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

Property Address:	418-420 New Jersey Ave SE	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent Calendar
ANC:	6B	<input type="checkbox"/> Denial Calendar
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept Review
Meeting Date:	September 28, 2017	<input type="checkbox"/> Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	#17-482	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Brendan Meyer	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

The applicant, owners Charles and Susan Parson, seek concept approval for a new 2 story with mansard, 2-unit building at 418-420 New Jersey Ave SE. The site is currently vacant. Plans were prepared by Jonathan Kuhn Architect.

Property Description and Context

The Board last heard an application for this site in May 2013. Demolition of a non-contributing building was approved and a concept design for new construction was determined incompatible with the historic district. Design recommendations from the Board were specific enough that final approval was delegated to Staff. Since then, a new architect has been commissioned and the concept design has fundamentally changed. The site overlaps with Commission of Fine Arts jurisdiction. This concept design was recently approved by CFA (September 20, 2017, S.L. #17-127).

Proposal

The concept design is for a two-story brick building with an additional slate mansard story effecting a traditionally themed Second Empire style house. Due to the unusually wide lot (31 feet), the building is sited to be unattached on both sides. The façade is organized into 4 bays of fenestration with the left bay setback 4 feet. The other bays sit on the property line and effect a front façade width of 22 feet with a one story, frame hexagonal bay occupying the right flank. Cornice height is at 26 feet above grade and the roof ridge is 35 feet above grade. Windows, doors, cornice, and dormers are trimmed with simplified contemporary profiles in wood. At the rear a three story rear wing off the main block forms an 8x30 foot dog-leg court.

Evaluation

The concept design meets the Board's design guidelines for new construction on nearly every principal: setback, orientation, scale, proportion, massing, height, materials, color, roof shape, and details & ornamentation.¹ The most out-of-synch site condition, its wide width, is successfully ameliorated by adapting a Second Empire form which in historic examples was usually built wider than a typical rowhouse. By pulling back a portion of the façade, a convincing Second Empire form and proportion, common throughout the historic district, is achieved. The height of the building's cornice and mansard sit comfortably in line with the current streetscape of brick corbelled cornices and slate turret roofs.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Review Board find the concept for a new 2 story with mansard, 2-unit building at 418-420 New Jersey Avenue SE compatible with the character of the Capitol Hill Historic District, and delegate final approval to Staff.

¹ *New Construction in Historic Districts* (1997)