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

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Landmark/District:	<b>Mount Pleasant Historic District</b>	(x) Agenda
Address:	<b>1614 Kilbourne Place NW</b>	
Meeting Date:	<b>September 22, 2022</b>	(x) Alteration/Addition
Case Number:	<b>22-365</b>	(x) Revised concept

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The applicant, Joe Harris, architect and agent for property owner Shellys Corner LLC, requests the Board’s review of a concept to remove a sleeping porch, construct a two-story side addition in its place, and undertake various site work and alterations to a 1910 residence to convert it to a two-family flat.

The Board first reviewed this project in July. It did not approve the concept as submitted, but requested revisions, including reducing the amount of proposed structural demolition after further studying its condition. The Board found that demolition of the sleeping porch might be found sufficiently compatible in itself, if it were replaced with a compatible addition, likely something with an expression and proportions more like the existing sleeping porch. The Board encouraged the applicant return with alternatives, perhaps a single-story one with a roof deck on top. The Board also encouraged that the applicant meet with the Advisory Neighborhood Commission, if the ANC wishes.

**Demolition**

The notes on the plans still appear to call for demolition of all the floor framing, with a rationale that the stairs are in bad condition and perhaps the floors are uneven. Largely driven by the program, all interior walls, some of which would have to be load-bearing, would be demolished as well. That is a considerable amount of demolition, which probably represents an incompatible demolition of the building in significant part—unless the removal of the floor assemblies can be documented to be necessary because of a deteriorated condition. Regrettably, this documentation has not yet been submitted, although there is one small photograph showing the underside of part of the first floor.

**Roof deck**

A deck is still proposed atop the primary roof, in a location probably better suited for the mechanical equipment. The applicant has presented photos of a mockup, but the railing will likely be slightly higher, as the deck will presumably be superimposed on the roof. A one-to-one setback does not render the deck entirely invisible—without considering the furnishings that might be placed upon the finished deck. As expected, the deck would be visible from Mount Pleasant Street to the east. Seeing it over 3170 Mount Pleasant Street seems less an issue than from the intersection of Mount Pleasant and Kilbourne, below, although the house’s bay projection will cut off most views from this angle (while, as we see in the photo below, trees are not an adequate year-round screen for such appurtenances).



**Fence**

HPO would normally not support a tall privacy fence that comes forward of the front corner of a building, let alone forward of a projection, but the present fence is one of longstanding, and the proposed one is an improvement as it relates to the bay. A fence would conceal a number of items that call for concealment: mechanical equipment, a window well, and a parking space. It should not be left raw wood but should be painted or stained a dark color.

**Side addition**

The principal revision is to the proposed two-story side addition, which would replace the side sleeping porch but have an alley-side parking space beneath. Although a character-defining feature, the Board did not appear to object to demolition of the somewhat altered porch, similar to the typical treatment of rear porches within the historic district. The question is how the addition is to be done. The choice to build up against the attic story presents a challenge. Additions to mansarded buildings are frequently mansarded themselves, but here that seems inappropriate, especially because the addition will remain porch-like—elevated over the parking space—no matter its roof type.

Staff recommended that the most successful approach to a third floor would be to carry up the sense of light sleeping porches. The proposal is now reasonably successful, with a greater proportion of void to solid than in the previous version, such that it feels subordinate to the main block, both in height and the feeling of mass. A structure that is different yet not out of place, like porches, is a better approach to joining the volumes. The rebuilt “porch” would be set back slightly farther from the street than the porch is now, so that it does not harm, remove or obscure the return of the house’s cornice; the cornice would instead meet it, which seems more appropriate than leaving a gap between the cornice and any structure behind. The most unfortunate consequence is the loss of one of the attic dormers. The primary exterior material is expressed as vertical wood boards, which is what it should be, unless there is some compatible

substitute proposed. The window units should almost certainly be similar around the addition, as it can be seen in the round and would be understood as enclosing single spaces on each floor.

**Recommendation**

*HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept and delegate to staff further review, with the conditions that: 1) the roof deck and its railing not be visible from Kilbourne Place; 2) the addition's primary exterior material is painted wood; 3) the addition's windows be more similar to each other in type and configuration; 4) replacement windows and doors meet the Board's regulations and guidelines; 5) additional meters for the addition unit be concealed from view from Kilbourne Place; 6) the fence be painted a dark color or stained with an opaque stain; and 7) the demolition of floors and bearing walls be reduced unless the applicant produces sufficient documentation of their deterioration to justify their replacement.*