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

Property Address:	3500 Connecticut Avenue, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Cleveland Park Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	July 28, 2022	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	22-374	X	Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	Steve Callcott		New Construction
			Demolition

Chris Klug, representing owner Mark Bucher and Medium Rare restaurant, with plans prepared by AM Structures, seeks conceptual design review for construction of an aluminum, motorized pergola structure in public space over an existing outdoor café.

Property History and Description

3500 is the end unit of a Georgian Revival styled coordinated row of ten buildings (3500-3518) that were originally constructed as rowhouses in 1921 by developer Harry Wardman. By the early 1940s, their ground floors had been converted to retail use, altered with projecting metal storefronts with Colonial Revival detailing sympathetic to the original rowhouse designs. A rehabilitation in the early 2000s resulted in restoration and recreation of the 1940s storefronts, as well as installation of several larger, two-story storefronts. The row is cited in the National Register nomination for the Cleveland Park Historic District:

Wardman's second project, 3500-3518 Connecticut and 2815-19 Ordway, (1/21/1921) took a decidedly different approach [*to his first project at 3520 Connecticut*]. The three-story red brick building, with white trim, on Connecticut Avenue was conceived of as a long low block with a central organizing theme based upon Colonial Georgian precedents, especially the five-part houses in Annapolis. The building is divided into five sections, the central section, of three bays, projects as do the two end sections, of two bays each. The central section is given prominence by its larger size and by the brick pediment with a central fan light which dominates the roof line. There are ten units, each with its own separate entrance, giving this long low building a decidedly domestic appearance. There is no added ornamentation. The organization of the building into projecting and receding sections with the emphasis on the central section, and the use of contrasting white trim reminiscent of the Wren influence on Colonial Georgian architecture, provide the stylistic definition.

Proposal

The plans call for an aluminum framed pergola measuring 12' deep x 60' wide x 12' 9" tall. It would be supported by 8' x 8' square posts and extend across the front of the end pavilion and the second recessed pavilion to the first of the two-story bays. The structure would have ceiling fans, recessed LED lights, and a motorized louvered roof that would allow it to be open or closed. The structure would be located 3' from the face of the

building, although it is unclear whether this is from the face of the building or the face of the projecting storefronts (which are not indicated on the plat).

Evaluation

HPO is aware of two similar pergola structures approved by the Board in historic districts at 1320 19th Street NW (Dupont Circle) and 360 7th Street SE (Capitol Hill). However, in both of those instances, the structures were located in front of large, non-contributing buildings; in the case of 1320 19th, a 1960s nine-story office building, and at 360 7th Street, a seven-story new construction project approved by the Board at the Hines Junior High School site. In both instances, the Board cited their location in front of non-contributing buildings as a factor in its approval.

Conversely, the subject location is in front of a pair of low-scale contributing buildings that are part of an architecturally unified row that is specifically cited for its significance in the historic district nomination. The proposed pergola crowds the historic buildings, appearing in the renderings to abut and obscure their first-floor storefronts, and resulting in an awkward relationship directly in front of the buildings' decorative cast iron balcony railings. While a lower structure that was pulled substantially away from the buildings (8-10 feet) might result in a reasonably compatible relationship, there isn't sufficient public space to provide the separation necessary to allow the buildings to remain unobscured from perspective views.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Review Board find the proposed pergola to be incompatible with the character of these buildings and the Cleveland Park Historic District.