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

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Landmark/District:	<b>Riggs National Bank</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	<b>1503 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	<b>September 24, 2015</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
H.P.A. Number:	<b>15-374</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Date Received:	<b>4/28/15</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision
Staff Reviewer:	<b>David Maloney</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conceptual Design

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The Milken Family Foundation and Shalom Baranes Associates, Architects, return to the Board for continued review of the design concept for an addition to the former Riggs National Bank building on Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. The building is a historic landmark in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites, and a contributing structure in two historic districts.

**Project Concept**

The Foundation proposes to occupy the building for offices, conference facilities, and a Museum of the American Educator. Public exhibit space would occupy the banking hall. Exterior alterations include an accessible entrance, relocation of visible rooftop mechanical equipment, expansion of the existing 5<sup>th</sup> floor, and construction of a new 6<sup>th</sup> floor.

As discussed at the Board’s review on June 25, the proposed renovations and roof additions are configured so as to allow for the reintroduction of natural lighting into the banking hall through the original ceiling opening. This will help restore the architectural character of the historic landmark, but it also results in an addition pushed forward on the roof and made more visible than would otherwise be acceptable on a building of this significance and character.

**Evaluation of Revisions**

The architects have revised the concept in response to the Board’s June comments. The central pavilion at the front of the top floor addition is now removed and the height is lowered. The result is a simplified form for the addition, which now has a continuous lower projection running straight along the entire width of the original 1899 building. This more neutral treatment and lowered height help to reduce the visual impact of the addition on the historic façade.

While the revisions in concept are responsive to the Board’s comments, a more complete development and refinement of the details for the new façade and accessible entrance will be needed for a final preservation clearance.

**Recommendations**

The Historic Preservation Office recommends that the Board endorse the project concept as a reasonable balance between restoration and the adaptation needed to bring about that benefit. In order to secure the restored character of the central banking hall as a permanent benefit, HPO also recommends that the Board encourage the applicant to proceed with the documentation needed to expand protection of the landmark to include the banking hall.