

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

Property Address:	2341 Ashmead Place NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Kalorama Triangle Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	March 31, 2016	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	16-055		New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Anne Brockett	X	Alteration

On behalf of owner Mike Cassar, architect K.C. Price seeks the Board's review of a concept to add to the rear and roof of this property in the Kalorama Triangle Historic District and to alter the front basement access. The property is one of five speculative rowhouses built in 1910. It sits near the center of a block of spec-built houses, erected in twos and threes by a number of different investors and developers.

Project Description

The project proposes to demolish the three-story rear ell and former sleeping porch and replace it with an addition of four stories. The addition would project five feet deeper into the rear yard than the current enclosed porch and would infill the dogleg space. Rear decks and an egress stair at the first three floors would project out and additional six feet. The new fourth floor would be set back four feet from the rest of the rear wall plane and feature a balcony set on the roof of the addition below.

The addition is proposed to be clad in hardiplank with french doors and a pair of windows on each of the lower floors. The fourth floor would be stuccoed and feature a single window and french door. (It should be noted that the correct rear elevation is shown on page A0203; the images on page CS-11 are incorrect in their materials and fenestration.)

At the front, the roof addition would be set back 31feet and would be set into the roof structure so as to stand only 6 feet above the existing front parapet. The addition would open onto a front deck, whose railing would be set back 16 feet from the façade. Although a front elevation was not submitted for the addition, the plan shows a large tripartite opening and a separate single door.

Finally, a front window well and alterations to the basement stair are proposed, including expanding the width of the existing stair and removing a portion of a pier partially under the stoop in order to meet code.

Evaluation

Since submission, the design has been reworked in response to HPO and community comments to shrink the size of the proposed addition and to set the rooftop portion back so that it not visible from Ashmead, as confirmed by a flag test. In addition, the egress stair has been reoriented 90 degrees to run parallel to the rear wall plane rather than jutting out from it.

The design of the rear elevation has been altered through the top floor setback and fenestration and material changes to make it less imposing on the alley and to treat it in a more hierarchical manner. Inclusive of the open decks and stairs, the addition is 11 feet deeper than the current footprint. It will set back on the top floor at both the front and rear and is set into the roof structure to minimize height. Although it occupies a small portion of the existing roof, it does not overwhelm the underlying building in its scale or massing.

The alleyscape is not an intact or unique expression of a historic alley and contains a row of 21 houses built somewhat sporadically during the 1910-20 decade by five developers each using a different architect. As designed, the addition is compatible with the historic district and consistent with previous Board approvals for additions to similar buildings in similar contexts.

The HPO does not have sufficient information on the proposed changes to the areaway or on the amount of interior demolition. As the project moves forward, the HPO will ensure that the interior framing remains intact and that any changes proposed for the basement areaway meet the Board's relevant guidelines. In addition, the HPO will review the front elevation of the roof addition to ensure its overall compatibility and consistency with the floorplans.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept for the addition compatible with the character of the Kalorama Triangle Historic District and consistent with the purposes of the Act and to delegate final approval to staff.