
HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	121 Tennessee Avenue, NE	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	September 27, 2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	18-430	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
		<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Owners Patrick and Becky McGeehan, with plans prepared by architect Melissa Boyette, seek concept review for a two-story addition on an existing one-story rear wing at the building located within the Capitol Hill Historic District. The proposal requires approval from the Board of Zoning Adjustment related to lot occupancy.

This project was presented to the Board in July but due to time constraints, the applicant was not given an opportunity to present their case nor did the Board have sufficient time to give the ANC's resolution great weight. Accordingly, as the request of the Chair, the case is being rescheduled for this month.

Property Description

121 Tennessee Avenue, NE is one of four three-story brick rowhouses built by D. B. Gottwals in 1892. The building currently features a one-story brick dog-leg wing. The rear elevation is clad in brick with modified windows openings. Of the properties within the square, a little less than half have no rear wings. Most existing rear wings that do exist are one and two-stories tall. There is one three-story rear wing located at 108 13th Street, NE.





The square is shaped like a triangle and features an interior alley with access on Tennessee Avenue and 13th Street. The building lots are irregularly shaped and many feature shallow rear yards.

Proposal

The plans call for construction of a two-story addition above the existing one-story wing. The addition would conform to the footprint of the existing wing except for a slight cantilever at the northern side-court elevation. The rear and courtyard elevations would be clad in vertical cement board siding and feature regularly bunched window opening. The south side elevation would be clad in brick and feature no fenestration.

Evaluation

The Board has traditionally given flexibility for additions on secondary rear elevations to allow for adaptation of houses to contemporary use, particularly when as in this instance they are not visible from any public street. The proposed addition will closely conform in footprint to the existing one-story wing and will not extend the full width of the building, and the additional floors will not impact or eliminate significant architectural features of the building. More than half the buildings within the square feature rear wings ranging in height from one to three stories. 121 Tennessee has the second deepest lot within the block and the additional two-floors will not overwhelm the alley-scale or the adjacent neighbors. The proposed use of Hard-plank at the third floor will differentiate the addition from the existing one-story wing and allow the building's historic volume to remain legible.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept to be compatible with the historic district and to delegate further review to staff.

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