

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD



**HPRB ACTIONS**  
**November 21 and December 5, 2013**

The Historic Preservation Review Board met to consider the following items on November 21 and December 5, 2013.

**NOVEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup> AGENDA**

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

**HISTORIC LANDMARK**

Randall Junior High School, 65 I Street SW, HPA #13-341, concept/rehabilitation and 12-story addition.

The Board found that if the Mayor's Agent determines that the proposed demolition is necessary to construct a project of special merit, then the design concept is compatible with the character of the historic landmark; recommended that the applicant continue to coordinate with the staff as the design progresses to ensure that design development plans are consistent with the concept and the Board's review comments; and delegated final review of permit plans to the staff. Vote: 8-0.

**GEORGETOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1625 33<sup>rd</sup> Street NW, HPA #14-019, alterations to rear, raised terrace and fence.

The Board recommended issuance of the permit as consistent with the purposes of the Act, with the condition that the staff shall review any proposed structural demolition to the house, plus details of the construction of the fence and gate, including a sample of the metal fence panels and any adjustments necessary to retain the planting beds, before clearing the application. Vote: 6-2.

**CAPITOL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

404 Independence Avenue SE, HPA #13-548, concept/rear addition.

The Board found the project consistent with the purposes of the preservation act with the recommendation that as the plans are developed further the applicant work to retain load-bearing partitions where possible. Final approval delegated to staff. Vote: 8-0.

651 E Street SE, HPA #14-042, concept/two-story rear addition.

The Board found the concept consistent with the purposes of the preservation act with the recommendation the applicant work with staff to further refine the design and return the project to the Board on the consent calendar. Vote: 8-0.

**CLEVELAND PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT**

3211 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, HPA #13-612, concept/building relocation, new construction.

The HPRB found the relocation of the house forward on its lot and the general height and mass of the addition to be uniquely appropriate for the property's context. As the design continues to be developed, the Board encouraged restudy of the shape and fenestration of the rear dormer, elimination of the front dormer, uniting the disparate elevation treatments in a common vocabulary, and developing a preservation treatment plan for the house, with the project to return to the Board when appropriate. Vote: 7-1.

**SHAW HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1600 7<sup>th</sup> St NW, HPA #14-038, concept/new one-story frame beer garden.

The HPRB directed the applicants to restudy the issues outlined in the staff report, in particular in regards to the setback from 7th Street, and return to the Board. Vote: 8-0.

**U STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1837 12<sup>th</sup> Street NW, HPA #13-617, concept/roof addition.

The HPRB found the proposed roof addition incompatible with the character of the historic district as designed and directed the applicant to resubmit a proposal that (A) Pushes the addition to the rear of the existing main block of the house and/or adds to the rear. (B) Includes more compatible fenestration on the rear elevation and (C) Provides accurate drawings of the front yard and the proposed basement entry for evaluation. Vote: 7-1

**WASHINGTON HEIGHTS HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1835-37 Wyoming Avenue NW, HPA #13-623, concept/rear and roof addition.

The HPRB directed the applicants to follow the recommendations in the staff report, reconsider the grade changes at the rear, provide proof of need that the garage must be demolished, eliminate the roof deck, and return to the Board for review. Vote: 7-0 (Aurbach absent).

**DECEMBER 5th AGENDA**

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

**DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT**

808-810 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW, HPA #13-567, concept/alteration, eight-story rear addition.

The HPRB found the removal of the rear wing of 810 and the modified scope of demolition for 808 to be consistent with the purposes of the act, but found the setback, height and architectural character of the 6th, 7th and 8th floors of the addition behind 810 and the setback and architectural character of the addition behind 808 needed further study and revision to be compatible with the historic district. Vote: 8-0.

**DUPONT CIRCLE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1731 New Hampshire Avenue, HPA #13-628, concept of new roof penthouse and roof deck.

The Board found the proposal for the expanded penthouse structure to be generally consistent with the character of the historic district with the condition that design issues listed in the report be addressed and resolved as well as for the applicant to consider reducing the height of the overall design and the mass of the addition, and delegated final approval to staff. Vote: 6-2.

**CAPITOL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

720 East Capitol Street NE, HPA #13-624, concept/rear addition

The Board found the project consistent with the purposes of the preservation act and delegated final approval to staff with the condition the roof deck is not visible. The Board directed the applicant construct a mock-up of the deck and work with staff to address any visibility issues. The Board also directed the applicant to work with staff on the selection of brick to ensure the new brick blends well with the historic building. Vote: 8-0.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

The Board approved the following items on the consent calendar on November 21:

**CAPITOL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

119 12<sup>th</sup> Street SE, HPA #13-547, concept/new garage.  
504 A Street SE, HPA #14-037, concept/rear addition

**DUPONT CIRCLE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1745-1755 N Street, NW, HPA# 12-612, revised concept, renovation and alteration of five rowhouses and construction of six-story rear addition.

