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

Property Address:	1272 5th Street NE	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Union Market Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	July 27, 2023	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	23-433	X	Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	Steve Callcott		New Construction
			Demolition
			Subdivision

416 Morse Street NE LLC, with plans prepared by architect Will Couch of Edens, seeks conceptual design review for construction of an aluminum and glass enclosure atop the front loading dock of a contributing building in the Union Market Historic District.

Property History and Description

The Union Market Historic District consists of 70 wholesale market warehouse buildings dating from 1929-1939. The historic district is formed by two central rows of buildings extending along 4th and 5th streets and two smaller rows lining Morse Street.

The market complex was conceived in 1928 by a federation of wholesalers (the Union Terminal Market Association) who, in anticipation of the demolition of Center Market for construction of the Federal Triangle, sought to establish a wholesale and farmers' market in northeast D.C. The association purchased the land, devised a street plan, and established a standard building form and style for the individual market buildings.

The buildings were designed by E.L. Bullock, Jr. and are all uniformly designed, symmetrical, two-story, Classical Revival-style structures clad in buff brick and steel sash windows with prominent projecting concrete loading docks. Classical detailing includes concrete bas-relief panels, Doric columns, blind arches above single rectangular window openings, and occasional projecting pediments on center units.

Proposal

The plans call for an aluminum framed enclosure with sliding glass walls and operable roof fins. Two options are provided – a larger option that would be 24' wide by 33' deep and extend out from (but not be connected to) the front façade, and a smaller option measuring 24' wide by 16'6" deep, set approximately 15' away from the building's front façade.

Evaluation

The first floor of buildings in Union Market (the former loading docks) have been extensively altered and enclosed over the years. As they have already been altered, maximum flexibility is given to tenants and owners to modify the enclosures to express the individuality of their businesses.

Conversely, the second floors of the buildings remain largely unified by their original design of repeating bas relief panels and steel windows under a continuous roofline. The continuity that

arises from the repetition of the same building design along an entire block gives the market an architectural cadence and rhythm that is perhaps its most important visual characteristic.

The proposed structure is not compatible with and interrupts that characteristic uniformity. This is not a reflection of the architect's design; it is simply that any enclosure in this location is not consistent with the preservation goal of retaining the cohesive, continuous design of the second floor front elevations visible and unencumbered.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Review Board find the proposed enclosure to be incompatible with the character of the Union Market Historic District.



Larger proposed enclosure at top; smaller proposed enclosure below.