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

Landmark/District:	Anacostia Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	1603 Good Hope Road SE	<input type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Meeting Date:	July 27, 2023	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New construction
Case Number:	HPA 23-441	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept

Applicant Amir Irani, with plans prepared by Square 134 Architects, seeks conceptual design review of revised plans for construction of a six-story plus penthouse residential and retail building located on a corner lot in the Anacostia Historic District. The site is currently occupied by a one-story non-contributing laundromat and surface parking.

At the June 1st meeting, the Board did not take a vote on the project but agreed that the architectural character of the building – including the modulated massing of the façade and the stepping down of the building in the back, the strong corner tower element, and the use of masonry in an Art Deco-inspired style were all positive elements that were trending in the right direction. While the members agreed that a taller tower element on the corner was a good approach, several members expressed concerns that six stories with a penthouse was too tall for the historic district, and asked that the height, the design of the ground floor, and overall detailing and color continue to be studied and revised and return for review after further community engagement.

Property Description

The site is located at the corner of Good Hope Road and 16th Street and adjacent to a vacant lot at 1605-1607 Good Hope where the Board recently gave final concept approval for construction of a five-story residential and retail building (HPA 22-445). The site is bordered by commercial properties on each side with residential properties at the rear behind the public alley. The block context includes the vacant non-contributing laundromat, a one-story non-contributing office building, and two- and three-story residential apartments. The grade gradually slopes down towards the west.

Project Description

The project calls for construction of a six-story building with a penthouse. The building would be clad primarily in brick, incorporating Art Deco motifs such as horizontal brick bands and vertical piers around the windows and at the corner. On Good Hope, the building would rise to 65' in height, with a five-story primary mass, a slight setback for the sixth floor, and a one-to-one setback for the penthouse. The building would have projecting bay-tower elements on each of the two primary elevations and step down to four stories in the rear, with a setback for the fifth and sixth stories.

Project Revision

The revised proposal call for a setback of the 6th floor by 12'-0" from the main building façade. The rooftop of the 5th floor has been lowered to be approximately 3'-0" taller than the adjacent neighbor. The storefront has been defined to show a more established sign band and showroom windows. The

building continues to incorporate Art Deco motifs such as horizontal brick bands and vertical piers around the windows and at the corner. The corner has been modified to be more prominent by increasing the size of the fenestration at the corner and reducing the setbacks of the bay projection.

Evaluation

For new construction projects on vacant lots in Anacostia, the Board has approved several projects at a height of five stories, typically with generous setbacks for the top one or more floors to help break down the buildings' massing and lower their apparent heights.

A six-story building proposed in the Anacostia Historic District continues to be greater than that found within the established ranges of height in the district. However, the applicant has lowered the fifth floor to align with the neighboring approved project and pulled the sixth floor in from the two sides. Despite these revisions, the sixth floor continues to be visible from the street and prominent at the corner. If the Board find the sixth floor compatible, it is recommended that the setback of the sixth floor be increased, both to help minimize the visibility down Good Hope Road and to increase the separation between the stepped parapets on each elevation from the sixth floor set immediately behind it.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Board approve the revised concept for the design of the building and seeks the Board's direction on the proposed height and treatment of the sixth floor. If the Board determines a sixth floor to be compatible, it is recommended that its setback be increased to diminish its visual impact and to provide more space behind the stepped parapet on the two primary elevations.

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