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

Landmark/District:	Takoma Park Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	220 Aspen Street, NW	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	March 28, 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	19-166	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
		<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Owners Geoffrey Bromaghim and Lindsay Damon, with plans prepared by architect Lisa Rigazio, seek concept review for a two-story addition at the rear of their one-story house in the Takoma Park Historic District.

Property Description

220 Aspen Street is a modest one-story bungalow with a half-width front porch. It was designed by the Minter Homes Corporation and built by Henry Van Devanter in 1923. Minter Homes was a manufacturer of ready-to-build housing, developed as an off-shoot of the Huntington Lumber and Supply Company located in Huntington, West Virginia. Online sources differ in identifying the date of the company's founding, listing 1887 or 1913. If founded in 1887, it would be the nation's oldest manufacturer of prefabricated houses. Minter continued in operation producing house kits until the 1950's and closed permanently in 1982.¹

Three other houses in the historic district were built by Van Devanter with designs by Minter Homes -- 222 Aspen next door, and 6804 and 6806 Laurel Street. All date from 1922-23. The houses are representative of the many mail-order kit houses that are found in the Takoma Park Historic District.

Proposal

The plans call for removing a small rear wing and constructing an addition behind the main block of the house that would include a one-story living room and a two-story bedroom section. The additions would be clad in siding and capped by roofs that would match the pitch of the house. The non-original windows in the main block would be replaced with six-over-ones to replicate the original fenestration, and a bay window on the side elevation would be lowered in height back to its original condition. The fenestration in the additions would be contemporary vertically-oriented casements.

¹ Casto, James E. "Lost Huntington: Minter Homes Corp." Herald-Dispatch, Huntington West Virginia, September 11, 2017; Bainbridge, Judith "Minter Homes Put Root in Greenville" Greenville News, Greenville South Carolina, April 10, 2014.

Evaluation

One-story houses are rare in Washington and present unusual architectural challenges for their expansion. The architect's initial approach was to remove the roof and add vertically to the house which, while resulting in a handsome larger bungalow design, resulted in substantial demolition and would have fundamentally altered the character of this modest house.

The proposed solution is a contemporary take on a camelback house, a building form that dates to the 19th century that features a two-story rear wing behind a one-story mass at the front. The camelback is often found on shotgun houses in New Orleans and other southern cities where one-story houses are not uncommon. The Board approved this type of solution at 3027 Rodman Street NW in the Cleveland Park Historic District in 2004, at 518 9th Street, SE in the Capitol Hill Historic District (date uncertain), and a three-story camelback for the shotgun house on Capitol Hill at 1229 E Street SE in 2017.

As in the previously approved projects, the proposal achieves compatibility by retaining and siting the addition off the primary mass of the building, using compatible materials, and replicating the form and pitch of the roof. While the addition will have some visibility from the street, when seen in perspective the result will be a complementary series of three shallow gabled roofs (the porch, the main block and the addition) stepping back from the street.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept to be compatible with the historic district, and to delegate further review to staff.

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