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

Property Address:	445 Ridge Street NW	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Landmark/District:	Mount Vernon Square Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent Calendar
ANC:	6E	<input type="checkbox"/> Denial Calendar
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept Review
Meeting Date:	April 28, 2016	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	#16-221	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Brendan Meyer	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision
		<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology

The applicant, contract purchaser Matthew Oppenheim, seeks concept review for a two-story frame addition to a two-story brick rowhouse at 445 Ridge St NW, a contributing property in the Mount Vernon Square Historic District. Drawings were prepared by D+O Inc.

Property Description and Context

The street is characterized by modest, two-story flat-fronted frame and brick houses, rare survivors of what were once typical and fairly common 19th century working class alley dwellings. The street contains houses built from 1855 to 1911, generally individually or in small groups of two or three. They have a notable consistency of simple block forms, punched windows, and spare detailing. While rowhouses are mostly attached, there are occasional gaps in the street face where there are side setbacks between groups of buildings, and one T-shaped alley on the south side of the street in the middle of the block. 445 Ridge fits squarely within the character and building type for the block, built in 1885, two bays wide with a brick corbeled cornice.

Proposal

Applicant proposes a rear addition 31 feet deep and the full width of the 11-foot wide lot. The addition would be two stories with a roof that starts flush to that of the historic house and rises approximately 6 feet towards the rear producing a butterfly roof form in combination with the existing house. The only demolition required would be removal of the current back wall.

Evaluation

The addition is compatible in size, height, material and form with the character of the historic district except for one concern. The glass curtain wall proposed for the rear elevation is out of scale and inconsistent with the basic character of the fenestration for such simple rowhouses. This can easily be rectified by swapping for the curtain wall for traditional punched opening windows. Other than this lone concern, this size and form of rear addition has been approved in other nearby locations in the historic district (438 Ridge St NW, 2009, 437 Ridge Street, 2014) and will not be visible from any public street. The addition will abut to, and be shorter than, the new rowhouse built at 447 Ridge. The rear addition will not project more than 5 feet deeper than any other nearby addition and it still leaves an ample rear yard setback.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept for a two-story frame rear addition with butterfly roof at 445 Ridge Street NW to be compatible with the character of the historic district, consistent with the purpose of the preservation act, and that final approval be delegated to Staff on the condition that:

- 1. The rear addition fenestration be punched opening, operable sash windows.*