked by prominent firewalls. The first-floor storefront was added when this and other houses in the row were converted to commercial use during the mid-20th century.

The building extends 105' in depth to an alley at the rear. The property stands on a block with diverse building types ranging in height from one to two stories, and the topography of the block slopes significantly up at the rear of the lots. New five and six story buildings outside of the historic district have recently been built at the end of the block and have changed the height and scale along this block of Martin Luther King Jr. Ave.

Proposal

The proposal calls for a two-story addition on top of the two-story building. The new third story would be set back 27' from the front façade and the fourth floor would be set back 47' from the front façade. The addition will be 22' in height and set primarily on the existing one-story rear ell. The plan also calls for the front façade to be rehabilitated; the existing windows and doors will be replaced per HPO guidelines, the entrance widened to meet accessibility requirements, and the interior renovated for classrooms. The addition is proposed to be clad in cementitious panels with glazing along the side ell and rear. A 10' deck is proposed on the third story roof.

Evaluation

The property is part of a block of intact two-story contributing row buildings. Two-story roof addition are uncommon for commercial row buildings and the historic district. Where the Board has approved roof additions, it has typically required that they have a significant setback, retain the integrity of the historic property, be subordinate in massing to the historic building, and have no or very limited visibility from public street views.

While the addition is set back considerably from the front façade, a flag test conducted with HPO staff showed that the fourth story will be visible above the roof of the historic main block from across the street (photo below). However, if the setback of the fourth-floor addition was increased (and/or the height lowered) and the portion of the third story and deck atop the main

block of the building were also removed, the addition could conceivably read from Talbert Street as a two-story building behind rather than on top of the historic building while not being visible above the building along MLK.

Recommendation

HPO recommends the Board direct the applicant to increase the setback of the entire addition, move the third story off of the existing two-story building, and lower the fourth-story to eliminate the visibility from the front. The applicant should restore the storefront entry to retain the transom, brick window base, and brick features to include a recessed entry to accommodate the wider wheelchair door similar to the neighboring property. The project should return to the Board (potentially on the consent calendar) for final review when ready.

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