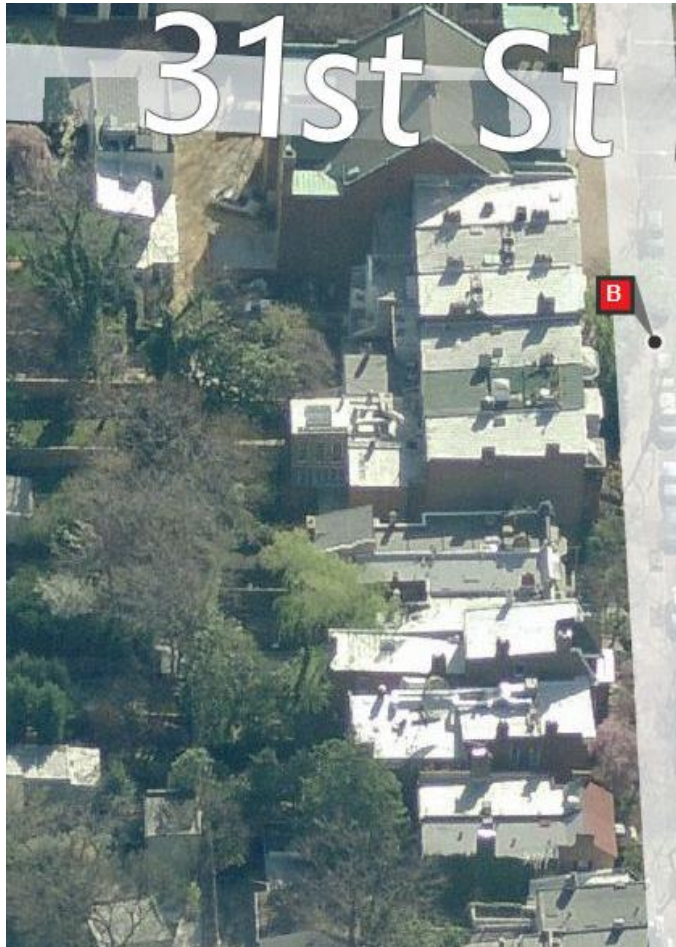

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District: **Georgetown Historic District** (x) Consent
Address: **3107 N Street NW**

Meeting Date: **November 20, 2014** (x) Addition
Case Number: **15-037**

Staff Reviewer: **Tim Dennée** (x) Concept

The applicant, owner Katherine N. Boone, with Dale Overmyer Architects, requests the Board's review of a concept to construct a two-story rear addition. The addition would replace a two-story enclosed porch and extend an additional twelve feet beyond the present rear wall. The width would be 20 feet, running from side lot line to side lot line. There would be an egress window well at the rear of the addition. The drawings call for no alteration at the front of the building, but some interior work and a new air-conditioning unit on the roof.



This row of three circa 1870 rowhouses appear to have originally had small one-story kitchen ells. Two-story porches were added later, and then both 3109 and 3111 received additions, with that at 3111 the deepest thus far. The present addition would be comparable to the depth of that at 3111. It would be clad with brick veneer on the rear elevation and stucco on the single exposed side. It would have conventional punched window openings at rear, with two-over-two wood windows to match the Italianate style of the house and large French doors on the ground floor. A chimney flue would rise from the roof. Overall, the size, proportions, materials and details appear to be consistent with what is found in the immediate neighborhood, a block that contains a few deeper ells and additions. Ideally, the same material would wrap around the exposed walls of the addition, but the west side wall is relatively little exposed to view.

There has been one neighbor objection,

from the next-door Georgetown Baptist Church, built in 1899. The congregation is concerned about excavation next to their side wall—which supports a very heavy pipe organ—and to the covering of an original window opening in that wall that now contains a kitchen vent (see photograph below). These are both justifiable practical concerns, but the engineering and inspection of the basement and its footings and the operations necessary for excavation and construction are properly issues for the applicant to coordinate with the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) and the neighbors. As for the side window/vent, that particular basement window cannot be considered an important character-defining feature given its location in the rear, within a common brick wall that has little to do with the fine brick and stone masonry of the church’s Romanesque facades. Neighbors on both sides of a common property line are entitled to reasonable use and enjoyment of their properties, including expansion when it is appropriate. They do not necessarily possess the right to vent into or see across a neighbor’s lot. DCRA treats openings located on common property lines as “at-risk,” i.e., subject to closure for reason of fire separation when new construction would abut them.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept as compatible with the subject property and the historic district and consistent with the purpose of the preservation law, with further review delegated to staff.

