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

Property Address:	810 O Street, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Shaw Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	April 23 and 30, 2015	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	15-248		Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	Steve Callcott	X	New Construction
			Demolition
			Subdivision

Four Points LLC, with plans developed by Esocoff Associates Architects, seeks conceptual design review for construction of a nine-story apartment building on the site of a non-contributing building at the corner of 8th and O Streets NW in the Shaw Historic District.

Property Description

The property is currently occupied by the Scripture Cathedral Church; the building does not contribute to the Shaw Historic District as its construction post-dates the period of significance (1833-1932). The property is adjacent to a surface parking lot to the east and a modest two-story building and a gas station to the south. The historic context is stronger across 9th Street, which includes a continuous row of late 19th century three-story row buildings. A contemporary nine-story hotel, part of the O Street Market redevelopment, is located in the block to the north.

Proposal

The project calls for a nine-story red brick and precast apartment building with ground level retail. Compositionally, the building would have a loose tripartite organization set atop a two-story base. The north elevation would have a more formal front rising the full height; the longer 9th Street elevation would have two large undulating projections and the upper floors sculpted with a variety of setbacks. An angled bay would mark the corner. The building would be capped by an oval shaped colonnade on the north engaging with and serving as a frontispiece for the penthouse behind.

Evaluation

The proposal employs a rhythm of vertically oriented fenestration and bays, traditional materials, façade depth and shadow, and substantial variety to the massing and roofline to break down the scale of the building to one which is compatible with its historic context. Like much of the architect's work, the proposal has a modulated sculptural quality that is rare for contemporary construction and which further helps soften the building's size in relation to the surrounding smaller scaled historic buildings. The perspective studies illustrate that the building will provide compatible views from surrounding blocks by relating to the materials, rooflines and cadence of the surrounding turreted, bay-front row buildings.

As the building continues to be developed, some additional evaluation may be warranted for the architectural treatment of the second floor of the building on the 9th Street elevation. While the two-story retail expression generally works for the composition of the building, it appears over-scaled for

the street. Reducing the scale and grounding the building by selectively bringing the vocabulary of the upper floors down through the base (as is done on the O Street elevation) may be worthy of further study.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Review Board approve the concept, with further study of the base of the building on the 9th Street elevation as suggested above, and delegate final approval to staff.