

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

Property Address:	Stead Park Recreation Building 1625 P Street NW	X	Agenda Consent Calendar
Landmark/District:	Dupont Circle Historic District		
Meeting Date:	December 3, 2020	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	20-468	X	Alteration

In October, the HPRB reviewed a concept to add to the historic Stead Park Recreation Building, comprised of former carriage houses connected by an ornamental pediment. Working with architects at VMDO, the Department of Parks and Recreation returns to the Board with several options to seek the HPRB's approval of one that sufficiently addresses the concerns expressed at the October meeting.

Proposal

The architects have presented four options, the first of which is the original design reviewed in October. The other three all include the following changes to the design:

- The overall depth of the addition and the solar canopies has been reduced from north to south (front to back);
- The depth of the hyphen has been increased from 8 feet to 10 feet, further distancing the historic building from the addition. Ten feet reflects the width of the former alley that ran behind the historic building;
- The hyphen has been significantly inset on both sides, increasing the distinction between the historic building and addition;
- The dimensions of the steel columns and beams supporting the solar panels has been reduced;
- The height of the new construction has been lowered;
- The color palette has been lightened; and
- The amount of paving in front of the building has been reduced.

The new options progress in their differences from the initial design, setting further down and back from option 2 through option 4.

DPR prefers either option 2 or 3 as the strongest design. HPO finds that option 4 is the most sensitive to the historic character and scale of the building.

Evaluation

All options treat the historic building sensitively and all include the alterations described above, which reduce the scale of the addition and enhance its compatibility. However, options 3 and 4 significantly lower the height, which is essential. The benefit of option 4 with its setback solar panel structure is that it treats the overall design as more of a central building with two park-like

canopy structures attached to the sides. Because of the continuous horizontal beam at the face of the addition in options 1 through 3, the solar supports become part of the addition itself, giving the addition a more monumental appearance and diminishing the prominence of the recreation building itself.

Option 4 requires the solar panels to be cantilevered along the south-facing line of the structure, leaving them exposed to view, unlike the other options. While staff takes no issue with this aspect of the design, the HPO also would support shielding them from view, if desired. Adding a horizontal beam here may help achieve some of the design goals with a horizontal datum in the same plane as the roof edge of the addition, but would also provide the break in this line that is important to provide breathing space around the historic building and allow it to stand proud of the new construction.

The reduction in the amount of paving in front of the historic building fulfills the Board's request from the previous meeting and the landscape design has the staff's support.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Board approve option 4 as designed, or with the addition of a horizontal beam to shield the solar panels from view, and delegate final review to staff.

Staff Contact: Anne Brockett