**MOUNT PLEASANT HISTORIC DISTRICT**

3146 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW, HPA #11-345, 3146 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW, extension of concept approval/ demolition of rear of church, construction of residential additions, alterations.

**MOUNT VERNON SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

445 M Street, NW, HPA #14-041, concept/new three-story, two-unit brick rowhouse.

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

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Property Address:	<b>1743-55 N Street, NW</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>Dupont Circle Historic District</b>	<b>X</b> Consent Calendar
		<b>X</b> Concept Review
Meeting Date:	<b>November 21, 2013</b>	<b>X</b> Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	<b>12-612</b>	<b>X</b> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Steve Callcott</b>	Demolition
		<b>X</b> Subdivision

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N Street Venture LLC, with plans prepared by architect Jeff Goins (PGN Architects), seeks conceptual design approval for a project in the Dupont Circle Historic District involving renovation and alterations to five townhouses, and construction of a six-story addition at the rear of the lots. The project would convert the properties to a multi-unit apartment building.

**Property Description**

The site includes five contributing buildings. The three five-story townhouses at 1751-55 were built as a symmetrical block in 1889. Unified by their composition and dark palette of brownstone and brick, they exhibit a stylistic blend of the Queen Anne and Romanesque. The four-story structure east of and recessed from the façade of 1751 was constructed as an addition in 1908; it is now referred to as 1749. The four-story Georgian Revival styled residence at 1745 was built in 1902, designed by architect Waddy Wood. The four-story building at 1743 was constructed in 1896, also designed by Wood in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. Its first two floors have been extensively altered; the original façade had a rusticated sandstone base, raised entrance, two-story projecting bay, and was capped by a red tile roof. All of the buildings are currently vacant.

**Previous Reviews**

Proposals for this site were reviewed by the Board in 2005-2006 and again in 2010 and 2012 (all but the 2012 review were for plans developed by different architects working for a different owner). From the beginning, the Board has focused on the treatment of the historic buildings, wanting to ensure that the project would substantially retain and adapt these largely intact structures in a sensitive manner that did not result in substantial alteration or demolition. The Board accepted the concept for a taller rear addition as a reasonably compatible compromise given the preservation benefit of limiting alterations to the historic buildings and retaining their significant interiors.

In the most recent review in November 2012, the Board approved the general scope of rehabilitation and the six-story height and mass of the rear addition. The applicants were asked to continue working with HPO to further develop the scope of exterior restoration, including recreation of the missing red tile roof on 1743 and retention to the extent possible of significant interior finishes, such as fireplace mantles, wainscoting, and the distinctive Colonial Revival stair in 1745. The applicants were further asked to continue studying the architectural character of the addition, with consideration given to materials, coloration,

scale, and composition, to improve compatibility of the addition with the subject properties and historic district.

### **Current Proposal**

The plans for the existing buildings have been developed to retain the most important character-defining features and spaces, with apartments laid out within the original rooms and floor plans. Demolition would be largely limited to non-original partitions and new openings within walls. While the exterior scope of restoration has not been developed beyond the conceptual stage, the scope includes restoring the missing red tile roof at 1743. The particularly distinctive public spaces on the first floor of 1745 (including its Colonial Revival stair) and the second floor of 1743 would be retained and restored in place. Fireplaces, wainscoting and trim elsewhere in the buildings would be retained or replicated.

On the rear addition, a partial seventh floor (that contained occupiable penthouses) has been eliminated, and the elevations and materials redesigned. The percentage of glass has been reduced and the facades broken down into smaller repeating vertical geometric elements. The materials now include a palette of terra cotta and wood panels in a variety of textures and earth tones.

### **Evaluation**

The applicants are to be commended for carefully developing interior plans that take advantage of and retain the distinctive spaces and features of the historic buildings. The essential retention of the floor plans and room configurations and proposed reuse of many of the distinctive features and finishes will provide a substantial preservation benefit to the project. As the project continues to be refined, the scope of restoration (including plans for retention and repair of original windows and doors on the primary elevations, masonry repair and repointing, roof repair and replacement) should continue to be developed in consultation with the HPO.

The design revisions to the rear addition have improved its compatibility with the historic district. The reduction in the percentage of glass, the choice and coloration of materials, and the use of smaller scaled, vertically-oriented projections relate more closely to the historic houses without compromising its contemporary design. The elimination of the penthouse level also simplifies the mass and obviously reduces the height.

### **Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Review Board find the revised concept consistent with the purposes of the preservation act, and delegate final approval to staff.*