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

Landmark/District: **Decatur Street Car Barn/Northern Bus Garage** () Agenda
Address: **4701 14th Street, NW** (X) Consent Calendar
Meeting Date: **September 24, 2020** () New Construction
H.P.A. Numbers: **20-469 (demo) 20-176 (concept)** () Alteration
(X) Demolition

Proposal

On May 28, 2020, the Historic Preservation Review Board heard a presentation by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Beyer Blinder Belle Architects and Wendel Architects regarding a proposed extensive renovation of the historic Decatur Street Car Barn. The Board did not find the concept design compatible with the landmark, citing the need to revise aspects of the newly proposed elevations on all sides. The Board also directed WMATA and its architects to seek input from the community and return with a revised concept that reflected all comments received.

However, HPRB did indicate agreement with the staff report recommendation that the substantial demolition associated with the renovation project was inconsistent with the purposes of the DC Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act (Act) because it would destroy practically all remaining historic interior fabric, the original eastern wall, and the majority of the car barn's north and south elevations. For these reasons, the Board agreed that the case should proceed to the Mayor's Agent for review.

In order to meet project schedules, WMATA has submitted a demolition permit and is requesting that the case be forwarded to the Mayor's Agent while refinements to the concept design are still being made. No project construction, alteration or demolition will begin until the HPRB's review of the revised concept is complete and the Mayor's Agent has determined whether the project constitutes a project of special merit or is consistent with the Act.

Recommendation

As before, HPO recommends that the Board:

- 1. Acknowledge that extensive renovations are necessary to meet project goals;*
- 2. Find that those aspects of the proposed concept relating to restoration of the 14th elevation and preservation of portions of the northern and southern elevations are appropriate for the historic Decatur Street Car barn;*

3. *Find the proposed demolition of remaining historic fabric inconsistent with the purposes of the DC Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act, and recommend that the case proceed to the Mayor's Agent for review; and*
4. *If the Mayor's Agent determines that the project is found to constitute a project of special merit and/or consistent with the Act, request that the Mayor's Agent direct the applicants to return to HPO for further design review to ensure final plans include an appropriate scope of preservation and restoration work to offset the loss of historic fabric.*

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