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

Property Address:	226 Kentucky Avenue SE	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	July 27, 2017	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	17-493	X	Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	Michael Robb		New Construction
			Demolition
			Subdivision

The applicant, architect Ramy Ali, and property owner, Alex Rouhani, request concept review for construction of a third story rooftop addition and a three-story rear addition.

Built in 1915 by W.S Plager, the apartment building at 226 Kentucky Avenue SE is a two story, three bay wide, flat front, painted brick apartment building.

Proposal

This project proposes to construct a third story addition, a rear addition, and a roof deck. The roof deck would sit atop the third story roof addition which would be set back from the front façade. The roof addition proposes brick facing at the front and cement board cladding on the side elevations. The front of the rooftop addition would have two bays with French Doors at the side and two picture window bays between.

The cement fiber cladding transitions to red brick at the rear three story addition. Proposed are two bays with paired, double hung, windows at the third story and two bays with single, double hung windows at the second story. The first-floor features three bays, also with paired double hung windows, and a central door. An aluminum canopy and one over one double hung replacement windows are also planned for the front and rear façades.

Evaluation

For additions, proposed work should be judged both for compatibility with the affected building and for its effect on the historic district. Historic properties may merit different levels of treatment or attention depending on their relative historic and architectural significance, as well as their respective building types. For instance, greater flexibility would typically be given for alterations to an historic garage than for a prominent historic church. In this case, the simple, unadorned nature of 226 Kentucky, along with its massing, scale, and width, lends itself to more significant contemporary treatments than compared to that of a single-family row house. The original use of 226 Kentucky as an apartment building, which balances a commercial and domestic nature, further contributes to the historic structure being able to manage moderately significant additions. The rear alley includes varying depths with a few additions and some intact doglegs.

The block features taller historic buildings neighboring to both the north and south of 226 Kentucky. Across the street are 1920s contributing apartment buildings with varying massing and

scales; 220 13th Street SE is a large (for the block), two-story, five bay apartment building that fronts both Kentucky Avenue and 13th Street built in 1926. At the north end of the block are two more 1920s apartment buildings of a smaller scale. In between are two three story non-contributing structures and a contributing 1920s apartment building fronting 13th Street. The proposed roof addition would bring the height of 226 Kentucky to a comparable height with the directly neighboring structures to the north and south while stepping the addition back allows the historic structure to remain the prominent mass. The context of the block, with varied height, massing, building types, and a mix of contributing and non-contributing structures, also allows for moderate amounts of additional height without adversely affecting the character of the historic district.

Perhaps more problematic are the design features of the rear addition, which has a cornice and an aluminum canopy. The cornice and canopy are unusual features in this alley and they serve to give the sense of a falsified front façade. From the drawings, the cornice appears only to function as a masking agent for the roof top deck. The rear of the structure should reflect the alley context rather than that of the primary street. This could be achieved by removing the cornice, removing some height from the third-floor addition and stepping the third floor back from the rear alley. The roof deck should also be removed or pushed further back toward the alley. The design of the canopy should either be changed or the canopy should be removed to alleviate the sense of a false front.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the applicant revise plans for the rear addition and roof deck and return to the Board for approval.