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

Landmark/District:	Anacostia Historic District	(x) Agenda
Address:	1519 W Street SE	
Meeting Date:	June 22, 2023	(x) Alteration
Case Number:		() New construction
		(x) Concept

Owners Raimi Gbabdamosi and Ashley Whitfield, with plans prepared by architect Mark Lawrence AIA, seek concept review for a second story roof addition on a house in the Anacostia Historic District.

Property Description

1519 W Street SE is a one-story brick property built in 1933 by Johnson McFetridge featuring simple Tudor revival architectural elements with a steep front-gabled roof with a cross gable over the side wall. The flat front façade features a small projecting entrance bay with steep gable roof and three historic wood windows. The building is uniquely situated on a double width lot on a raised berm set back from the street.

Proposal

The proposal calls for the demolition of a majority of the existing roof and construction of a one-story rooftop addition. The plan proposes two large dormers on each side of the steep gable roof. The dormers would be setback approximately 12' from the front façade and extend past the rear elevation by 10'. The addition will be set behind the existing chimney and retain the profile of the side gable within the dormer. The addition would be clad in either shingle or metal paneling. The wood windows on the front façade would be repaired and retained and the existing windows along the side elevations replaced with aluminum clad windows.

Evaluation

In most instances, a rear addition is the best way to add extra space to a historic building without altering its character, and these constitute the majority of proposals that come before the Board. When certain design principles are met, such as the retention of significant architectural features; subordinate massing; appropriate materials; and compatible fenestration; the Board has regularly approved rear additions.

It is more difficult to design a compatible roof-top addition, as such additions typically alter significant features of a building, such as its roof line, height, design composition, relationship with surrounding buildings, and overall form and mass. In limited circumstances, additions on top of a building can sometimes be achieved when they are either invisible or not prominently

visible from a public street, don't result in the removal or alteration of important character-defining features of the building or streetscape, and are compatible with their context.

The concept proposal for 1519 W Street SE does not meet many of the prescribed design principles for compatible rooftop additions. While the addition is set back from the front by 12', it would be highly visible from W Street, and fundamentally change the volume and roofline of the house. The removal and reconstruction of the roof will result in the loss of significant architectural roof features, particularly the steep gable roof that characterizes the architectural styled home, and the addition will engulf the free-standing side gable. Cladding the roof addition in standing seam metal visually highlights the addition as a roof feature and not part of the building's original massing.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept to be incompatible with the historic district and to revise the concept to retain the roof framing and locate the addition at the rear.