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

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Property Address:	<b>731-733 Euclid Street, NW</b>	<b>X</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>National Association for the Relief of Destitute Colored Women and Children/Merriweather Home</b>		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	<b>July 28, 2022</b>	<b>X</b>	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	<b>22-366</b>	<b>X</b>	Alteration
		<b>X</b>	New Construction
		<b>X</b>	Subdivision

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Euclid Flats LLC, with plans prepared by architect Greg Kearley of Inscape Studio, seeks conceptual design review for construction of two rowhouses, each flanking an existing duplex house at 731-733 Euclid Street NW. The project would also include rehabilitation of 731-733 and subdivision of the property.

**Property Description and History**

731-733 Euclid Street is a free-standing, three-story double house constructed in 1879. The Second Empire-styled property faces south, set high atop a steep berm above the street, with an exposed basement and accessed by non-original concrete stairs. The houses are clad in brick and capped by a mansard roof with dormers; the full width front porch is not original but dates from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The houses remained as separate private residences until 1930 when they were combined and converted to the home of a Civil War-era organization called the National Association for the Relief of Destitute Colored Women and Children (later called the Merriweather Home for Children). The Home constructed a two-story addition on the rear of the building in 1931 and occupied the site until 1971.

A landmark application is pending on the property which outlines its history and makes a compelling argument for its historical significance and in meeting the DC and National Register designation criteria. This concept application would only be considered by the Board if the property is designated.

**Proposal**

While the applicant initially sought to raze and replace the building, since learning of its historic significance they have since worked with HPO to develop a project that would retain and rehabilitate the historic building, with construction of two three-story rowhouses erected in the flanking side yards. The new houses would be set back 16 feet on the east and 24 feet on the west from the façade of the existing building. They would be contemporary in design, with two-story bays and punched windows, clad in brick. Stair towers would extend to the roofs, which would contain decks.

A third story would be added to the rear two-story wing of the house and roof decks atop the third-floor roof accessed by stair towers. Rehabilitation plans for the existing building and site have been preliminarily discussed with the applicant but would be further developed and finalized contingent on the Board's approval of the new development plans.

The project would require subdividing the single lot into four separate lots.

### **Evaluation**

The project would result in the retention and rehabilitation of the proposed landmark and would retain what is perhaps its most distinctive physical characteristic, which is its appearance as a detached building. The substantial setbacks from the front façade of the historic building and the steep topography of the site would result in extremely limited visibility of the new construction and allow a substantial portion of the side elevations to remain seen. The roof terraces and stair access towers would be set back sufficiently so as to not be visible from any street view.

The proposed subdivision would not result in a change to the boundaries or protection as a landmark and is necessary in order to permit the new construction and rehabilitation.

As the plans continue to be developed, HPO would encourage further study of the intersection of the third floor on each new rowhouse where it abuts the historic building's mansard roof and cornice. Setting back this single window bay by a few feet, perhaps for an exterior balcony, would result in slightly more of the cornice and mansard to remain exposed, perhaps providing a more eased transition between the old and new buildings. A landscape plan for the property should also be developed to provide an appropriate setting for the project and ideally that mitigate the formidable impact of the existing walls and stairs facing the public sidewalk.

### **Recommendation**

*HPO recommends that the Board find the proposed concept and subdivision to be compatible with the landmark, and that final approval be delegated to staff.*

*HPO Staff Contact: Steve Callcott*