

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

Property Address:	2803 28th Street, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Woodley Park Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	December 21, 2017	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	18-104	X	Alteration New Construction

On behalf of owners Jennifer Morris and Eugene Moses, architect Thomas Lenar of Sixarch proposes a roof addition, infill construction at the second floor rear, and a new deck and fenestration arrangement on the first floor rear of this 1922 home in the Woodley Park Historic District.

Description of Work

The proposal calls for adding a level behind the existing front mansard roof. The new third floor would have a minimally sloped roof and allow a 7'6" interior height. The addition would be set back approximately 9 feet from the rear wall with a roof deck covering the remainder of the roof below. On the second floor, two recessed areas flanking the center will be filled in to align with the floor below and a small area of the basement level will also receive an addition below the first floor.

Due to a slope running southward on 28th Street, the roof addition would be set in by approximately two feet at the southwest corner where the peak of the mansard is slightly visible over the rooflines of the adjacent houses.

The addition would be clad in cementitious board siding on the rear and sides and windows and doors would be rearranged to align with new interior spaces. The small rear deck would be expanded to run across the rear face of the building, representing the only increase to the building's footprint.

Evaluation

The Board has reviewed numerous additions of this type, where a high mansard protects the new addition from view, and has determined it to be a compatible way to add to rowhouses. Although the proposal would alter the rear roofline, the overall massing and appearance remain the same from the front. The rear elevation is typically where change is most appropriately sited and this addition, with its generous 9-foot setback from the rear wall, does not overwhelm the underlying building or create an uncomfortable height along a pristine row or alleyscape. Infilling the areas of the rear elevation is also compatible, as is expanding the deck and shifting door and window openings on the rear. The second floor infill will bring the house into alignment with the houses to either side. The roof addition will appear similar to the one erected two doors down at 2807, part of the same row of homes constructed in 1922. The project proposes no increase to the building's footprint other than the wider deck.

The Woodley Park Community Association formulated a set of guidelines in 2016 to “express to the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) the sense of the residents of the Woodley Park Historic District as to the characteristics deemed of importance and worthy of preservation.” These guidelines take a conservative approach to alterations at the rear, stating that additions “should not disturb uniform sightlines or consistent patterns of a particular alley or portion of an alley in cases where such sightlines or patterns exist. The exception to this is alleys or portions alleys that do not have uniform sightlines or consistent patterns.” While the Board did not formally adopt these guidelines, it is worth noting that the property two doors to the north has received a similar roof addition, infill of the second floor has occurred on both adjacent homes, and other alterations have taken place along the rear facades over the years. Thus, it is difficult to label this portion of the alley one that has inherent uniformity.

As confirmed by the construction of a mockup and site visit by staff, the notch out of the front corner of the addition should be sufficient to eliminate any visibility from 28th Street and the architect has committed to ensuring this invisibility throughout plan development and construction. As the design continues to be refined, the detailing and final materials selection will be developed in consultation with HPO.

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 preservation act and to delegate final approval to staff.