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

Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill Historic District	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	1015 E Street SE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	July 23, 2015	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	15-499	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Sarah VanLandingham	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Applicant Brian Athey of Congressional Capital, LLC, with plans prepared by Workshop t10, seeks concept review for a new rear addition, basement, and front basement entrance to 1015 E Street SE in the Capitol Hill Historic District.

Property Description

The subject property contains a brick two-story porch-front with a rear ell addition constructed in 1880. There is a very small side yard between 1015 and 1013. The neighboring buildings are a mix of commercial buildings occupying up to 100% of their lots and rowhouses with rear yards. Since 1015 is the most eastern lot facing on E street of this block, it is abutted on its east side by six lots facing 11th Street that do not have access to the alley.

Background

In December 2014 the HPRB reviewed a proposal at 1013 and 1015 E Street SE to combine two lots, remove the existing rear additions on both houses and build a new carriage house at the rear spanning both of the properties. The Board found the concept incompatible due to the size and scale of the rear building, its extensive use of areaways (including on the alley side), and the overall impact on the alley.

In response to this, the applicant revised the plans instead employing large rear additions on each of the buildings that would maintain the historic space between them and not require a subdivision. The Board reviewed the proposal in February 2015 and found it to be compatible. Subsequently, the applicant applied to BZA for zoning relief to extend a nonconforming side yard at 1015 E St SE. At that time, several neighbors came out in opposition to the plan based on light, air, and emergency egress concerns. The BZA asked the applicant and the neighbors to work together to figure out a solution that worked for all parties. This application is the result of that effort.

This proposal concerns only 1015 E St SE as the project at 1013 did not require zoning relief and will be built as previously approved.

Proposal

Many aspects of the project were previously found compatible by the Board in February 2015, including the front basement entrance and new basement. The new plans call for maintaining the existing building and one of the two rear additions; the smaller of the two rear additions will be removed. The program previously proposed for the rear addition would be shifted to a rear building (technically an addition connected by a trellis for zoning purposes) set in 15' from the rear property line. There would be an areaway on the yard side but not on the alley side. The new construction would be clad in brick with simple double-hung windows.

Evaluation

Since the Board found the previous proposal to be compatible, it is appropriate to focus more closely on those aspects of the project which have changed, namely the rear addition. This is an unusual lot configuration that presents challenges for additions. Typically, secondary buildings should be designed to be clearly subordinate in size and ornament in the tradition of carriage houses and should be located at the alley. In this case, the various constraints have created a plan that is a hybrid between a rear building and a rear addition. While it is a somewhat unusual pattern of development for Capitol Hill, it will not be visible from any streets, it maintains more of the original historic fabric (since there is less demolition of the rear required), and the design and materials are simple and compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District.

This proposal is distinct from the initial December 2014 plan that the Board found incompatible. At that time, the project called for an alley building spanning two lots and contained an areaway on the alley side; this addition is substantially smaller, will be located only on the lot of 1015, requires no lot combination subdivision, and does not contain an areaway on the alley side. As the applicant intends to install roll-up doors at the rear property line, the shape of the alley will be maintained; a condition usually achieved by garages and carriage houses.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends the Board find the concept to be compatible with the Capitol Hill historic district and delegate final approval to staff.