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

Property Address:	1110 6th Street, NW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Landmark/District:	Mount Vernon Square Historic District	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent Calendar
		<input type="checkbox"/> Denial Calendar
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept Review
Meeting Date:	August 2, 2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	#18-440	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Brendan Meyer	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

The applicant, owner Verbena Ventures LLC, seeks concept review for a basement areaway, a three-story plus basement rear addition, and partial fourth floor addition and roof decks to a three-story contributing rowhouse in the Mount Vernon Square Historic District. Plans have been prepared by Arcadia Design.

Property Description and Context

1110 6th Street is the last survivor of a row of three attached houses built in 1873 by owner G.W. Cissell. The house displays several characteristics of postbellum architecture, including grandly proportioned windows on a flat façade and a wood cornice consisting of Greek Revival flourishes like the palmette in the plancier at the cornice return. The first floor sits above a raised basement with uncharacteristically large windows. A cellar exists below the basement. The house does not have a rear wing and the long gradual sloping roof profile of its south elevation is visible from both 6th Street and L Street.

Previous Review

The Board reviewed a concept design for this property submitted by a different owner in June 2015 that had some similarities to the current concept. That previous concept consisted of three components: a three-story, 28-foot deep rear dog-leg addition, a partial fourth floor addition with roof decks front and back to span both the existing house and new rear addition, and a large front basement areaway to house a multi-level flight of stairs down to the cellar.

The Board found the concept for the rear addition to be compatible but found the partial fourth floor to be incompatible because it would result in substantial demolition, a visible alteration of the building's roofline, and an incompatible addition atop the building that would be visible from both L and 6th Streets. The Board also required that the front roof deck be removed because of its visibility from street view, and elimination of the multi-level front basement entrance.

Proposal

The current concept calls for a three-story, brick-clad, 30-foot deep rear addition, and a partial fourth floor addition, 55 feet long, with roof decks in front and back, spanning both the existing house and the new rear addition. A small basement entrance is proposed to be located under the existing main entrance, and the extent of demolition limited to include only removal of the roof for the fourth floor, with the floor assemblies and existing rear wall of the building retained.

As in the 2015 proposal, the rear and roof additions would be prominently visible due to the undeveloped project site to the south. Development was proposed on this adjacent site in 2006 and in 2014, but remains unpermitted and unbuilt. Depending on the extent and size of new construction on this site in the future, the visibility of the rear and roof additions at 1110 could be reduced or eliminated as seen through this site. However, the roof addition would remain visible from 6th Street from the north, as well as from L Street and New York Avenue.

Evaluation

The proposed basement areaway is compatible with the historic district and the principles in the Board's *Preservation and Design Guidelines for Basement Entrances and Windows*. The retention of the building's exterior walls and floor assemblies, with removal limited to the roof, does not constitute demolition as defined in the Board's regulations (DCMR 10-C, Section 305). While two feet longer in footprint than that previously proposed, the rear addition remains compatible in height, mass, materials and design for the historic district.

However, the fourth-floor addition and front roof deck remain incompatible for the same reasons that the Board found in 2015. In that review, the Board determined that the addition was incompatible in that it altered the character-defining profile of the building, which is visible from both 6th and L Streets, resulting in a roof addition and deck visible over the top of the building.

The revised concept has been flag tested and inspected by staff. The flag tests show that the proposed fourth floor would be prominently visible from the south, even rising above the historic building at 1100 6th Street (Photo 1). It would also be visible from the north and encroach on the roof profiles of the turret at 1112 6th Street and the pediment and entablature of the church at 1114 6th Street (Photo 2). The size and location of the fourth-floor addition now proposed, and its associated roof decks, is larger than the previous concept and would produce a rooftop addition even more visible from 6th Street than the 2015 proposal. It is recommended that the Board reaffirm its previous finding that the fourth-floor roof addition and front deck be eliminated for a finding of compatibility for the project.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board reaffirm its finding of compatibility for a three-story rear addition at 1110 6th Street NW and find the concept design to be consistent with the preservation law, but find the partial fourth floor and front deck to be an incompatible alteration for a contributing building to the Mount Vernon Square Historic District.



Photo 1: View of mock-up of roof addition from south



Photo 2: View of mock-up of roof addition from north