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

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Property Address:	<b>1250 U Street, NW</b>	<b>X</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>U Street Historic District</b>		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	<b>December 16, 2021</b>	<b>X</b>	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	<b>21-421</b>	<b>X</b>	Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Steve Callcott</b>	<b>X</b>	New Construction
			Demolition
			Subdivision

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Shalom Baranes Associates Architects, representing EastBanc and Jamestown, seeks on-going conceptual design review for construction of a 10-story plus penthouse apartment building at 13<sup>th</sup> and U streets and townhouses along Temperance Court alley in the U Street Historic District.

When considered at the November 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board did not vote on the application but expressed concern about the proposed height and mass of the 10-story building and asked the applicants to study whether removing a floor and/or further modulating the mass could improve the project's compatibility. The Board did not provide specific design comments or recommendations for the alley buildings along Temperance Court, but asked the applicants to consider how the history of the alley could be collected and interpreted within the context of the project.

### **Revised Proposal**

The plans have been revised to provide additional setbacks to the apartment building in an effort to reduce the visual impact of the U Street. On the top floor, the setback on the east has been increased by 7' and on the west by 6'. Along 13<sup>th</sup> Street, two new alternative massing treatments are included. Option A, the applicants' preference, reduces the width of the building on all floors by 5'8". Option B proposes to reduce the width by 14' on the top two floors, stepping down to a secondary mass. To offset the density loss from the setbacks, the south-facing court has been slightly reduced in size.

Revisions have been to improve the visibility and prominence of the Metro entrance (again, with two options), and a preliminary plan has been developed to introduce historic interpretation and storytelling of the historic Temperance Court community.

### **Evaluation**

The increased side (east and west) setbacks of the top floor are more effective than the previous iteration at reducing its visual prominence and helping lower the apparent height, as seen from perspective views, and the additional modulation on the side elevations provides some break in the building's mass. HPO concurs with the applicant that option A on 13<sup>th</sup> Street is the better of the two, with improved, thinner proportions for the corner element.

Both options for the Metro introduce a “skylight” in the roof above the entrance to the escalators and double height artwork to improve the proportions and extent of light in the space under the landing of the new stairs to the second-floor retail space. Option A, in which the skylight abuts the rear wall of the building, might be more successful in expressing the height of the space and allowing the artwork to be read as a continuous element without being bifurcated by the landing.

**Recommendation**

*The HPO seeks the Board’s determination as to whether the revisions are sufficient to address its previous concerns.*