

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

Property Address:	1613 S Street, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Dupont Circle Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	March 28, 2019	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	19-216		New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Anne Brockett	X	Alteration

Representing owner Wayne Hinson, Paul Wilson of Trout Design Studio seeks the Board's review of a concept to add to the rear and roof of a Dupont Circle rowhouse, one of six built speculatively by Robert Balloch in 1880. The project would also reinstall a front stoop, which was removed years ago, replace windows and doors, and add a roof deck.

Project Description

The project calls for an addition that is roughly 15½ feet deep on the first floor plus an additional 5 foot deck. On the second and third floors the addition projects out further, cantilevering over this deck. The addition would extend over the roof, where it would open to a front-facing deck, which would cumulatively result in demolition and occupation of roughly two-thirds of the roof.

At all three above-grade levels, the addition takes a dogleg form, set back a generous five feet from the side lot line. This elevation presents cladding materials of channel glass at the first floor, translucent panels at the second, and a mix of full-height windows and hardiplank on the third. The rear is a fully glazed curtain wall and the east face, which sits on the lot line, is unfenestrated hardiplank siding. A hardiplank-clad roof projection for attic storage sits atop the addition.

At the front, the original door and stairs were removed prior to designation of the historic district and the basement door has become the building's primary entry. The project will restore a front door and steps, proposed to have perforated risers, glass treads, and vertical picket railings.

Evaluation

Roof additions are often considered compatible when they cannot be seen from the street and are clearly subordinate to the underlying building. While a flag test needs to be performed to confirm whether there is any visibility, HPO is more concerned with the size, scale, and massing of the proposed addition.

The addition sits squarely on the roof of the main block as well as overhangs at the rear with a cantilever. The result is an addition that overwhelms this modest 2½ story residence. There are instances where the Board has required residential roof additions to sit behind the original rear wall entirely, with no construction on the existing roof, and there are cases where an addition has been allowed to sit somewhat forward of this line (as long as it is not visible). The underlying building type and scale, the surrounding context, and the addition's overall design must be carefully considered in determining an appropriate and compatible approach.

The building at 1613 S Street is quite small and, unlike its immediate neighbors, has no rear addition. It abuts a full 3-story building to the west with another 3-story residence just three houses to the east. There is a roof deck on the building currently, accessed via a rear spiral stair. Four houses to the east at 1605 S, which is part of this same 1880 row, an addition was approved in a similar aesthetic by the same architecture firm, occupying approximately the same footprint as is proposed at the rear of 1613. However, the roof addition is set back to be much closer to the rear wall of the house.

It is recommended that the addition be revised to be more in keeping with the proportions of 1605 S, which not only sits well back from the front of the building but also has no rear overhang, and no additional bump-up on the roof. Such a revised design would embody a more compatible form and be a less obtrusive way to add to a historic rowhouse.

The dogleg form and modern material palette are compatible for a rear addition to this rowhouse. While the addition will be visible across a parking lot from Swann Street, its neighbor at 1605 is also visible and the Board has treated rear elevations with more latitude in terms of stylistic design.

The installation of a front stair is a welcome restorative approach; however, the replacement stair and stoop should be historically appropriate to the block, using compatible railing, tread, and riser designs and materials that match the historic stairs of the abutting properties.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the addition compatible with the character of the historic district with the following requirements:

- *That the roof addition be set back to the same depth as the house at 1605 S Street NW;*
- *the rear overhang be pushed back so that all floors are aligned;*
- *the attic bump-up for storage be eliminated;*
- *the front stair be redesigned to be historically appropriate to the building and row;*
- *a flag test be conducted to confirm non-visibility from S Street;*
- *and that final approval be delegated to staff.*

Staff Contact: Anne Brockett