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

Property Address:	304 T Street NW	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	LeDroit Park Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Denial Calendar
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Concept Review
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Permit Review
Meeting Date:	June 22, 2023	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	23-368	<input type="checkbox"/>	New Construction
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Subdivision

Agent Eric Teran, on behalf of owner Ulysses S. Glee, Jr., seeks concept review to add a roof deck on top of the two-story rowhouse at 304 T Street NW which is a contributing property in the LeDroit Park Historic District. Plans were prepared by Eustilus Architecture.

Property Description and Context

304 T Street NW is part of a row of six houses (300 thru 310 T Street) designed by N.T. Haller in 1891. As a group they are a good example of Haller's unique late-Victorian style. The row defies the normal rules of repetition or symmetry from this time period and instead follows Haller's own rules which featured variations in height, window types, ornament, and roof forms. Haller made each house unique from the others by repeating enough components to hold the row together as a collective design. 304 T Street, with its two-story main block and two-story rear wing, matches the massing and height of its three neighbors to the west. During recent permitted construction the rear wing of the house collapsed and has been reconstructed to its historic dimensions.

Proposal

The applicant proposes to add a roof deck on top of the house. The floor of the deck would occupy the full area of the rear wing. It would be accessed through stair-length roof hatch in the roof of the main block of the house.

Evaluation

The LeDroit Park Historic District is almost devoid of rooftop additions that are taller than the main block of the house.¹ The roofs of main blocks are also free of roof decks. This widespread condition of intact and unoccupied roofs is a significant factor in the high level of integrity enjoyed in this historic district. The Board has regularly protected this local characteristic by declining to approve roof top additions that are taller than the main block of the house, or roof decks that are on the highest roof of the house.² On the other hand, in cases where a lower roof is available, for example where a three story rowhouse has a two-story rear wing, the Board regularly approves additions and decks that only occupy the lower roof of the rear wing and are not taller than the main block of the house. The submitted design is not conceptually different from applications regularly declined by the Board based

¹ The few roof top structures that exist in LeDroit park, like the shed and deck visible on top of 1846 2nd Street NW either predate the historic district or were built at an unknown date without Board review.

² 513 Florida Ave NW (HPA 19-039) December 2018, the Board did not approve a third-floor addition on a two-story house. 324 U St NW (HPA 15-490) July 2015, the Board did not approve a three-story rear addition on a two-story house. 1852 3rd St NW (HPA 14-246) May 2014, the Board did not approve a three-story rear addition on a two-story house. 611 Florida Ave NW (HPA 21-413) September 2021, the Board did not approve a partial 4th floor addition on a three-story house.

on this standard. The burden is on the applicant to show that an exception to the Board's standards is appropriate in this case.¹

One complicating factor discovered during preparation of this staff report is that the owner, in anticipation of the Board approving a roof deck, has already built 42" tall parapet walls on the rear wing of the house without review or approval from staff. Raising walls with parapets in this fashion incompatibly alters the perceived height of the rear wing and is one of the principal reasons why the Board has developed their standard that roof decks in LeDroit Park that are on the highest roof of the house--which is the case at 304 T Street--are not compatible with the historic district. If the Board approves this application, the parapet walls will remain in place. If the Board denies this application, Staff will work with the applicant to have the parapet walls removed and the rear wing returned to its historic dimensions.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board maintain its record of decisions on this type of alteration and find the concept of a roof deck at 304 T Street NW not compatible with the character of LeDroit Park Historic District.

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¹ DCMR 10C, 2001.3