

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

Landmark/District:	U Street Historic District	(X) Agenda
Address:	1901 9th Street NW	() Consent
		(X) Concept
Meeting Date:	May 28th, 2020	(X) Alteration
HPA Case Number:	20-117	() New Construction

Ronnie McGhee and Associates, architect and agent for property owner 9th Street LLC, returns to the Board for concept review of a four-story rear addition and excavation for a basement level on a two-story brick house. When the Board last reviewed the project in February, it found the proposed four-story addition incompatible and asked that it be designed to reduce its height and visibility.

Property Description

The property is located near the corner of 9th and T Streets, abutting the rear yard of the corner building, thus semidetached, affording public views along the side of the subject property and into its rear yard. It is a two-story contributing brick building with a rear ell, built before 1888 and likely from the late 1870s. The building is not part of matching row, but stands on a block with diverse rowhouse types ranging in height from two to three stories. The house has a one-story rear addition. The front elevation appears to retain its original 2-over-2 windows.

Revised Proposal

As in the previous plans, the four-story addition would replace the original ell and a later addition and proposes to infill most of the rear lot, putting the front wall of the addition 29 feet back from the house's façade. The addition would be clad in cementitious panel to match the color of the neighbor's property. The existing windows and doors will be replaced per the Board's guidelines, and the interior will be renovated.

The revised plans maintain the four levels but lowers the height of the addition by staggering the interior levels relative to the existing floors into a basement level, and the set back of the fourth floor has been increased to 38 feet from the front façade and provided with a slanted roof toward the front. A roof deck has been added to span the roof of the third floor and stepping down to the roof of the existing building. The height of the addition from the existing roofline will be approximately 14 feet.

Evaluation

The revised proposal appreciably reduces the height of the addition and minimizes its view along the street. A flag test for a ten foot tall addition was performed and was slightly visible across the street and while the addition remains visible through the rear yard of the adjacent property. it is sufficiently compatible with other third-story additions in the U Street Historic District. However, because the roof of the addition will be somewhat visible, it is recommended that it's shape be simplified to eliminate the slanted front edge.

The deck over the third floor addition is compatible with other roof decks along 9th street however, it is recommended that the deck not extend over the existing building's roof. The proposal does not show window wells or egress windows associated with the excavation for the basement, and such features could not be compatibility accommodated on the front elevation of this at-grade building. Approval of the basement level should be made contingent on no exterior

alterations being made to the front of the building for window wells, areaways or other features. Similarly, all utility meters associated with the expanded building should be accommodated inside or on a secondary elevation.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept, contingent on the following: 1) revised the design of the fourth floor roof as a straight slope towards the rear; 2) the deck on the roof of the existing building is eliminated; 3) the basement level is constructed without resulting in exterior alterations to the front façade or front yard; 4) a flag test with HPO is conducted for the revised plans prior to the approval of permit plans.

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