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

Landmark/District:	U Street Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	1708 ½ 10th Street NW	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Meeting Date:	September 30, 2021	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Case Number:	21-521	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Applicant Arcadia Design seeks concept review for the renovation and alteration of a non-contributing two-story building into a three-story building with a raised basement in the U Street Historic District.

Property Description

1708 ½ 10th Street NW is a two-story flat front brick building constructed in 1953 for Edwin Shelton. It is flanked by contributing row of two-story buildings to the east and a row of taller contributing two-story buildings with raised basement to the west.



Contextual view of 1708 ½ 10th St NW, location of property indicated with arrow

Proposal

The existing non-contributing building would be renovated into a three-story with raised basement brick row house with a projecting bay. At 35' tall, it would be taller than the height of the neighboring buildings. The building would be fifty-six feet deep. The bay would have three ganged windows at the front with a large window at the third floor and a smaller window at the window well. The main entry would have a full lite door with a large transom window, awning, and punched window above. The metal stairs would be offset to the side to accommodate a basement entrance that sits beside a window well. The cornice would have corbeled brick detailing to align with the two-story historic contributing building. The rear elevation and third story addition would be clad in a lap siding. There is a rear roof deck on the

second floor and a roof deck at the rear of third story addition. At the rear of the property would be two parking pads and a raised brick patio.

Evaluation

The proposed height and mass of the building raise compatibility concerns. The height is distinctly taller than the flanking contributing properties, and appears discordant with the overall heights of the block. While one or two -story additions on non-contributing buildings can be appropriate, the scale must remain in line with the context of the row, and the third story addition should not be significantly taller than the neighboring property (1708). The problem is exacerbated by the roof deck on the third story that adds to height of the addition, and the 35' does not include the measurement of the parapet and glass guard rails towards the rear. The mass of the building - with a raised two-story primary block and a slightly recessed (but still quite visible) third story - is not typical of the straight-forward, simple massing presented by rowhouses in the historic district and is more typical of pop-ups found outside of historic districts.

HPO recommends that the height of the building be lowered by lowering the level of the basement to push the building further down into the grade, reducing the floor-to-floor heights, and eliminating the rooftop deck and parapet to make it more consistent in height with historic houses in this row. As well, it is recommended that the third floor be pulled to the front façade to simplify the overly complicated massing.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends the Board find the project design to be compatible with the U Street Historic District on the condition that the third story level be lowered and aligned with the front façade, with removal of the third story roof deck, and that final approval be delegated to staff.

Staff contact: Imania Price