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

Landmark/District:	Cleveland Park Historic District	(x) Agenda
Address:	3700 Connecticut Avenue NW	() Consent
		(x) Concept
Meeting Date:	March 31, 2016	() Alteration
Case Number:	16-210	(x) New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Frances McMillen	(x) Demolition
		(x) Subdivision

Contract purchaser Murillo/Malnati Group LLC, with drawings prepared by Dynerman Architects, requests concept review for the demolition of 3700 Connecticut Avenue NW, construction of a three-story single-family house, and a subdivision in the Cleveland Park Historic District.

Property Description

Constructed in 1920, 3700 Connecticut Avenue is one of three bungalow style houses designed by J.A. Moore for owner Catherine McCarron along Rodman Street. The subject property has been altered considerably over time. In November 2006 (HPA #06-377) the Board determined the house to be non-contributing due to significant alterations of the building's structure and the loss of numerous original and character defining features. According to the November 2006 staff report the original side gable roof was removed during the 1960s and replaced with the current double-roof characterized as an indeterminate or "Mayan Revival" style. The entrance to the house was originally located on Rodman Street and included a full length porch with a stone base and wood columns. The porch was later enclosed and a new entrance and stoop added to the Connecticut Avenue elevation. Most of the original windows have been altered and the original wood clapboards have been covered with aluminum siding.

The National Park Service holds an easement on the property restricting any new construction to a single-family home with a maximum height of 40'.

Proposal

The proposal calls for demolishing the house, joining two lots, and constructing a three-story single-family brick house. The proposed building is broken up into three volumes. The two main volumes are three stories in height and separated by a recessed central front entry. The entry section would be slightly lower than the outer wings and would include expansive windows on the second and third floors and a glass entrance on the first floor. The first floor would be approximately 6' above grade. The two-story north wing would include a roof deck above the second floor and a terrace located off the first floor. Fenestration throughout the building would consist of elongated window openings that graduate in size with the largest of the openings on the first floor. Brick panels would be located below the third story windows and a bluestone band

below the openings would differentiate the second and third floors. An enclosed third-floor terrace is proposed on the Rodman Street and Connecticut Avenue (southeast) corner of the building. The cornice would be copper and translucent panels are proposed for south and west elevations.

Evaluation

The reasons for which this property was determined non-contributing in 2006 remain unchanged. The house has been extensively altered, resulting in a significant loss of integrity to its massing, roofline, and architectural character. HPO recommends that the Review Board reaffirm its finding that the property no longer contributes to the character of the Cleveland Park Historic District.

The proposal for new construction is generally compatible with the historic district in terms of scale, height, massing, design and materials. The design attempts to strike a balance between two contexts, the multi-story urban apartment buildings on Connecticut Avenue and the adjacent smaller scaled houses on Rodman Street. The renderings included with the submission are much more successful than the elevation drawings in conveying the residential scale and three-dimension quality of the proposed building, whereas the elevations give it a flat rowhouse feel that is not reflective of the design intent. As shown in the renderings, the three separate volumes are successful in breaking down the mass of the building into smaller, more residential components. Although the house is taller than the adjacent bungalows on Rodman Street, it does not overpower them. The choice of brick and the size and style of the window openings are referential to the neighboring apartment buildings. The bluestone banding, the variation in window sizes, and the use of a contrasting brick for the building's base provide some additional character and, along with the three separate volumes, further help break down the massing. The applicant is encouraged to continue to work with staff on finalizing the details and the selection of materials, including the brick, doors, windows and cornice.

The subdivision would result in a minor change in lot size, which would remain consistent with established lot sizes on this street and within the historic district.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board:

- *reaffirm its finding that the existing building on the site is non-contributing due to a loss of integrity;*
- *find the concept for new construction to be compatible with the historic district;*
- *find the proposed subdivision to be compatible with the historic district;*
- *and delegate final approval to staff with the condition the applicant work with staff on finalizing the details and the selection of materials, including the brick, windows, doors, and cornice.*