

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

Landmark/District:	Dupont Circle HD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	11 Dupont Circle NW	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	January 28, 2016	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	16-149	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Kim Elliott	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

First Potomac Reality Trust with HOK Architects seeks conceptual design review for modifications to the façade and renovation of building entries, public space, and rooftop terrace along Dupont Circle in the Dupont Circle and Massachusetts Avenue historic districts.

Proposal

11 Dupont Circle is a nine-story office building with underground parking facing Dupont Circle. Constructed in 1974, it is non-contributing to the character of the Dupont Circle and Massachusetts Avenue historic districts.

Proposal

The proposal includes modifications to the façade at levels 1, 2, and 9, a renovation of the building entries at New Hampshire Avenue and Dupont Circle, a redesigned public space along New Hampshire and the addition of a rooftop terrace.

The design for the façade at the lower and highest levels removes the band of brick at the lower level and the top of the building and replacing it with glazing.

The entry to the ground floor space (which is actually several feet below grade) opens to Dupont Circle, while the entry to the office building is located on New Hampshire. The main entrance along New Hampshire is set far off of the street, resulting in an entry that is difficult to see from the sidewalk. The redesign is intended to provide greater visibility to the entrance and enliven the entry promenade and courtyard space, and prominently display the address of the building. At the Dupont Circle retail entrance, the stairs would be reconfigured, the double doors replaced with sliding doors, and the entrance accentuated by creating a metal frame with lighting.

At the roof level, the project proposes a large roof deck, adding enclosed space to the existing penthouse along with outdoor seating and event space.

Evaluation

The existing building presents a number of design problems which the project seeks to address. The sub-grade retail first floor is difficult because its entry is not at street level and the dark and heavy base of the building offers almost no visibility into the space. By removing the lower brick banding and replacing it with glazing, the space would appear more open and inviting and provide a stronger base to the building's overall composition. This same approach is incorporated at the top floor level—removing the thick brick banding and replacing it with glazing—giving the building a lighter and more modern expression. However, the height of this glazed top floor is very tall proportionally to the rhythm of the rest of the horizontal building and the proportion could benefit by breaking down this vertical module.

The cap at the top of this glazing helps frame the top of the building, however, the height or depth of this piece should perhaps be expanded to create a stronger terminus.

The design solutions to enhance the entrance at Dupont Circle are limited given the current tenant leases. However, while minimal, they still result in improvements. The reconfiguration of the steps, the replacement of the double doors, and the dark-painted metal panel frame around the entrance with lighting will all help provide a stronger sense of entrance.

The design on New Hampshire Avenue replaces the raised planters with in-ground berms with plantings and metal and wood benches creating a green public space that is much more compatible with the front yards of the row on New Hampshire Avenue. This design of more inviting and accessible space also leads the pedestrian to the main entry of the building. Through tactile materials, paving patterns, and lighting, the approach to the entry and the newly designed courtyard space are enhanced. With the addition of a bench and a railing, the vehicular and pedestrian entry points are clearly separated. The address of the building is displayed as a large scale graphic in the public space. While the idea is for the address to be visible by a pedestrian at the Circle, the scale of this two-story element is oversized for the pedestrian-oriented character of the historic district and this streetscape, and should be lowered and reduced in size.

The rooftop terrace is similar to the rooftop terrace at 1500 New Hampshire Avenue, the hotel building just to the north on the Circle. The substantial setback from the building edge and the low profile of the enclosed space is compatible with other HPRB approved projects in this vicinity. Because the horizontal shading system is visible from the street, and due to its proximity seen above the Patterson Mansion, it is recommended that this element be visually simplified.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends the Board find the concept to be compatible with the Dupont Circle and Massachusetts Avenue historic districts, contingent on refinements to the building signage and rooftop canopy as outlined above, and delegate final approval to staff.