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

Property Address:	1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Massachusetts Avenue and Dupont Circle Historic Districts		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	April 28, 2022	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	22-184		Subdivision
			New Construction
			Demolition

1776 Mass Ave RE LLC, with plans prepared by Michael Graves Architects, seeks on-going conceptual design review for façade and public space alterations to a non-contributing office building in the Massachusetts Avenue and Dupont Circle historic districts.

When reviewed at the March 31 meeting, the Board did not take an action but expressed general support for the proposed three-bay façade and treatment at the top of the building. However, the Board asked that the base of the building be more assertively expressed, that the language of the projecting bays be woven through the curtain wall, and that further consideration be given to the proposed use of laminated wood as the predominate material. The Board noted that the ANC’s concern regarding the garage door on the front of the building had already been addressed by the applicant through redesign. The Board asked that the design be revised and include eye-level renderings of the concept showing the proposal in context be provided when it returns for further review.

Proposal

The design has been revised in response to the Board’s comments. The base of the building has been strengthened with the entrance canopy lowered from the second floor to the first and an additional matching canopy added over the break-room doors, and the laminate panels have been extended horizontally across the spandrels on the first two floors. This use of the panels on the base, as well as on the top of the building, also addresses the recommendation that the building’s projecting bay vocabulary be woven through the curtain wall. Two options for the canopy at the top of the building are proposed – the free-form organic option previously shown, and a new rectilinear option. Additional options for the top of the building are also illustrated in the appendix of the applicant’s submission, which add height to the tops of the bays and integrate them into the eighth-floor canopy structure.

Evaluation

The revisions are successful in providing a stronger base and unifying the building’s composition. The new rectilinear option for the top floor canopy seems more consistent with the formal character of the building and the Massachusetts Avenue Historic District and has the added benefit of bringing the penthouse more convincingly into the building’s design.

With the revised composition, HPO is more comfortable with the proposed wood laminate material. While wood is more typically used as an accent rather than a primary material in most

of the urban historic districts, the warmth and range of the material are not incompatible with those same qualities that are found in the historic district's masonry-clad buildings.

HPO defers to the Board on whether the alternative studies for the top of the building should be further pursued.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board approve the revised concept for recladding the building, including the rectilinear canopy option, as consistent with the character of the historic district and that final approval be delegated to staff.

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