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

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Property Address:	<b>1321 13<sup>th</sup> Street, NW</b>	<b>X</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District</b>		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	<b>July 27, 2017</b>	<b>X</b>	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	<b>17-486</b>		Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Steve Callcott</b>	<b>X</b>	New Construction
		<b>X</b>	Demolition
			Subdivision

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Beck Vissat, representing N 13 LLC, with plans prepared by DEP Designs, seeks conceptual design review for demolition of a four-story building and construction of a five-story apartment building in the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District.

**Property Description**

1321 13<sup>th</sup> Street is a four-story (three above a largely above-grade basement), flat-front row building. It has a raised entrance, is clad in stucco, and has vinyl one-over-one windows. Based on permit, map and photographic research, the building was built as a house in the early 1870s and likely had a one-story projecting bay. It was converted to an apartment building in 1923; while the extent of physical alterations for this conversion are not clear, this may have been when the bay was removed and a basement retail space created. Formstone was applied to the building sometime after 1930, likely to cover the scars created from the removal of the bay. The formstone was removed in 2000, with approval by the HPO, revealing that the underlying brick was sufficiently deteriorated as to preclude restoration. In response to the discovery of the façade's condition, a stucco finish on metal lathe was applied.

The building is identified in the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District nomination as constructed between 1871-1873. Based on that date of construction, it is listed as contributing to the historic district.

**Proposal**

The applicants are seeking to have the Board reclassify the building as non-contributing to the historic district based on lack of integrity to allow for it to be demolished, and review of the replacement building for compatibility with the historic district. An integrity assessment report has been prepared by preservation consultant Preserve/scapes. The replacement building would be five-stories (four above a raised basement) with a traditional projecting-bay composition in a contemporary vocabulary. The façade materials would be brick and terra cotta.

**Evaluation**

The National Register of Historic Places identifies seven characteristics for consideration in the evaluation of building integrity: location, materials, design, craftsmanship, setting, feeling, and association. In evaluating the property against these seven characteristics, the

applicant's historical analysis and integrity assessment is persuasive in documenting that the building does not retain sufficient integrity to be considered a contributing resource to the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District. With the exception of location, which remains intact, the building is significantly compromised when judged against the other characteristics. Its setting has been compromised by alterations to its site for the creation of the basement retail space, and the loss of the building's façade composition, materials, door surround, windows and doors, projecting bay and cornice, has resulted in the building no longer retaining integrity of materials, design, and craftsmanship. The extent of alteration is significant enough that the building no longer conveys integrity of feeling or association with the historic district.

While contemporary in its vocabulary with a higher proportion of glass-to-masonry than is typically found in the district's historic buildings, the proposed new construction is compatible for this site's context, which includes a mix of historic rowhouses and larger new construction projects. The proposed height, massing, proportions, scale, materials, and façade composition are respectful and compatible with the adjacent historic buildings and the character of the historic district.

In response to concerns from owners in the adjacent apartment building, the floor plans have been modified since initially submitted to pull the rear portion of the new construction 10 feet off the property line. The creation of a court on the south side will allow retention of windows on the adjacent building that would otherwise have been blocked up.

As the plans continue to be developed, the design of the stairs (which are an important design feature of buildings in the district) and the material selection and detailing will be important to the ultimate success of the project, and should be coordinated in consultation with HPO.

### **Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Review Board make the following findings:*

- 1) Based on the historical and existing conditions documentation, the existing building at 1312 13<sup>th</sup> Street NW should be reclassified as non-contributing to the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District based on a lack of integrity;*
- 2) The proposed new construction project is compatible with its context and the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District;*
- 3) Final approval is delegated to staff, with the condition that the applicants continue to coordinate with on design development and material selection.*