

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

Property Address:	1923 9th Street NW	Agenda
Landmark/District:	U Street Historic District	X Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	September 22, 2016	X Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	16-572	Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	Anne Brockett	X New Construction

Working with the architecture firm DEP, Ditto Residential LLC proposes to demolish a non-contributing single car garage that occupies a small portion of this lot and construct a 5-story residential building. The lot is situated between a pair of relocated and restored two-story rowhouses to the north and a two-story non-contributing commercial building to the south. Wrapping behind the site is a multi-story residential building facing onto 8th Street, 9th Street, and Florida Avenue.

Project Description

The proposed masonry building would stand four stories tall with a pushed back fifth floor, faced with textured concrete at the base, composite panels at the fifth floor, and a composed arrangement of stone panels and brick for the second through fourth floors. A projecting bay of three stories plus balcony would be largely glass with spandrel panels at each floor. The remainder of the façade would be occupied by a vertical column of glass rising up from the main door. A tall parapet would hide a green roof and roof deck for the fifth floor unit, which is pushed back more than 30 feet from the front.

The building rises to its full height at the rear alley, clad in concrete at the lower level and composite panels above with a balanced fenestration composition. Because of the low height of the building to the north, the design calls for at risk windows on the north elevation, arranged in an asymmetrical pattern and flanked by panels of sections of stone panels. On the south elevation, a vertical strip of glazing towards the front carries over the design and materials of the façade.

Evaluation

Since their initial submission, the plans have been revised to reduce the height, particularly of the fifth floor, and by shifting the bay window down a floor so it now rests on the ground and extends only up to the third floor. Both modifications help the building better relate to the streetscape and bring the height (actual and perceived) lower. The design of the façade is well composed relating its proportions and lines to the historic building to the north and utilizing modern yet compatible materials. The addition of windows on the sides and the use of modular siding helps alleviate what would otherwise be highly visible blank walls.

Despite abutting smaller historic buildings, the considerable width of the lot can accommodate a building of this height, as it results in a proportional height-to-width relationship that is compatible with the surrounding historic buildings. In form, massing, size, and materials and composition of the elevations, the building is compatible with the historic district and relates well to the smaller historic buildings directly to the north and throughout the district. The HPO commends the applicants for their sensitive approach to designing in a historic district and their responsiveness to HPO comments.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find construction of a five-story building at 1923 9th Street NW compatible with the U Street Historic District and consistent with the act and to delegate final review to staff.