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

Property Address:	2119 Champlain Street, NW	X Agenda
Landmark/District:	Pepco Substation #25	Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	January 25, 2018	X Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	18-035	X Alteration
		New Construction
		Demolition

The Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO) seeks conceptual design review for alterations, partial demolition and additions to Substation No. 25. The proposal is part of a comprehensive modernization of the substation.

A landmark application is pending on the property for consideration by the Board, the merits of which are outlined in a separate designation report. The proposed concept design would be subject to HPRB review if the property is designated.

Property Description

Substation No. 25 is a half-acre energy distribution site located at the corner of Champlain Street and Old Morgan School Place, NW. In addition to substantial outdoor equipment, the site contains a 2-story substation building located on the northwest corner of the property facing Champlain Street. The building was constructed in 1930, designed by Washington architect Arthur B. Heaton in the Art Deco style. The west and south elevations are clad in brick with a granite foundation and limestone accents; the south elevation has a series of six distinctive buttresses. The east elevation is constructed of red brick laid in American bond pattern; the north elevation is parged.

Proposal

The project calls for retention of the building's front elevation, approximately one-third of the south elevation, and two of the six buttresses for incorporation into an expanded building that would house a reconstructed power plant. Due to the increased size and configuration of the new equipment, the remaining portion of the south wall, the north wall and the rear wall would need to be removed and replaced.

Evaluation

The project has been studied by Pepco's engineering teams in consultation with HPO, and the extent of demolition has been reduced to the greatest extent possible given the program. Nevertheless, the project will result in substantial demolition of the 1930 building and is therefore

not consistent with the purposes of the preservation act.¹ The applicants will be seeking approval for the project as necessary in the public interest to construct a project of special merit.

The design of the expanded facility has been developed to relate to the character of the existing building to present a single, unified architectural character to the complex. Enclosing the outdoor equipment will significantly improve the character of the site.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Board find the proposal will result in substantial demolition of the 1930 building, and that the project be forwarded to the Mayor's Agent for review.

HPO Staff Contact: Steve Callcott

¹ Work considered demolition under the Act shall include, but is not limited to, any of the following, as determined by the Mayor's Agent: the removal or destruction of any façade; the removal or destruction of all or a substantial portion of the structural components of the building, such as structural walls, floor assemblies, and roofs; the removal or destruction of all or a substantial portion of the roof along with all or substantially all of one or more exterior walls; the removal or destruction of all or substantially all of an entire wing or appendage of the building, such as a rear ell, unless the wing lacks physical or historic integrity, or is not a character-defining feature; the removal or destruction of a substantial portion that includes character-defining features of the building or structure.