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

Property Address:	925 M Street NW	() Agenda
Landmark/District:	Blagden Alley-Naylor Court Historic District	(x) Consent Calendar
ANC:	2F	() Denial Calendar
		(x) Concept Review
		() Permit Review
Meeting Date:	December 18, 2014	() Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	#14-716	(x) New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Brendan Meyer	() Demolition
		() Subdivision

The applicant, owner Ditto Residential, LLC, seeks concept approval for a new 3-story, 2-unit brick and metal rowhouse on a vacant lot at 925 M Street NW in the Blagden Alley-Naylor Court Historic District. Plans were prepared by DEP Designs. The Board reviewed this design in November and provided direction to the applicant.

Property Description and Context

The existing lot has been vacant since designation of the historic district in 1999. Historic maps show that a rowhouse with a typical projecting bay occupied the lot from 1890 to around 1968. The lot is bounded on the east by Blagden Alley and on the west by a rare 3-story flat front frame rowhouse setback from the front property line.

Proposal

The proposal calls for a contemporary ensemble of brick, metal panel and glass, three stories tall on a short raised basement. It has been revised in response to the Board's November comments, in the following ways:

- the front projection has been brought down to grade and eliminated the areaway from the front face of the projection,
- the front fenestration has been reorganized in a regular rhythm of glazing units and opaque shadow boxes that produce a compatible rhythm and scale, and
- the penthouse stair has been repositioned five feet further back from the front façade.

Evaluation and Recommendation

The concept has been revised positively. At the front the building will meet the ground solidly without interruption from any areaway. At the top the penthouse stairs should not be visible from any public vantage point on M Street or Blagden Alley along the side of the building. The small amount of visible roof elements (page A-0.9, sight line C) is insubstantial and will blend in with the overall profile of the new building and the adjacent historic buildings. Flag tests conducted during construction will assure that the built penthouse will not be visible.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Review Board find the concept for a 3-story brick and metal rowhouse at 925 M Street NW to be generally compatible with the character of the historic district on the condition that the penthouse not be visible from M Street NW.