

---

---

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

---

---

Landmark/District:	<b>Capitol Hill Historic District</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	<b>628 A Street, SE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	<b>January 24, 2019</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	<b>19-079</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
		<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

---

---

Owners Jason and Anne Thomas, with plans prepared by architect Jennifer Flower, seek concept review for a two-story rear and side addition and one-story rooftop addition at the building located within the Capitol Hill Historic District.

### **Property Description**

628 A Street SE is a semi-detached two-story brick rowhouse built c.1887.<sup>1</sup> Currently the building features a two-story brick dog-leg wing. It is one of a row of four similar rowhouses (624-630). The rear elevations at 624, 626 and 628 currently align. The Board approved a 15' 0" deep rear addition and stair bulkhead and dumb-waiter at the roof at 630 A Street in 2014.<sup>2</sup>

### **Proposal**

The plans call for infilling the dog-leg side court with a two-story addition. The addition would not extend past the existing rear elevation. The exterior dog-leg wall would be retained and become an interior wall. Additionally, there would be a side-addition at the narrow side court between 630 set-back 23' 3" from the primary elevation. The first floor of the rear and side addition would be clad in brick and the second floor in Azek panels. The plans also show the demolition of the existing roof and the construction of a one-story rooftop addition. The addition would be inset 11' 3" from the east elevation and not extend the full width of the building. It would extend the full width of the dog-leg and align with the rear elevation. The rooftop addition would have an interior ceiling height of 8' 0". There would be a roof-deck at the front of the roof set-back from the front elevation. The side addition would be seen from the street, and the rooftop addition would not be.

### **Evaluation**

In most instances, a rear addition is the best way to add extra space to a historic building and constitute the majority of proposals that before the Board. When certain design principles are met, such as the retention of significant architectural features; subordinate massing; appropriate materials; and compatible fenestration; the Board has voted to approve a rear addition.

---

<sup>1</sup> Date of construction based on building's first appearance on 1887 Hopkins Map

<sup>2</sup> 630 A Street, SE (HPA#14-237, April 24, 2014)

It is more difficult to design a compatible roof-top addition, as such additions typically alter significant features of a building, such as its roof line, height, design composition, relationship with surrounding buildings, and overall form and mass. In limited circumstances, additions on top of a building can sometimes be achieved when they are either invisible or not prominently visible from a public street, don't result in the removal or alteration of important character-defining features of the building or streetscape, and are compatible with their context.

The concept proposal for 628 achieves many of the prescribed design principles for compatible rooftop additions. The addition has been set back significantly from the front and side elevations and designed to be invisible from any streets. The removal and reconstruction of the roof will not result in the loss of significant architectural roof features. There are other roof additions present within the row, including at the adjacent neighbor at 630. Cladding the roof addition in standing seam metal visually highlights the addition as a roof feature and not part of the building's original two-story brick massing.

A side addition can often be architecturally appropriate, particularly when it is similar in character to historic elements found on similar buildings, such as side porches, and when significantly set back from the primary elevation. In the case of 628, the side addition is set back approximately 20 feet, allowing for the creation of a shadow, helping to maintain the rhythm and sense of massing within the streetscape. The use of Azek panel cladding at the side addition references wood porches and projecting bays historically found within the district and differentiates the addition from the originally brick building. The Board has found other side additions appropriate within Capitol Hill, such as at 108-110 8<sup>th</sup> Street, NE.<sup>3</sup>

### **Recommendation**

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

*Staff Contact: Gabriela Gutowski*

---

<sup>3</sup> 108-110 8<sup>th</sup> Street, NE (HPA 16-694) February 23, 2017