

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

Landmark/District:	Dupont Circle Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	1772 Church Street, NW	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	June 4, 2015	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	14-530	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Kim Elliott, Steve Callcott	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

CAS Riegler Development, in partnership with St. Thomas Episcopal Parish, seeks conceptual design review for a project incorporating the existing parish hall into a mixed-use building that will include apartments and a new church designed by Hickok Cole Architects at the corner of 18th and Church Streets in the Dupont Circle Historic District. The project was presented at the September 2014 and March 2015 HPRB meetings, and the applicant has continued to develop the design based on feedback from HPRB and community.

At the March meeting, the Board approved the concept of the building with the following comments:

- Simplify and edit the architecture and materials of the residential building;
- Develop the church design so that this building is the dominant element of the overall composition;
- Refine the church design so that tower becomes more grounded, and continue studying the texture and materiality;
- Design public space at front of church to include green space and to inform entry to the building;
- Minimize the penthouses;
- Provide a preservation plan;
- Address the points articulated in the ANC resolution.

Proposal

The revised design includes modifications to the residential building and the church building with specific responses reducing the visible mass of the residential building, further developing the elevations in regard to their compatibility with the neighborhood, and strengthening the identity of the church building and clarifying the hierarchy between the residential and church components.

Residential:

The residential building has been refined in two major areas to address comments from the March HPRB meeting. The top floor has been eliminated and floors 5, 6, and 7 have additional setbacks from Church Street, as well as a new setback at the alley elevation. The Penthouse height has also been reduced by 8'-6". The façade elevation has been simplified through massing and materials, most notably in the bays, which are now brick rather than metal and that extend to the ground.

Church:

Design development has focused on improving the proportions of the three components of the building, minimizing the penthouse, grounding the tower, and redesigning the first floor window openings at the southeast corner.

Evaluation

Residential:

This revised mass responds to concerns from the Board, HPO and ANC by eliminating the top floor, increasing set-backs at the 5th, 6th, and 7th floors and at the alley, and decreasing the height of the mechanical penthouse – all of which reduce the size and visibility of the building. Extending the bays to the ground, simplifying their design, and using brick results in a substantial improvement in the façade's compatibility with the rowhouse language on Church Street. The editing of materials has also made a significant improvement to the scale and street-front presence. As a minor suggestion, the street level could benefit from an interruption of the building base meeting the sidewalk – one solution would be to eliminate the raised planter boxes at the interstitial spaces between the bays and substitute at-grading plantings.

The rear elevations are also successfully resolved, with a window articulation that unites the Parish Hall level and the addition above.

Church:

The Church elevations have been effectively refined with a focus on adjusting the proportions and minimizing the penthouse mass so that the expression of the sanctuary space is the strongest and largest component of the composition, illustrating the ascension up to the ceremonial floor. As requested, the tower element has been grounded by bringing the glass corner continue to the ground to form the entry to the building. The southeast corner of the first floor continues to be developed with a large corner window which is improved, but could continue to be revised to better reflect the interior program. The public space at the 18th Street side of the church should also continue to be developed with a more compelling and welcoming landscape to soften the façade and provide areas for seating and plantings.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board make the following findings:

- 1. The additional setbacks at the church Street elevation and the alley and the elimination of the top floor for the residential building result in a height and mass that is compatible with the historic district and the perceived height is compatible with the scale of Church Street.*
- 2. The refined church design successfully articulates a distinct corner building with its own identity and creates a hierarchy of spaces;*
- 3. Encourage the applicant to incorporate comments as outlined in the staff report and delegate final approval to HPO staff.*