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

Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill Historic District	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	714 11th Street, SE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	July 26, 2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	18-474	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
		<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Owners Eric Rosenthal and Jeffrey Menzer, with plans prepared by architect Robert Weinstein, seek concept review for a new basement entrance, light-well, and basement windows at the building located within the Capitol Hill Historic District.

Property Description

714 11th Street, SE was built by William Thompson in 1894. The building is three-stories tall and six-bays wide. The primary elevation is brick punctuated by one-over-one double-hung windows topped by segmented-arched brick lintels. Half of the ground floor features three double-hung windows and the other half a historic projecting storefront. The recessed primary entrance to the building is tucked beneath the storefront's hipped roof. North of the property are a row of flat-front brick rowhouses. To the south of the property is an undeveloped lot used as greenspace for the school across the street.

Proposal

The plans call the removal of brick paving and excavation to accommodate new basement stairs and light-well. The excavation would be limited to the area directly in front of the three double-hung windows. Two new windows and one single-leaf door would be installed at the newly exposed basement level. The windows and door would align with the existing fenestration at the upper floors. A new 36" tall metal fence and gate would be installed at the property's perimeter. The work would have no effect on the historic storefront.

Evaluation

The existing historic at-grade entrance at the property makes it impossible to discretely locate a new basement entrance beneath a stair or porch. The proposal is deferential to the historic storefront and will cause no damage. The new basement windows and door will align with the buildings existing fenestration pattern and retain the symmetrical quality of the building's façade. Given the wide nature of 11th Street and the varied building types with in the block, a new basement stair and entrance will not significantly detract from the streetscape.

Alterations to accommodate requests for basement entrances are reviewed according to the principles established by the Board's "Preservation and Design Guidelines for Basement

Entrances and Windows.” The guidelines stress the importance of retaining character-defining architectural features, and the proposal is sensitive to this principle by retaining the historic wood storefront. The guidelines go on to state:

3.1 Basement entrances and areaways should be subordinate to and not dominate the setting of historic property unless significant alterations to the site or street have fundamentally changed the original condition.

If the new stairs were shifted east to be directly in front of the façade, a portion of earth could be retained within public space. Plantings within this area could be used to screen the stair from view allowing the existing entrance to remain dominant.

The guidelines also note that increasing the size of areaways can be useful to accommodate the location of utility meters and trash storage, something that the applicant intends to do.

3.5 some increase in the minimum size of areaways for trash storage or utility meters may be appropriate if they can be accommodated by no other means.

Given the constraints of the site, it would be impossible to retain an area of planting in front of the stairs and create space to store trash and the utility meter. In this circumstance, the least impactful solution is to install a new basement stair and light-well with room to discretely store trash and the utility meter.

Recommendation

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

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