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

Property Address:	421 T Street NW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	LeDroit Park Historic District	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consent Calendar
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Concept Review
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Permit Review
Meeting Date:	December 3, 2020	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	20-300	<input type="checkbox"/>	New Construction
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Demolition
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Subdivision

The applicant, owner Vitis Investments LLC, seeks continuing concept design review to combine three lots into one and add a three-story rear addition to 421 T Street NW, a freestanding three-story house which contributes to the LeDroit Park Historic District. At the June 2020 meeting the Board approved the height and massing of the addition and advised the applicant to revise the scale and complexity of the roof components. At the September 2020 meeting the Board advised the applicant to reduce the height of the addition and revise the third floor to look more like a roof. Plans were prepared by Square 134 Architects.

Proposal Revisions

The applicant has transformed the previous scheme from a contemporary form to a more traditional form. The roof now adapts a cross hipped roof shape to match the one at the main house. The addition has been lowered approximately four feet so the main eave no longer aligns with that of the main house. Some of the roof dormers have been removed and most of the remaining ones have been improved with traditional pitched roofs. The north elevation has been revised so that its third story is no longer a masonry gable wall, but now a pitched roof with dormers. This revision has allowed the projection at the second and third floor to take the shape of a steep pitched gable with jerkin-head roof. On the east elevation, the revision to a hipped roof has allowed the new third floor to pitch back from the existing chimney affording it more prominence and giving the addition more separation from the historic house.

New submission materials include a perspective view of the east elevation and a preservation plan. The new perspective illustrates how the addition will appear when viewed from 4th Street and looking west down the alley. The preservation plan documents the condition of the components of the existing building—several of which like the slate roof can be restored rather than replaced--and commits to reconstructing the missing front porch.

Evaluation

The revised concept follows the direction provided by the Board and has resulted in a concept design that is compatible with the house and historic district.

Not only has the addition been reduced in height so that it is not the same height as the historic house, but the conversion to a hipped roof has produced several other benefits. The third floor is now completely housed within the roof on all sides. The hipped roof produces roof angles and components that match the scale and proportions of the historic house. It also reduces the perceived height and visibility of the addition when viewed at a distance. The subdivision necessary to accommodate the addition adds two small lots to the existing lot; the first small lot was part of the lot historically and the

second small lot increases the size of the lot minimally with no discernible impact on the historic district.

The value of the preservation plan is that it will be a helpful guide to the applicant and staff during permit review and construction. It stands as a commitment by the applicant to rebuild the front porch with sufficient detail and craftsmanship to replicate the missing historic porch. The plan is also a clear testament by the applicant that many important historic components, like the slate roof, wood windows and masonry, can be restored rather than replaced, and that in the few places where there is deterioration beyond repair that the item will be replaced in-kind to the Board's standards.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends the Board approve the subdivision and find the revised concept design for a three-story rear addition to 421 T Street NW to be compatible with the character of the house and historic district, and delegate final approval to Staff.

Staff contact: Brendan Meyer