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

Property Address:	327 Cedar Street, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Takoma Park Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	July 27, 2023	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	23-288		Alteration
		X	New Construction
			Demolition

TM Associates LLC and the Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) return for ongoing conceptual design review for construction of a seven-story mixed-use housing and retail development on a 6.78 acre site at the Takoma Metro station in the Takoma Park Historic District.

At the June 1st meeting, the Board did not take a formal action, but the members expressed that the site plan and general conceptual approach to the project were well thought out and there was agreement that this site could support a building of this size and height. However, the members thought that the design of the building facing Carroll Street needed to be edited, simplified, and unified and concurred with the recommendations in the HPO report that further evaluation of color, materials, detailing and composition were needed for the building to be found compatible with the Takoma Park Historic District. The Board also asked that more detailed mapping and treatment of the heritage trees and the design of the public park be provided.

Revised Proposal

The plans have been revised and additional information provided in response to the Board's comments:

- 1) A higher proportion of brick has been incorporated in the facades, with detailing and patterning to provide visual interest,
- 2) The material colors have been revised to warmer earth tones that are more evocative of the Takoma Park neighborhood,
- 3) On the L-shaped building (facing Carroll and Cedar), the facades have been simplified and made more cohesive, with elimination of the white enframing element and corner tower, and providing a consistent, recessive treatment on the top floor on each of the two elevations,
- 4) The L-shaped building's brick facades have been more effectively grounded with brick piers extending through the storefront level to visually support the upper floors,
- 5) Metal sign bands with decorative patterning have been incorporated into the storefronts to provide detailing and texture,
- 6) A more detailed tree retention and planting plan has been provided,
- 7) A more detailed plan for the park has been provided.

Evaluation

The revisions are responsive to the Board's comments and improve the compatibility of the project. The L-shaped building is substantially simplified and more cohesive, and the colors throughout are more reflective of the Takoma Park neighborhood. The use of pattern and detailing provide greater visual interest and relates to the craftsmanship found within the historic district's contributing buildings.

While the parameters of the park have been developed as illustrated in the updated submission, the final design and programming will continue to be developed in consultation with the ANC. Unless a substantial change to the park's size, circulation or tree retention plan is proposed, it is recommended that the public consultation be allowed to proceed and that the park not be subject to further HPRB review.

As the project continues to be refined, HPO recommends consideration of two additional areas for further study:

- 1) In a recent case regarding new construction in the Anacostia Historic District (1605 Good Hope Road SE), the proposal's compatibility was enhanced by a redesign of what had initially been proposed as generic metal balcony railings with a site-specific design that was developed to relate to the character of that district. A similar opportunity exists here for the balcony railings that could add distinction to the project.
- 2) While both flush and projecting storefronts are found in the historic district, the use of projecting storefronts would provide a more human scale and three-dimensional cadence to the base of the building.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Review Board find the revised concept to be compatible with the character of the Takoma Park Historic District, and to delegate final approval to staff.

HPO staff contact: Steve Callcott