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

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Landmark/District:	<b>Capitol Hill Historic District</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	<b>232 South Carolina Avenue, SE</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	<b>June 28, 2018</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	<b>18-140</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
		<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

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Owner Vern Martell Jr., with plans prepared by architect Bill Putnam, seeks concept review to construct front and side porches at a corner rowhouse in the Capitol Hill Historic District.

### **Property Description**

The house is located at the corner of South Carolina Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, SE. The original building permit records that owner/architect H.R. Howerstein was responsible for building the house as the end unit in a row of nine houses in 1912; in the same year, he also built two similar houses facing 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Of the eleven Howerstein houses, only four retain their original front porches.

232 is three-bays wide at both the South Carolina and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street elevations and features a slate-clad mansard roof with a gable dormer with multi-light windows. The second-floor fenestration consists of a center door that opened to the roof of the front porch flanked by two double-hung windows, a condition shared by other buildings within the row. The side elevation facing 3<sup>rd</sup> Street is as architectural articulated as the primary facade; with six-over-six double-hung windows, stone lintels, bracketed cornice, and dormers.

There is a curb-cut at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street with access to a garage recessed at the basement level. A shallow concrete and brick landing projects above the garage at the first floor accessed by a concrete stair set within a stone retaining wall.

### **Proposal**

The plans call for the construction of a front porch at the South Carolina Avenue elevation. The new porch projection would align with the existing porch at the neighboring house at 230. The columns shafts would be painted fiberglass and the Doric capitals, porch railings, and trim work would be painted wood. The metal entrance stairs would be replaced by wood stairs and railings. The concrete landing on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street elevation would be removed and a new side porch constructed to resemble the proposed primary elevation porch in terms of material and design. New concrete stairs would be constructed within the repaired retaining wall leading to new wood stairs accessing the new porch.

**Evaluation**

The reconstruction of the front porch will restore an important missing architectural feature of the building. The proposal has been developed to replicate the proportions, materials, and details based on remaining porches in the row. As the design continues to be refined, consideration should be given to using concrete or brick stairs with metal railings, as is found on the other houses in the row. Both in terms of long-term durability and compatibility, masonry stairs with metal railings would be a better choice over exposed wood stairs and railings.

While there is no evidence that the side elevation had a porch, the size, placement and detailing is compatible with the character of the house and row. Unlike some corner buildings within the district where the design of the side elevation is simpler than the primary elevation, this building has an equal amount of architectural detailing at both elevations, and the proposed design of the porch reflects this. The side porch will not precisely align with the front porches of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street houses, but will visually relate to them and anchor the corner.

***Recommendation***

*The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept to be compatible with the historic district and to delegate further review to staff with the condition that the front porch stairs be built of either concrete or brick.*

*HPO contact: Gabriela Gutowski*