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

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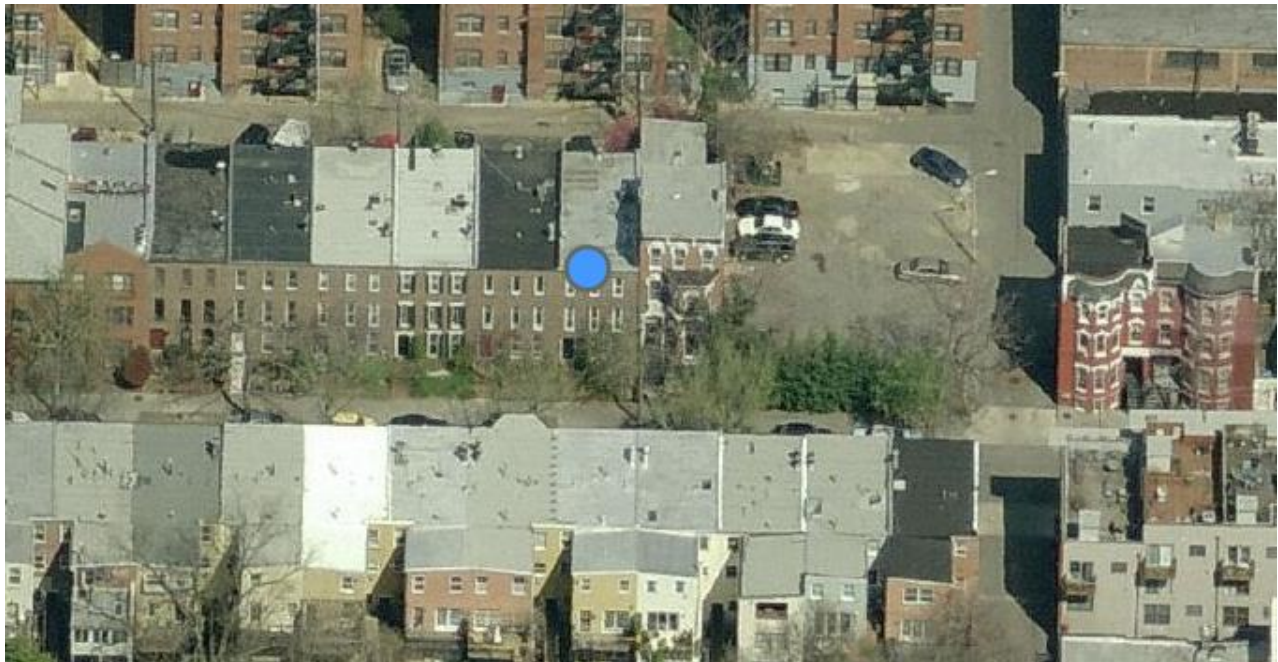
Property Address:	<b>1421 Corcoran Street, NW</b>	<b>X</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District</b>		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	<b>December 5, 2019</b>	<b>X</b>	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	<b>19-606</b>		Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Steve Callcott</b>	<b>X</b>	New Construction
			Demolition
			Subdivision

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Audrey Elkins, representing owner Bashir Halabi, seeks conceptual design review for construction of a three-story row house in the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District.

**Property Description**

1421 Corcoran Street is a three-story, flat-front, slab-on-grade brick rowhouse, which is the end unit in what was a row of six constructed in the 1970s.<sup>1</sup> The house is adjacent to a brick, bay-fronted Victorian rowhouse to the east. The subject property does not contribute to the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District based on its date of construction outside the district’s period of significance (1855-1940).



**Proposal**

The project calls for demolishing the building and replacing it with a three-story, flat-front house above a partially raised English basement. A roof deck is proposed atop the third floor. The façade

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<sup>1</sup> The other end unit house in this row – 1431 Corcoran – was demolished and replaced with a three-story raised basement rowhouse in 2014.

would be set flush with the face of the adjoining buildings, composed of three vertical bays of windows capped by a cornice element. The third floor would have an open balcony on the third floor, the result of a building code requirement that the new construction maintain a 10-foot clear zone from the adjacent property's chimney. The rear elevation would be brick.

### **Evaluation**

The Board approved a three-story-above-raised-basement house for this property in 2015, of a different design by a different architect. As with that proposal, the concept's three-story height, the alignment of the façade in both height and plane with the adjoining buildings, its orientation to the street, and the conceptual façade composition of three vertical bays of openings are all compatible with the character of the historic district and specifically consistent with the character of this streetscape.

What is unusual and not entirely resolved in the design is the open deck on the third floor and the requirement that the new construction be pulled back from the neighbor's chimney. The solution of expressing the open deck as an enclosed balcony (which was suggested by the HPO) works sufficiently well in elevation but, as there will be no side wall, it will be evident that this is merely a two-dimensional false front when seen in perspective above the neighboring house. As an alternative, it may be preferable to simply terminate the façade at the top of the second floor and set the third floor back rather than trying to incorporate it into the front façade.

### **Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Review Board approve the demolition of the existing building as non-contributing to the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District, and seeks the Board's recommendation on whether the existing proposal is compatible or whether an alternative design should be pursued.*