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

Landmark/District:	U Street Historic District	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	1303 T Street NW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	January 28, 2021	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	21-125	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
		<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Owner David Getson, with plans prepared by Shawn Buehler of BFM Architects, seeks conceptual review for construction of a roof addition atop this contributing building within the U Street Historic District.

Property Description

The 1300 block of T Street consists of mid-to-late nineteenth century two-story frame and masonry buildings. 1303 was built by 1874 as a two-story rowhouse with a rear ell. The property is flanked by three-story Richardsonian Romanesque rowhouses. In contrast, the subject property is a modest brick structure with a one-story bay window under a front porch. The house extends approximately 61 feet in length and is roughly 21 feet in height. The primary elevation features three punched windows on the second floor and a cornice with dentils and end brackets.

The proposal calls for a third story roof addition with front roof deck. The roof deck will be set back 5' from the façade. The tallest portion of the third story roof addition will be set 34' from the existing face of the building. The addition will be 8'3" in height and clad in Hardi Plank horizontal siding. The proposal calls from a glass railing along the roof deck.

Evaluation

The Board has typically required that roof additions on rowhouses be not visible from street view. As stated in its design guide for roof additions: "roof additions that are visible from a public street are not appropriate, as they would alter an historic building's height, mass, design composition, cornice line, roof, and its relationship to surrounding buildings and streetscape – all of which are important character-defining features that are protected for historic property." However, in limited instances, the Board has determined very minimal visibility that does not detract from the character of the historic property nor the character of the row can be acceptable. (such as at two recent cases in the U Street Historic District at 1909 9th Street and 1924 10th Street).



As currently proposed, the third story addition would be slightly visible from the far side of T Street, as shown in the photograph of the lumber mock up (above). With substantially taller buildings on either side blocking views of the addition from perspective angles, the extent of visibility would be limited to a small top sliver of the addition from a straight-on view. As this minor amount of visibility, set back 34' from the front elevation, would not alter the building's perceived height, mass, design composition, cornice line, roof or relationship to surrounding buildings, HPO believes it is consistent with the intent of the Board's guidelines.

However, HPO would recommend that the applicant increase the setback of the front roof deck by at least another 4 feet in order to ensure that equipment, umbrellas and furniture would not be visible from street view.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Board approve the proposed roof addition on the condition that the roof deck be set down in existing roof, moved to the rear, or that all equipment be eliminated from it.

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