

<b>HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION</b>
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Property Address:	<b>1009 O Street NW</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>Shaw Historic District</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent Calendar
		<input type="checkbox"/> Denial Calendar
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept Review
		<input type="checkbox"/> Permit
Meeting Date:	<b>December 19, 2019</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	<b>#20-053</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Brendan Meyer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

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The applicant, Sean Ruppert on behalf of owner 1009 O Street NW LLC, seeks conceptual review for construction of a new three-story, rowhouse addition to 1009 O Street NW in the Shaw Historic District. Plans were prepared by GPS Designs Architecture.

### Property Description and Context

This block is typical of the Shaw Historic District and exhibits a variety of building forms from multiple overlapping phases of development. Most of the rowhouses on the block were built individually, two or three stories tall, with and without projecting bays. A variety of roof lines are present along O and 10<sup>th</sup> Street, capped by corbelled brick, wood cornices, and the occasional mansard roof or turret.

The site is two record lots under a single tax lot. 1009 O Street is an existing three-story rowhouse with 2-story bay which sits on the west record lot. The east record lot is vacant. The existing archway extended off of the front façade of 1009 O Street is not an original character-defining feature and leads to a side entrance.

### Project Summary

The new construction takes the form of a three-story rowhouse with a projecting bay to fit the vacant lot. It would reuse the existing entryway as the primary entrance for the three units proposed for 1009 O Street and the two units in the new construction. Behind the entry arch would be an open court which precedes an enclosed vestibule setback ten feet from the front property line. The vestibule provides access to stairs in each building and is demarcated on the front façade by the section of metal frame construction.<sup>1</sup>

The proposed front elevation, separate from the setback metal frame, expresses a three-story brick rowhouse with a symmetrical arrangement. A three-story projecting bay is centered on the façade and ends short of the main cornice. Paired window units at each floor create large areas of glazing in the projecting bay which contrast to the small window units on either side of the bay.

At the rear, the new construction would have a dog-leg massing roughly aligned with the rear dog leg of 1009. The rear wing would be clad in lap siding in contrast to the existing brick dog leg. Both rear elevations would be fenestrated with large areas of glazing. Each building will

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<sup>1</sup> It is the shared vestibule which joins the old rowhouse and new construction into a combined building and technically makes this project an addition to 1009 O Street and not new construction at 1007 O Street.

have a roof deck at the center of its roof plate accessed internally with low-profile hatches. The decks would be visible only insubstantially from the rear.

### **Evaluation and Recommendation**

In form and composition, the new construction would fit comfortably and compatibly into this block of historic rowhouses while still expressing its 21<sup>st</sup> century period of construction. While the existing archway is not a character defining feature of 1009 O Street and could be removed without harm to the historic district, its reuse as entry for both buildings yields positive results. Perhaps best is that the setback behind the archway relieves the new construction from the wood cornice at the top of 1009—facilitating its preservation—and offsets the new from the old thus not eroding the proportions of the historic elevation. The variety of front façades already on the block, including three-story houses with three-story bays, means that the one proposed here would be in scale with its neighbors.

One revision would make the one off-key note of the front façade compatible with the historic district. The first-story windows are larger than the other stories by extending the window sill down close to grade. Historic rowhouses are typically raised above grade on a short basement and make first floor windows taller than upper stories by adding transoms at that first story. The new construction already sits close to grade because it is aligned with 1009 and it does not have a front stoop which would otherwise help organize the façade traditionally. The sill of the first-floor fenestration should be raised to de-emphasize this minor anachronism.

### **Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Review Board find the concept for a 3-story rowhouse form addition to 1009 O 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.*