

HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Landmark/District:	Dupont Circle HD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	2147-2149 P Street, NW	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	October 27 2016	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	16-528	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Kim Elliott	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Valor P Street, LLC, with PGN architects seeks conceptual design review to add a 5-story rear addition to a pair of 3-story rowhouses in the 2005 expansion of the Dupont Circle Historic District.

Property Description

This pair of rowhouses was designed by architect Alfred B. Mullett in 1894 and now sits along a diverse row of 1-story historic commercial buildings and non-contributing 10-story apartment and hotel buildings. The interior of the houses at 2147-2149 have had extensive renovations over the last several decades to accommodate different uses as a restaurant and nightclub, resulting in the loss of the original structural system and the construction of additions at the rear bringing it to 100% lot occupancy. The project is currently going through the BZA process with a request for rear yard set-back relief. Directly behind the property is the Walsh Stable, designed by Lemuel Norris in 1903 and designated as a local and national landmark in 1986.

Proposal

The project calls for demolition of the current rear additions and the construction of a new 5-story addition incorporating a commercial/retail first floor and residential units on floors two through five.

This project was recently presented to the Board at the July 2016 hearing and the applicant has returned with drawings that respond to the Boards actions which included: (1) the addition should be shifted back off of the main block of each historic house—34' setback at 2147 and 54' setback at 2149—so that the addition will read convincingly as a separate building; (2) the 4 elevations should continue to be developed so they are a more cohesive; (3) the front doors should be aligned with 2nd and 3rd floor façade windows.

The revised proposal will be set back 34' from the façade at 2147 and set back 51' at 2149, so that the additional stories will not overlap the historic buildings. At the rear, the new construction will be set back 3' from the property line. The roof terrace at the 4th floor would be set back 15' from the front façade.

Evaluation

The P Street corridor is a busy commercial strip with a variety of building types, massings, and styles, of historic and non-contributing buildings, such that there is no consistent roof line or architectural continuity. In such circumstances, the Board has sometimes found additions to be compatible where they

are visible from the street as long as the taller addition is not built on top of the main block of the historic structure and can convincingly read as a separate structure behind the historic building.

The overall massing of the building is not incompatible with the varied context—ranging from one and two-story commercial buildings at the corner to four-story apartment buildings on the same square facing 22nd Street and 10-story buildings to the east of the site. The large-scale 10-story buildings were built before the Dupont Circle Historic District was expanded to include this section of P Street. The proximity of the proposal with the landmark Walsh Stable, one of the largest and most unaltered stable buildings in the city, should also be considered, although the 22' wide lot between the new project and the Walsh Stable is owned by the adjacent Dupont West condominium and is likely to remain open.

The revised proposal sets back the new construction 3' from the rear property line – this extra breathing room between the project and the Walsh Stable is helpful although very minimal.

With all four elevations of the addition visible from the street view, it is important that the design and materials be compatible on all elevations. The proposed front façade design calls for a floor to ceiling aluminum window system while the other three elevations are designed as brick with aluminum and metal panel punched windows. The rear and side elevations have a successfully composed design that is compatible to the historic building elevation through the solid course brick banding detail and the proportions of the punched aluminum windows that reference the scale of the historic windows. The banding on the west elevation could be shortened to terminate at the windows instead of striping all the way across.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Board find the concept generally consistent with the historic district and consistent with the preservation act and to delegate final approval to staff.