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

Landmark/District: **Cleveland Park Historic District** (x) Consent
Address: **2964 Newark Street, NW**
ANC: **3C** (x) Concept
Meeting Date: **September 28, 2023** (x) Alteration
Case Number: **23-503**

Applicant Eric Gronning, agent for property owner Saeed Elnaj, seeks concept review of a three-story rear addition and open front porch to a non-contributing building in the Cleveland Park Historic District.

Property Description

2964 Newark Street, NW, was built in 1941. It is a two-story brick Colonial Revival residence with a hipped roof. At slightly over 18 feet in width, the building has a rather narrow street frontage containing only two bays. Because the property slopes down from the street, the front of the house appears to be two stories while the back appears as three. The front of the house is unadorned and nearly flat save for an uncovered, half-width porch slab surrounded by railings. In the nomination, the house was identified as not contributing to the character of the Cleveland Park Historic District.

Proposal

The applicant proposes to add a three-level addition consistent with the rear of the house, but its flat roof will make it approximately five feet shorter than the hipped roof of the main block. The rear addition is about 24 feet in length. The first 8'10" will extend on the same plane as the house, after which it will angle east approximately four degrees to follow the lot lines. From there it will extend an additional 16'8". An uncovered deck would extend ten feet from the southern end of the addition, with a staircase providing access to the ground level. Another smaller, uncovered deck would be located at the end of the third story. The addition is to be clad in a combination of brick to match the existing house and smooth, gray fiber-cement siding. It will feature contemporary fenestration with long, narrow casement windows spaced sparingly.

An open front porch would be built atop the existing slab. Slightly longer than half the width of the house, classical columns to support a hipped roof and balustrades will complement its Colonial Revival style.

Evaluation

The proposal is compatible. The west and south elevations of the addition will not be viewable from the street, and this particular section of Newark Street has no alley. However, because the houses along Newark are staggered to match the roadway's curve and incline, the east elevation of the rear addition will be partially visible from the right of way. The applicant has reduced the prominence of that wall with the subdued cladding and spare fenestration. It calls no attention to

itself and blends in seamlessly with the gray background of Cleveland Park's shadowy trees and masonry walls.

An open front porch will help the non-contributing house better fit in with a neighborhood where such features predominate (as do at least 84.6% of the houses on Newark Street between 34th Street and Connecticut Avenue). Although it should not be required, the house may appear more appropriate, and better retain its Colonial Revival symmetry, with a full-width front porch rather than the proposed half-width porch. Still, the applicant shall be allowed, if desired, to construct a full-width porch.

Recommendation

HPO recommends the Board approve the concept as consistent with the purposes of the law, while allowing for the option of a full-width porch, and delegate further review to staff.

Staff contact: Todd Jones