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

Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill Historic District	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	629 East Capitol St SE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	September 22, 2016	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	16-630	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Gabriela Gutowski	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Applicants Scott Patterson and Patrick Tangney seek concept review for creating a new basement entrance, modifying existing and creating new window openings, and roof modifications to a house in the Capitol Hill Historic District. The applicant will be requesting a code modification from the Public Space Committee for basement stairs that project slightly more than allowed 7'0".

Property Description

The subject property is one of a row of five brick rowhouses built in 1875 by an unknown architect. The building was altered by the application of a new façade in the Mediterranean revival style in 1914.

The façade is buff colored patterned brick and features single-coursed row-locked brick lintels, square-headed one-over-one double-hung windows, and an over-hanging roof with wood brackets and red scalloped roof tiles. The east side elevation abuts the alley and is visible from East Capitol Street; the rear of the building has a series of additions and enclosed porches, with a one story garage facing the rear alley.

Proposal

The plans call for the removal of masonry under the porch and the installation of stairs leading to a new basement entrance. The stairs would feature a simply designed picket railing to match the existing metal railing at the porch. At the east façade, the proposal calls for removing one one-over-one double-hung window, sill and lintel at the third floor and infilling the opening with brick, removing the fire-escape, creating one new window opening at the first floor featuring a one-over-one double-hung window, and creating four new window openings at the second floor featuring 2'0" x 2'0" single-light windows. The existing rear additions would be reclad in brick to replace the existing siding, and the window openings altered to feature one-over-one double-hung windows and single-leaf entrance doors at the ground floor. The existing CMU wall at the alley would be removed and replaced with a brick wall featuring metal picket gates leading to entry stairs with metal picket railings. The two roofs at the rear additions would have roof decks enclosed with 4'0" tall brick parapet walls.

Evaluation

The proposed new stair leading to the basement entrance conforms with the HPRB's design guidelines governing the creation of new basement entrances, specifically, the new entrance will be located at a discrete area directly below the porch and will not extend further into the yard than the existing entry stair, therefore creating a subordinate relationship to the main entry stair and porch. Due to the depth of the front yards along East Capitol Street, there will be a considerable amount of greenspace and plantings between the sidewalk and the new stairs, limiting their visual impact from the street. The new basement entrance will result in the limited removal of plain masonry and would not destroy or damage significant architecture features at the façade.

The proposed brick cladding at the rear additions will unify the rear of the property in terms of cladding material and is compatible with materials found at rear extensions within the historic district. The new window openings and doors at the rear additions will create a consistent and regular fenestration pattern and the scale and configuration of the proposed one-over-one double hung windows will be compatible with windows found elsewhere at the building and at secondary facades within the district.

The horizontal band of four 2'0" x 2'0" single-light windows on the side elevation is not compatible with the proportions, scale and vertical orientation of the existing rectangular one-over-one double-hung windows at the east and north facades on the historic building. Given the windows close proximity to a primary façade of the building, and their visibility from the street, the proposed windows would better relate to the building if they conformed to a fenestration pattern that is more compatible with the characteristics of other openings in the building.

While it is typical for rear extensions within the district to feature roof decks with both solid parapets and open railings, the proposed coping detail at the parapet roofs of the two rear extensions are heavy and awkwardly proportioned in comparison with the main building. A simplified coping detail at the two roofs would better relate to the house and be more compatible to other rear extensions within the row.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends the Board find the concept to be compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District, with the revisions to the 2'0" x 2'0" single-light windows and roof coping as outlined above, and delegate final approval to staff.