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

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|--------------------|--|----------|------------------|
| Property Address:  | <b>2161 Florida Avenue, NW</b>             | <b>X</b> | Agenda           |
| Landmark/District: | <b>Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District</b> |          | Consent Calendar |
| Meeting Date:      | <b>June 2, 2016</b>                        | <b>X</b> | Concept Review   |
| H.P.A. Number:     | <b>16-377</b>                              | <b>X</b> | Alteration       |
| Staff Reviewer:    | <b>Steve Callcott</b>                      |          | New Construction |
|                    |  |          | Demolition       |
|                    |  |          | Subdivision      |

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Architect Amy Gardner (Gardner Mohr Architects), representing owner Beth-Ann Gentile, seeks conceptual design review for construction of a roof addition to a two-story building in the Sheridan Kalorama Historic District.

**Property History and Description**

2161 Florida Avenue is a two-story brick building that was originally constructed as a garage between 1907 and 1911. It was historically associated with the mansion at 1609 22<sup>nd</sup> Street which was designed by Wood Donn and Deming in 1905, but the garage was built several years after the completion of the house. Measuring approximately 25' x 22' in plan, the building was converted to residential use and subdivided to be on its own lot prior to designation of the historic district in the 1980s.

The building had a garage door facing the alley (the opening of which is bricked in), flanked by shuttered double hung six-over-six windows; the second floor had three similar windows to the first floor, the middle of which has been bricked in. The elevation facing Florida Avenue has three openings on each floor, one of which on the first floor is a door. The building is set back from the property line with the yard enclosed by a 6' high brick wall; a second lower brick wall separates a parking space from the sidewalk.

The building's context is defined by the rear elevations of large townhouses facing 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and R Street which range in height between three and five stories. The alley does not contain other alley buildings.

**Proposal**

The project calls for constructing a third floor clad in brick and transparent and translucent glass. New wood carriage doors would be installed in the location of the original opening and the bricked-in second story window reopened. The low brick wall adjacent to the sidewalk would be removed and replaced with an evergreen hedge.

**Evaluation**

The evocation of the original garage doors and reopening the second floor window are restorative in nature and will enhance the historic character of the property. The replacement

of the brick wall with a hedge will provide as softer, more natural treatment of the property's edge while screening the parking space from the street.

This building's particular site condition – a single structure that is not part of a larger alley setting – and its context surrounded by the taller rear elevations of surrounding townhouses lends itself to a third floor addition that is compatible with the character of the historic district. The design has been developed to respect the building's underlying mass and character and to be clearly distinguishable as a contemporary addition. The proportions and spacing of the windows in the addition have been sized and placed to replicate those in the underlying building, and the translucent panels are proposed as a contemporary, visually light weight field on which the windows would be arranged. The modest set back on the east and north sides has been added to reduce the mass and further distinguish the addition.

As the design continues to be refined, the applicants may want to consider reducing the contrast in color between the vertical window framing and the translucent panels. As rendered, the charcoal colored framing elements results in a graphic quality that may draw more attention to the addition and its many component parts than if the framing was lighter in color and less sharply contrasting with the panels.

**Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Review Board find the concept compatible with the character of the historic district and delegate final approval to staff.*