

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

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| Property Address:  | <b>1746 Q Street, NW</b>               | <b>X</b> | Agenda           |
| Landmark/District: | <b>Dupont Circle Historic District</b> |          | Consent Calendar |
| Meeting Date:      | <b>March 28, 2019</b>                  | <b>X</b> | Concept Review   |
| H.P.A. Number:     | <b>19-172</b>                          |          | New Construction |
| Staff Reviewer:    | <b>Anne Brockett</b>                   | <b>X</b> | Alteration       |

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Potomac Construction Group seeks the concept review to convert this stone-faced rowhouse into six residential units with rear and roof additions. The house is second in from the end of a string of rowhouses on the south side of Q Street. Both the north and south sides were constructed as a single speculative venture, designed and developed by architect/developer T. F. Schneider between 1891-94. The row is specifically called out in the National Register nomination for the Dupont Circle Historic District as “one of the most impressive Richardsonian rows in the area.” While additions have been added to the rear of several buildings, they have generally respected and retained the row’s most character-defining feature, a three-sided bay with chimney.

**Project Description**

The proposal would add a roof addition and deck behind the existing pent roof and a full-width, rear addition at the first and second floors. This lower addition extends 12’ rearward with additional 5’ deep balconies on each floor. It sits above a partially below-grade basement with areaway. The third floor retains the bay and chimney, supporting it internally. A third floor window would be converted to a door to provide access to a deck on top of the addition.

The rear of the pent roof and the more gently sloping roof beyond would be removed for a nearly 23’ roof addition with rear-facing deck. The walls of the additions are clad in brick and the four balcony railings are glass with a 3½ foot setback on the third floor and roof.

The alley outbuilding, which is not historic, would be removed.

**Evaluation**

This row has an unusual original configuration at the rear with no doglegs and shallow projecting bays, each containing a decorative chimney. While the houses lacked rear wings originally, they have accreted over the years and imparted a more typical alleyscape with projections of varied depths, heights, and materials.

What is important, however, is that all, save one, retain the upper – and most visible - portion of the bay with chimney. When this project was initially conceived, it sought to demolish the entire rear wall. In working with HPO, the design has evolved to keep the uppermost rear façade in order to preserve what is character defining about this building and row along the alley.

In 2002, the Board approved a 2-story rear addition above a partially raised basement at 1742 Q Street, which similarly proposed retaining the existing rear of the house at the top floor. Although this addition was not built (a 2-story deck was later permitted), it was approved by HPRB because “it

is respectful of the block's unified roof line, retains the distinctive three-sided bay and central chimney, and minimizes demolition of original building fabric.”

The proposed rear addition is generally compatible with this historic building and row. Like the 2002 proposal, it retains the three-sided bay and chimney at the roofline. The use of glass railings, rather than parapet walls for balconies, is appropriate but pulling in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor balcony off the building's edges and reducing the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor balcony is recommended so that the chimney and east side of the bay are excluded and remain even more prominent.

The HPO does not find the roof addition to be a compatible aspect of the design. This aspect of the work was identified as problematic early in consultation with the architect because it alters the historic form and massing of the building. There are no rooftop additions on any of Schneider buildings on either side of Q Street. Although likely not visible from Q Street, the addition would markedly interrupt the contiguous rear roofline and row of chimneys that the design seeks to protect.

**Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Board find the roof addition and roof deck incompatible with the character of the historic district and the concept of a 2-story addition with reduced balconies compatible and consistent with the purposes of the preservation act. The HPO further recommends that final approval be delegated to staff.*

*Staff Contact: Anne Brockett*