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

Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	1363 & 1365 A Street NE	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
ANC:	6A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
		<input type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Meeting Date:	October 31, 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Case Number:	19-535	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Applicants Julie and Scott Aaronson (1363) and Heidi and Erik Floden (1365), with plans prepared by architect Dorothy Murdoch, seek concept review for construction of new two-story garages on adjacent properties located in the Capitol Hill Historic District. While two separate concept applications have been submitted, the proposals are identical and are being consolidated into a single HPO report and recommendation.



The alley-facing elevations of the garages at 1363 and 1365 A Street, NE



Looking westward and eastward from each end of the alley

Property Description

The one-story frame garages were built sometime between 1916 (the date of construction of the associated houses) and 1928. They are located on an alley made up mostly of garages of the same period, early residential garages, along with one larger brick carriage house, and a public garage. Both 1363 and 1365 have a single opening for a garage door and no architectural ornament. Along the alley, most other garages range in height between ten and twelve feet. The tallest building is the carriage house at the opposite end of the alley, measuring just over eighteen feet in height.



The existing two-story carriage house at the opposite end of the alley

Proposal

The existing garages would be demolished and replaced with matching brick garages with the same setback from the alley. The proposed garages would each measure 23 feet deep, 17 feet wide, and 20 feet tall. The mass of the second story of the garages along the alley elevation would be lightened with a ribbon of windows, Hardi panels, and Boral trim. The garage door openings would have steel lintels and paneled doors with glazing on top. The new garages would be approximately twice as tall as the adjacent garages on either side.

Evaluation

The Capitol Hill Historic District is distinctive for its alleys and alley buildings. According to the 2014 DC Historic Alley Buildings Survey, of the 1249 alley buildings identified, 723 were garages; of those, almost half of the garages (324) were in Capitol Hill. This alley clearly illustrates the beginning of individual car ownership in the city, with an organic mix of the early residential garages exhibiting a variety of materials and characteristics.

While the subject buildings fall within the period of significance for the district, these types of secondary buildings are not specifically listed as contributing in the district designation. Additionally, the Board has routinely approved replacing architecturally undistinguished one-story garages for two-story buildings, a position consistent with the city's planning policies to promote accessory units in residential neighborhoods.¹

¹ The Zoning Commission adopted amendments to the Zoning Regulations in 2016 that allowed accessory apartments as a matter-of-right use, subject to conditions, in all residential house (R) zones; in residential-flat (RF)

The proposed design balances adding accessory units at the end of a row of small garages, book-ending the larger carriage house at the other end of the alley. The materials and design elements draw from the adjacent garages and fall within the Board's generally approved 20-foot height limit. The L'Enfant Trust holds an easement on the property at 1365 A St NE and has given conceptual approval for the new garage at that address.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends the Board find the concept plans for construction of two-story garages at 1363 and 1365 A Street NE to be compatible with the Capitol Hill historic district, and delegate final approval to staff.

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zones, an apartment unit may be created in an accessory structure as an alternative to providing it in the primary building.