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

Property Address:	448 Ridge Street NW	☐ Agenda
Landmark/District:	Mount Vernon Square Historic District	☒ Consent Calendar
ANC:	6E	☐ Denial Calendar
		☒ Concept Review
Meeting Date:	May 28, 2015	☐ Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	#15-061	☒ New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Brendan Meyer	☐ Demolition
		☐ Subdivision
		☐ Archaeology

The applicant, Suzanne Reatig Architecture on behalf of owner Ridge Lofts, LLC, seeks continuing concept review for four new three-story brick and metal rowhouses with a total of 8 residential units at 448 Ridge St NW currently a vacant lot in the Mount Vernon Square Historic District. Drawings were prepared by the applicant. Plans were prepared by Suzane Reatig Architecture.

Previous Board Action

In December 2014 the Board discussed the compatibility of a proposed third story in relation to the surrounding context of two-story rowhouses. The Board adopted a motion (5-3) to approve a third story if it was sufficiently setback from the street. The applicant returned to the Board in January 2015 with a moderate setback partially obscured by raising the front parapet. The Board declined to approve the concept (7-0) because of the visibility of the third story.

Proposal

The concept has been revised again, this time setting the partial third floor back 15 feet from the front elevation at Ridge Street. Combined with the parapet of the front elevation and third story height of approximately 8 feet, the third floor is shown as not visible from Ridge Street. The front facades have been revised slightly to adjust to the proportions of its components and materials in coordination with some minor dimensional changes. The proposal to use terra cotta tile to mimic horizontal wood siding and sections of metal panels to pace the rhythm of four facades remains substantially the same as proposed since December.

Evaluation

The increased setback of the partial third floor successfully responds to the Board's primary concern. A flag test conducted by Staff during construction can assure this result. A small portion of the third floor will be visible at the west party wall because of the vacant adjoining property, but this is insubstantial in the overall context of the proposal and streetscape. The concept has been successfully moderated such that the innovative site plan for the project is compatible with the historic district and does not attempt obviously incompatible features like multiple curb cuts or driveways.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept for a three-story row at 448 Ridge Street NW to be compatible with the character of the historic district on the condition that the third floor not be substantially visible from Ridge Street, and that final approval be delegated to Staff.