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

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Property Address: **2210 North Capitol Street NW**  
Landmark/District: **Bloomingdale Historic District**

Meeting Date: **October 3, 2019**  
H.P.A. Number: **#19-495**

Agenda  
 Consent Calendar  
 Denial Calendar  
 Concept Review  
 Permit Review  
 Alteration  
 New Construction  
 Demolition  
 Subdivision

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Property owners Greg and Erin Fairbanks seek concept review for adding a third story to the two-story rowhouse at 2210 North Capitol Street NW, a contributing property in the Bloomingdale Historic District. Concept plans were prepared by Saul Architects.

### **Property Description and Context**

2210 North Capitol Street is the end house of a row of six built in 1923 and designed by George T. Santmyers.<sup>1</sup> All of the houses share a common style with small variations in components. The houses are two-stories in dark buff brick with aligned roof lines. Full width porches with brick piers and concrete balusters span the facades. There are two variations of grey slate mansard roof forms at the attic story. Typical end units like 2210 North Capitol have a bracketed soffit below a pair of splayed hipped-roof dormers. Interior units instead have open pent eaves below a pair of splayed shed-roofed dormers. Prominent stepped parapets are between each house and at the end of rows. This house is the end of the row so its south elevation has a long stepped-parapet along the alley.

### **Proposal**

A third-floor addition is proposed to be added on top of the house. This would be accomplished by extending the front roof slope of the mansard up 18 inches and then building a flat roof back from this new roof ridge, producing a floor-to-ceiling height of nine feet. The side elevation would rise above the brick stepped parapet alley elevation and would be clad in composite siding. A small deck would be added on top of the two-story enclosed rear porch.

### **Evaluation**

The proposed addition would produce a prominent incompatibility in an otherwise architecturally unified group of houses that is highly characteristic of the Bloomingdale Historic District. Extending the front slope of the mansard would break the regular roofline of the row and produce a mansard composition out of proportion with the other houses and the house below. Adding a flat-roofed profile on top of the alley elevation not only prominently alters the height of the house but it would also erase the distinctive stepped parapet roof form from the end of the row. Whether the side of the addition is clad in siding or brick is irrelevant since both materials would have the same incompatible effect on the height and form of the house.

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<sup>1</sup> This group was part of a larger development of 36 houses built by the same development team on five separate permits in 1922 and 1923. The houses include the northside of W Street to 19 W Street, 2210-2220 North Capitol Street, and both sides of Adams Street to 17 and 20 Adams Street.

Staff sympathizes with the applicants because this project had been initially submitted for permit review prior to designation of the historic district.<sup>2</sup> However, the preservation law and regulations went into effect in September 9, 2018 and must be applied to any permit application not issued prior to that date. As the Board is aware, the designation took place after the proponents of the historic district underwent a public, multi-year effort to designate Bloomingdale as a historic district to protect it from demolitions and alterations that are incompatible with the rich architectural character of the neighborhood.<sup>3</sup>

### **Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept to add a third story to the two-story rowhouse at 2210 North Capitol Street NW to be incompatible with the character of the house and historic district.*

*Staff contact: Brendan Meyer*

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<sup>2</sup> Permit application B1712565 was submitted to the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs on 9/27/17. The zoning review identified substantial revisions that were required for approval. The application was made subject to historic preservation review on 9/9/18. DCRA cancelled the application on 3/11/19 for inactivity and reactivated it at the applicant's request on 6/3/19.

<sup>3</sup> Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act of 1978, Section 6(a) (D.C. Official Code § 6-1105). Historic district designation shall become effective thirty days after notice of determination (DCMR 10C, Section 220.2)