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

Property Address:	999 E Street, NW	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Pennsylvania Avenue NHS	X Consent Calendar
		X Concept Review
Meeting Date:	January 24, 2019	X Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	19-141	New Construction
		Demolition

Applicant Harold Bingham (Mark G. Anderson Consultants), representing 999 E Street Owner LLC, seeks conceptual design review for alterations to an office building in the Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site.

Property Description

999 E Street is a nine-story office building located at the northeast corner of E and 10th streets. It was designed by Washington architect Waddy B. Wood in 1930 for the headquarters of the Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco). The building is clad in a limestone veneer over a steel frame; its restrained ornament and neoclassical features illustrate a particularly refined and skillful example of the Art Deco style. The first two stories of the center three bays on the 10th Street elevation and the nine center bays on the E Street elevation are framed by giant pilasters, creating dramatic entrances on both facades. An incised Greek fret frieze delineates the division between the third and fourth stories. Sculpted bas-relief panels separate the windows on the eighth floor. The building retains its original metal doors and bronze-framed storefront windows.

Proposal

The project calls for portions of the first and second floors and all of the third, fourth and fifth floors to be leased for use as a museum. The museum's occupancy requires insertion of additional elevators and stairs that would result in some openings on the secondary east side elevation to be covered over on the inside, and for the creation of two new doors within two of the three existing storefronts to the east of the original doors on the E Street elevation. Monument signs in the public space sidewalk are also proposed, subject to the additional review and approval by the DC Department of Transportation.

Evaluation

Altering the original storefronts on a building of such high architectural quality and integrity is regrettable and will compromise the symmetry of the building's E Street elevation. However, in taking into account the occupancy and egress requirements of the proposed museum, and after considering a variety of alternatives (entry through the existing lobby or through the side secondary elevation), no other viable option emerged. The architects have refined the proposal in consultation with HPO to retain as much of the original storefronts as possible (the stone bases, the bronze storefront framing, the transom windows) to minimize loss of the building's distinctive elements and to allow restoration of the original condition in the future if desired. The applicants

have also committed to working with HPO on the material finish and detailing of the new doors and sidelights to ensure they are of a quality commensurate with the building, and to pursue historic landmark designation for the building.

The covering over of the windows on the secondary elevation for the new stair and elevator, with black out panels inserted behind, will retain the existing sash and masonry openings, and is not an incompatible treatment for a secondary elevation.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Board find the concept for the new entrances to be compatible with the character of the building and historic district, with final approval delegated to staff.

HPO Staff Contact: Steve Callcott