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

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Property Address: <b>1216-1226 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW</b>	(X) Agenda
Landmark/District: <b>Shaw Historic District, Blagden Alley/Naylor Court Historic District</b>	( ) Consent Calendar
ANC: <b>2F</b>	( ) Denial Calendar
Meeting Date: <b>April 25, 2013</b>	(X) Concept Review
H.P.A. Number: <b>#13-215</b>	(X) Alteration
Staff Reviewer: <b>Brendan Meyer</b>	( ) New Construction
	(X) Demolition
	(X) Subdivision

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The applicant, owner Douglas Development Corporation, seeks concept approval for a three-story rear addition to three adjoining rowhouses at 1216, 1218 and 1226 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW which are contributing properties in both the Shaw and Blagden Alley/Naylor Court Historic Districts. The addition would require a subdivision to join the three lots into a single lot. Plans were prepared by Antunovich Associates.



**Figure 1** Rear addition viewed from southwest

### Property Description and Context

This part of 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW is representative of more than 150 years of development along a major commercial corridor. Victorian rowhouses dating from 1870 to 1890, survived as commercial uses after 1920. Interspersed among the two and three-story rowhouses are some smaller one and two story commercial structures and an early automotive showroom. Taken together, the immediate blocks are a diverse collection of heights and materials reflective of the accretion of generations of development.

Opposite the site is the Walter E. Washington Convention Center which spans between 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets from Mount Vernon Square to N Street.

The three rowhouses each date approximately to the 1870s based on their construction method, ornamentation, and lack of original building permit records.<sup>1</sup> Each of the three buildings is slightly different in form, but all exhibit particular characteristics of early Victorian buildings. 1216 9<sup>th</sup> is two stories with a two story projecting bay, 1218 is a three-story flat-front building, and 1226 is two stories with a one story projecting bay. Windows are aligned horizontally across all three building and have narrow and tall proportions. Windows are segmentally arched and ornamented with a variety of metal hoods and skewbacks. Cornices are wood with arched friezes between brackets.

1216 and 1218 9<sup>th</sup> Street are both in good to very good condition despite having been vacant for approximately 10 years, however, this is not true of 1226 9<sup>th</sup>. A Paulownia tree has taken root at the rear roof parapet, grown roots down through the masonry to the basement, and as the roots have expanded, the tree has displaced enough bricks to cause a collapse of all framing from roof through basement at the rear of the building.<sup>2</sup>

The Blagden Alley – Naylor Court Historic District was designated as a historic district because of its notable collection of alley buildings including alley dwellings, stables, garages, warehouses, and other light industrial buildings. The only alley structure on the project site is at the rear of 1226 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW. It is two-story garage with a bricked-in opening above a vehicle door that is adjacent to a row of one-story garages. All of the garage structures are contributing buildings in the historic district in various degrees of condition. The garage at 1226 is exhibiting serious structural deficiencies where the west façade is no longer connected to the north façade and is bowing towards the alley at this corner.

The vacant lot to the south of the project site was given concept approval by the Board in May 2012 for a new 5-story building (1212 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW, HPA #12-504).

## **Proposal**

The applicant proposes to restore all faces of the historic buildings including the straightening and reattaching the alley façade of the garage. All three lots will be joined into a single lot and connect the structures both internally with selective penetrations through party walls and with a rear addition. To make space for the rear addition, the rear wing ells of 1218 and 1226 would be demolished. The maximum height of the addition will align with the rear of the historic three-story building in the center of the group and enclose an interior combination of one-, two- and three-story spaces. The portion of the rear addition extending back from 1216 will only be one story in height and include a series of enclosed rooms and open courts.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> Street end, the rear addition will abut, and substantially retain, the rear walls of the main blocks of the rowhouses. On the Blagden Alley end, the addition will rest on top of the back six feet of the existing garage, but the garage wall will be preserved as a feature inside the addition. The

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<sup>1</sup> DC building permit records only become a reliable dating tool starting about 1878 when building permits became a requirement for new construction.

<sup>2</sup> Paulownia trees are a very real menace to historic masonry buildings. These trees are invasive and almost literally eat buildings. They are particularly rampant in Blagden Alley, Mount Vernon Square and LeDroit Park. Trees grow ten feet a year. When pruned they sprout multiple new trunks and branches. In their native habitat they take root in cliff faces. In urban environments they take root in brick walls.

moderately pitched roof of the garage will be removed and replaced with a flat deck hidden behind the retained side walls of the garage.

The addition will show an exterior wall of large masonry units in a stacked pattern. Fenestration will be concentrated at the alley end of the addition on both the west and south walls and feature large banks of ganged casement windows with wood plank spandrels and headers between floors of windows. The same arrangement of windows and wood plank spandrels would be used at the two vehicle sized openings where the addition meets the alley.

