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

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|--------------------|---|----------|------------------|
| Property Address: | 1250-1274 5th Street NE | X | Consent Calendar |
| Landmark/District: | Union Market Historic District | | Agenda |
| Meeting Date: | April 27, 2017 | X | Concept Review |
| H.P.A. Number: | 17-306 | X | Alteration |
| Staff Reviewer: | Steve Callcott | | New Construction |
| | | | Demolition |
| | | | Subdivision |

Property owner Edens seeks review of a subdivision to combine lots containing adjoining contributing buildings in the Union Market Historic District. The lot consolidation is proposed for the purposes of allowing openings within the party walls for future tenants to occupy spaces across existing lot lines.

Property Description

The Union Market Historic District consists of 70 wholesale market warehouse buildings dating from 1929-1939. The historic district is a nine-acre section of the larger 42-acre commercial complex, located in the triangular tract of land east of where the diagonal New York and Florida avenues cross, east of Union Station. The historic core is formed by two central rows of buildings extending along 4th and 5th streets, NE, and two smaller rows lining Morse Street, NE.

The market complex was conceived in 1928 by a federation of wholesalers called the Union Terminal Market Association, who, in anticipation of the demolition of Center Market for construction of the Federal Triangle, sought to establish both a wholesale and farmers' market in northeast D.C. The private association purchased the land, devised a street plan for the wholesale market complex, 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 materials, with projecting loading docks with covered roofs, and steel sash windows. Classical detailing includes concrete panels with garland *bas-reliefs*, Doric columns, blind arches above single rectangular window openings, and occasional projecting pediments on center units.

Proposal

The subdivision would combine lots 23-28 which consists of five loading bays and is known as 1250-1258 5th Street; lot 807 (old lots 15-17) and 809 (old lots 13-14) which also consists of five loading bays and is known as 1260-1268 5th Street; and lots 10-12 which consists of three loading bays and is known as 1270-1274 5th Street.

The subdivision is part of a project that will include renovation of the buildings for ground-level retail and upper level office or retail uses. The proposal for exterior work is being developed in coordination with HPO and is being proposed in a manner that is consistent with preservation

standards. The applicants have recently started exploring using the federal rehabilitation tax credits for the project, which would result in the project being certified by the National Park Service as meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Evaluation

The first floors of these buildings have already been combined and altered over the years and will likely continue to change as new tenants with different spatial needs are identified. The applicants' primary goal is to allow greater flexibility and co-joining of the second floor spaces, which remain separated by fire walls into individual spaces. The proposal includes a summary by architect David Lopez (LED Better Studio LLC) which explains how combining the lots into a single building would satisfy requirements in the DC Building Code.

Combining the lots into a single lot for the purposes of improving the viability of renovating the buildings and reusing the existing second floors is consistent with the purposes of the preservation act. The only hesitation that the proposal raises is that the larger single lot provides a footprint that makes a future speculative redevelopment project with additional floors proposed above the historic structures more feasible. However, regardless of the subdivision, such a proposal would still be fully within the Board's jurisdiction to review to ensure compatibility with the historic district.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Review Board approve the lot combination subdivision as consistent with the purposes of the preservation act.