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

Property Address:	1521 17th Street NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Dupont Circle		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	September 28, 2017	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	17-586	X	Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	Michael Robb		New Construction
			Demolition
			Subdivision

The applicant, Miner Feinstein Architects, and property owner SSFLP Manassas LLC, request concept review of a project of a rooftop mezzanine, a two-story rear addition, and façade improvements for the property at 1521 17th Street NW.

Built in 1874, the structure at 1521 17th Street NW is a brick and stucco, three-story, three-bay, commercial structure with a central storefront bay at the first floor with flanking entrances.

Proposal

The project calls for construction of a brick, two-story, rear addition with a roof terrace, and a rooftop mezzanine. There is also façade restoration work proposed, including repair of the existing windows and lintels, restoring or replacing of the front window sills, restoration of the cornice, repointing the north and south facades, repairing and repainting of the existing stucco, and moving the existing gas meters to the basement.

The brick rear addition would extend approximately 20' from the existing rear wall, with a second-floor terrace extending an additional 5' toward the alley. The second, third, and fourth floors are breached with a large, centralized single bay with fixed divided lights and transoms, and a door opening to a terrace at the third floor. A paired door provides access to the first floor at the rear. The mezzanine at the third floor is proposed to rise approximately 8' from the existing roof line and is set back approximately 30' from the front façade.

Evaluation

Seventeenth Street between P Street and S Street contains a mix of commercial, residential, and larger scale apartment buildings. The west side of the street between P and Q Streets is lined with both larger apartment buildings that are greater than four stories in height, with smaller residential structures at the corners of P and Q. The east side of 17th is primarily smaller scale (three-stories or less) row commercial structures. From Church Street, much of the existing roofline on the south (side) elevation is exposed and visible from the street. Also from Church Street, the first three structures in the row (from south to north) step up in height with various types and amounts of exposed mechanical equipment on the roofs. The rear elevation of 1521 17th Street is exposed in the rear alley as well as to Stead Park, which is directly behind the subject property.

The commercial nature of the row and the varying heights of structures on 17th Street and in the sightlines in the distance suggests that a visible addition with added height has the potential to be

considered a compatible addition. This case, however, proposes that the added height be a mezzanine, rather than a small partial floor or penthouse, leads to a massing that is generally out of scale with the historic structure and awkward in form and roofline. The mezzanine rooftop also features mechanical equipment and a railing that would exacerbate the incompatibility. A smaller rooftop addition, more along the lines of a penthouse with a simple roofline and concealed mechanical equipment, could conceivably be a compatible approach.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Review Board find:

- 1) the concept for façade rehabilitation is compatible,*
- 2) the concept for the rear addition is compatible,*
- 3) the mezzanine is incompatible and should be removed or greatly reduced in size and simplified in form and roofline, and roof top mechanical equipment be relocated to where it is not visible from 17th Street.*