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

Landmark/District:	Saint Elizabeths Hospital Historic District	(x) Agenda
Address:	801 through 1199 Sycamore Drive SE¹	
Meeting Date:	July 23, 2020	(x) New construction
Case Number:	20-346	(x) Subdivision
		(x) Revised concept

The applicant, Redbrick LMD, long-term lessee of the subject parcels, requests the Board’s review of a revised concept to construct an 88-unit townhouse project. The site is at the south end of the city-owned East Campus, on two parcels bounded by Sycamore Drive, Alabama Avenue and a public alley. The site plan implies a proposed subdivision.

At the June 25 hearing, the Board expressed support for the general concept and for the recommendations in the staff report but did not take a vote as the project had not been considered by the Advisory Neighborhood Commission. The Board recommended that the project be revised to respond to the HPO recommendations, that it be presented to the ANC, and that it return to the Board for further review. The Board requested that the applicant consider the scale of the houses as they face those in Congress Heights. The Board also requested more information on sustainable features and on landscaping along Sycamore Drive.

The staff report had recommended:

1. *Eliminating the bays and turrets in favor of quoins that would unify each building and relate them all to the nearby historic buildings.*

These revisions have been made.

2. *Improving the composition of the end walls that are turned to the streets, and making the gables symmetrical, so that the pitch of the front roofs is reduced.*

Bay projections have been added roughly in the center of the most prominent side/end elevations. The gables remain asymmetrical.

3. *Using a red brick similar to that of the campus buildings and wrapping that brick around at least three sides of each building.*

Red brick has been proposed. The applicant will have an opportunity to discuss the materials choices and colors at the hearing. The brick has not been wrapped around the sides that the applicant characterizes as less prominent. The elevations on Sheet A400 are a montage rather than a true elevation of the assemblage of buildings. The plan shows the buildings to be farther

¹ South side. Street addresses have not yet been assigned, as the property has not been subdivided. The two subject parcels (10 and 14) are presently designated as three assessment and taxation lots—811, 812 and 823—in Square 5868S.

apart, leaving gaps between the closest buildings that are substantial enough to expose plainly that the façade material does not return, and that the brick quoins would abut siding.

4. *Giving more attention to the landscaping and landscape features, especially of the narrow area at the juncture between the “parallel” and “perpendicular” rows, at the spaces between the buildings, and as screening at the entrances to the parking courts.*

The landscape drawings are the same as last month’s.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept, and delegate to staff further review and clearance of a permit application, with the conditions that the brick be wrapped around at least three sides of each building; that the siding on the fourth side be fiber-cement and not vinyl; that the applicant reconsider making the gables symmetrical; and that the landscape be developed further to address the Board’s concerns.