### **Evaluation**

The existing conditions of the building and a flag test of the height of the addition have been inspected by staff. The flag test exhibited that the portion of the three story addition that is behind 1226 is set far enough back and screened sufficiently by adjacent properties that the front of the addition will not be visible along 9<sup>th</sup> Street. The amount of demolition required is not substantial. The structural components of the building including load bearing walls, roofs, and floor systems, with the exception of the collapsed floors at the rear of 1226, are intact and will be mostly retained. The rear wings to be demolished are not significant character defining features, or will be retained as is the case for 1216.

The height and massing of the rear addition is compatible with the forms commonly associated with the rears of rowhouses and the arrangement of garages along Blagden Alley. This is achieved by arranging the taller part of the addition against the rowhouses and lowering the height of the addition to one story along the alley.

The simplicity of materials and scale of components matches the characteristics of the commercial and industrial building types of the alley. The use of robust sections of raw wood planks in the openings of the addition is particularly evocative of the heavy trabeated beam forms found throughout Blagden Alley.

### **Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept for a three-story rear addition at 1216, 1218 and 1226 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW, including the joining of the lots in to a single lot, and delegate final approval to staff.*



**Figure 2** Addition (grey) at alley next to existing garage (red).

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD



**HPRB ACTIONS**  
**April 25 and May 2, 2013**

The Historic Preservation Review Board met to consider the following items on April 25, 2013.

**Present: Gretchen Pfaehler, Chair; Rauzia Ally, Andrew Aurbach, Maria Casarella, Graham Davidson, Nancy Metzger, Joseph Taylor, and Charles Wilson.**

**APRIL 25<sup>TH</sup> AGENDA**

**McMILLAN PARK RESERVOIR**

McMillan Reservoir Sand Filtration Site; discussion of revised master plan and design guidelines (continuation of March 28 meeting).

*The Board expressed its appreciation for the hard work and substantial efforts of the VMP team and the community in working to improve the proposal, and found the revised master plan to be an improvement over the previous submission, particularly with retaining the raised berm/plinth condition at the south end of the site. The Board encouraged that the original tripartite organization be strengthened, such as by eliminating new secondary roads and encouraging a more cohesive site plan in the middle section. The Board continued to question the external orientation of the buildings and garden in the northern portion of the site, and the effect the new construction will have on the north maintenance corridor. While appreciative of the larger public park and preservation of open space in the southern portion, the plans for the park itself should be developed to maintain a strong sense of the site's open quality. As well, it was noted that the larger park had resulted in the new construction "ballooning out" elsewhere on the site, resulting in the loss of the Olmsted perimeter walk, which was felt to be an important element to retain and to unify the disparate new construction projects. To justify the extent of demolition and to ensure some sense of place be retained, the Board thought that the quality of new construction will need to be extremely high, and that the guidelines for new construction were perhaps not strong enough to ensure unity and cohesiveness among the various new buildings.*

**LANDMARK DESIGNATION HEARINGS**

Brigadier General George P. Scriven House, 1300 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Case #12-04.

*The Board designated the property a historic landmark to be entered in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites, and recommended that the nomination be forwarded to the National Register of Historic Places with a recommendation for listing as of local significance, with a period of significance of 1893 to 1918. Vote: 8-1 (Casarella opposed).*

**DUPONT CIRCLE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1216 18<sup>th</sup> Street NW, HPA #13-212, concept/rear roof deck and screening of mechanical equipment.

*The Board found the concept design for the addition to be compatible with the existing historic building and encouraged the architect to continue to develop the elevations and details to include a separation between the historic building and new construction through detailing, and to restudy 2<sup>nd</sup> floor louver and screen detail; include missing drawings of the west elevation; and requested to see the project in May for review. Vote: 9-0*

**HISTORIC LANDMARK**

Uline Arena & Icehouse (Washington Coliseum), 1140 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, NE, HPA #160, concept/alterations, roof additions.

*The HPRB found the conceptual design to be generally consistent with the purposes of the preservation act, with the additional study and consideration given to the following:*

*(1) Fenestration within the coliseum to better retain the pattern of fenestration on the M Street elevation and to ensure new windows are compatible with the building; (2) Design of the roof addition on the icehouse, particularly on the portion that wraps around to M Street, to improve its relationship with the underlying building; (3) Consideration of how the interior volume of the building might be retained in some portion of the coliseum; (4) On-site interpretation of the site's significance should be developed as an integral part of the building's design; 5) the parking garage and streetscape treatment should continue to be developed in consultation with the community. Vote: 9-0.*

**DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT**

819 6<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, HPA #12-492, concept/five-story rear addition.

*The Board found the concept for a five story rear addition to be compatible with the character of the historic building and its context within the Downtown Historic District, contingent on the location for mechanical equipment and utility meters being placed unobtrusively and detailing related to the addition being further refined, and delegated final approval to staff. Vote: 9-0.*

**KALORAMA TRIANGLE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

2012-2014 Kalorama Road NW, HPA#13-164, revised concept/alterations, rear addition.

*The Board found the revised concept to be compatible with the character of the historic district and consistent with the preservation act conditioned on a reduction of the perceived mass of the 4<sup>th</sup> floor, refinements to relay a more residential scale, and continued coordination with the community. The Board directed the applicant to return for permit review. HPRB approval shall not be construed as endorsement for any necessary zoning or building code relief. Vote: 9-0.*

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLANNING**

Public comments on 2016 Historic Preservation Plan (Draft).

