

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

Property Address:	1833 12th St NW	Agenda
Landmark/District:	U Street Historic District	X Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	January 24, 2019	X Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	19- 133	X Alteration

Applicant Nathan Behling requests concept review for façade restoration, a front basement stair, and construction of an addition above and to the rear of a rowhouse in the U Street Historic District.

Property Description

The house is one in long row of identical houses constructed by builder J.E. Mandley for owner J.C. Rumsey in 1877. The houses are two stories in height with a one-story wood projecting bay and capped by imposing wood cornices detailed by brackets, dentil moldings, and modillions. The original two-over-two windows are capped by brick hood lintels; the two windows over the projecting bays on the second floor are elongated.

Proposal

The proposed addition at the rear fills in the existing dogleg and extends the length six feet. A new third floor would be set back thirteen feet from the façade and clad in brick veneer. Along the front façade, the applicant proposes to remove the “fieldstone” cladding and restore the wood details. The façade will also propose new metal stairs and a new concrete stair to a basement entrance in compliance with historic guidelines.

Evaluation

The rear and roof additions are compatible with the historic district and consistent with previous Board approvals. The roof addition does not overwhelm the underlying building in scale or massing and HPO inspected a mock-up of the roof addition and confirmed that it will not be visible from the public right of way.

However, the location of the roof addition will require that the front chimneys on each side of the property be raised three feet above the height of the roof addition, resulting in them being extremely visible and incompatibly tall for the row.¹ In order for the roof addition to be found compatible, an alternative solution for the chimneys will need to be identified. Options could include closing the chimneys off (if they are no longer used), providing mechanical venting if allowed by code, or setting the roof addition back the required 10 feet from the chimney so that they do not need to be raised in height.

¹ The building code requires that an active chimney be raised three feet higher than the roof of any portion of the building that is within ten feet of the chimney.

The new basement stair is compatible with the house and consistent with the principles outlined in the Board's guideline for basement areaways and window wells.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept compatible with the character of the historic district and consistent with the purposes of the Act contingent on a solution being achieved that doesn't raise the chimneys to where they are visible above the building's roof line, and that final approval be delegated to staff.

Staff Contact: Imania Price