

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

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Property Address:	<b>1481 Florida Avenue NW</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>U Street Historic District</b>	<b>X</b> Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	<b>April 30, 2015</b>	<b>X</b> Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	<b>15-244</b>	<b>X</b> Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Anne Brockett</b>	New Construction

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Architect Norman Smith returns to the Board to seek conceptual review for a revised design to add a four-story side addition to this end rowhouse in the U Street Historic District. The house is situated on a shallow, triangular lot and features a wider façade and a front bay of different proportions that projects off the corner (rather than front) of the house.

### **Project Description**

In response to comments by the HPRB and HPO, the architect has reworked the design in the following ways:

- Brick will be used for the first floor with hardipanel for all floors above, which creates a uniform base and more successfully integrates the fourth floor with those below.
- The fourth floor has been pulled out nearly flush with the floors below at the front and the side “wings” have been eliminated to create a footprint that mimics the floors below.
- The sloped roof has been flattened; balconies added at the ends only, and a metal structure has been added to frame the roof area.
- The height of the hyphen has been reduced by one floor.
- The perceived verticality has been increased through fenestration positioning and orientation.
- Windows have been added to the previously blank walls at the south and southeast.
- The front entry has been reworked to share a single leadwalk and replace excess paving with landscaping.

### **Evaluation and Recommendation**

The architect has addressed the concerns and comments of the HPRB and HPO. The lowered hyphen, footprint of the fourth floor, cladding treatment, window placement and proportions, and the elimination of the front roof deck all work together to create a compatible alteration. The one suggestion from staff would be to eliminate the horizontal metal framing element where it extends beyond the building face at the fourth floor roofline. While this feature does serve as a modern cornice to cap the building, it also increases the perceived size of the top floor by extending to the northeast and southwest of the actual building, which is counter to the setback as proposed. Otherwise, the addition fits in with its surrounding residential context and is consistent with similar approvals in the U Street Historic District.

*The HPO recommends that the Board find the proposal for a side addition compatible with the historic district and consistent with the purposes of the preservation act and to delegate final approval to staff.*