*Public comments on the preservation plan were heard; no formal action was requested or taken by the HPRB.*

**MAY 2<sup>ND</sup> AGENDA**

The Historic Preservation Review Board met to consider the following items on May 2, 2013.

**Present:** Gretchen Pfaehler, Chair; Rauzia Ally, Andrew Aurbach, Graham Davidson, Nancy Metzger, and Charles Wilson. **Absent:** Maria Casarella, Bob Sonderman and Joseph Taylor.

**HISTORIC LANDMARK**

Hecht Company Warehouse, 1401 New York Avenue, NE, HPA #13-065, revised concept/adjacent construction of garage.

*The Board found the revised garage and streetscape concept plans to be compatible with the landmark and consistent with the preservation act. It was recommended that that the applicants continue to study the corner tower elements on New York Avenue, either eliminating them entirely or making them more subtle, that the precast trim elements be made thinner in profile, that the color and material of the sidewalks be consistent with the character and period of the landmark, and that the glazed brick from the demolished 1961 wing of the building be considered for reuse. Motion to approve the concept and delegate final approval to staff approved. Vote: 5-0 (Ally not present)*

**SHAW HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1216-1226 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW, HPA #13-215, concept/rear additions.

*The Board approved the concept for a three-story rear addition at 1216, 1218 and 1226 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW, including the joining of the lots in to a single lot, and delegated final approval to staff. Vote: 5-0 (Ally not present).*

1620 7<sup>th</sup> Street NW, HPA #13-206, concept/new 3-story commercial/residential building.

*The Board found the concept for a new three-story rear building at 1620 7<sup>th</sup> Street NW to be compatible with the character of the Shaw Historic District and consistent with the purposes of the preservation act. Final approval was delegated to staff. Vote: 6-0.*

**DUPONT CIRCLE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

2123 Twining Court, NW, HPA #13-210, concept for alteration with roof deck.

*The Board found the scope of exterior restoration and one-story garage addition consistent with the purposes of the preservation act; encouraged the applicants to develop a variation of Option C (with the roof deck on the north side of the building) that pulls the proposed roof deck further in from the sides and pulled back from the outside wall to minimize the projecting handrail; and encouraged the applicant to study the detailing of the garage addition and handrails. The applicant is to work with staff in resolving these design issues. Vote: 5-0.*

**CAPITOL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

420-430 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, NE and 208, 214, and 236 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, HPA #13-107, revised concept/new construction and site alterations.

*The Board approved final detailing and materials for new construction on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. The Board also approved the applicants' original (February 2013) concept plan for a new sidewalk café on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Final approval was delegated to staff. Vote: 4-2.*

720 L Street, SE, HPA #13-267, concept/site alterations for beer garden.

*The Board recommended restudy of the service structure on the lot to improve its compatibility with the historic district, with the project returning to the Board for further review when ready. The applicants will work with staff on final details for trellises, fencing, signage, retaining walls, ramps and stairs, and any dumpster enclosure. Vote: 3-2 (Metzger recused).*



1113 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, HPA #13-258, concept/side addition.

*The Board found the concept to be compatible with the character of the historic district and consistent with the purposes of the preservation act, and final approval was delegated to staff with the following conditions: the applicant will work with staff on the roof access structure design and the blocking up of the secondary elevation windows. Vote: 6-0.*

#### **SPINGARN HIGH SCHOOL**

Spingarn High School, 2500 Benning Road, NE, HPA #13-004, refinements to approved concept for proposed streetcar car barn.

*The Board unanimously approved the site development-related aspects of the concept including the siting of facility the total number and placement of tracks and parking spaces and related details. The Board also endorsed the “stay arm” system for overhead wires within the project area and urged DDOT to minimize the visual impacts of the catenary system as a whole. Finally, the Board encouraged DDOT to communicate carefully with the ANC and the larger community regarding how and when the project would be constructed in phases. Additional comments regarding architectural and landscaping refinement were deferred until a future date. Vote: 5-0*

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

*The Board approved the following items on the consent calendar on April 25.*

#### **ANACOSTIA HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1620 U Street, SE, HPA #13-282, construction of two-story house.

#### **CAPITOL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

123 6<sup>th</sup> Street, SE, HPA #13-262, concept/side addition

432 New Jersey Avenue, SE, HPA #13-263, concept/side addition (renewal of 2007 concept approval).

*(Metzger recused)*

1013 E Street, SE, HPA #13-259, concept/rear addition.

#### **CLEVELAND PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT**

3430 34<sup>th</sup> Place, NW, HPA #13-272, concept/addition and widen driveway. *(Casarella recused)*

#### **MOUNT VERNON SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

411 Ridge Street NW, HPA #13-270, concept/new three-story, 2-unit flats.

#### **U STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT**

2001 14<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, HPA #13-152, concept/roof top canopy



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