

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

Property Address:	2000-2002 11th Street NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	U Street Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	October 1, 2015	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	15-535		New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Anne Brockett	X	Alteration

Neighborhood Development Company, working with Bonstra/Haresign and Freelon Architects, seeks review of a concept to demolish a non-contributing, two-story building and construct a 10-story residential tower. The proposal would also combine this lot with the adjacent lot on the corner of 11th and U Streets, which is occupied by the Industrial Bank building, an historically significant two-story structure that was built c. 1917 with a 1920s addition. A narrow alley separates the bank from its non-contributing, 2-story neighbors to the west on U Street and the property directly to the north contains the non-contributing, 5-story Lincoln Condominiums.

Project Description

The project calls for constructing a 10-story-plus-penthouse structure that would replace the c. 1970s building; while reading as a separate structure, it would technically be an addition to the Industrial Bank. Although set back at the rear for zoning purposes and set in from the side lot line to allow for a light well for the at-risk windows of the adjacent condo building, the new construction would essentially occupy the entire lot as viewed from the street. On floors 5 through 9, the building's footprint expands to project 4' over 11th Street at the south corner and 6' over the bank building, with three slightly projecting balconies per floor. The 10th floor would step back to the current property lines, while the penthouse would be set back an additional 6 feet on the U Street side, 16 feet on the 11th Street side, and 12' on the rear.

Evaluation

Designing a compatible 10-plus story addition to a 2-story edifice, especially within a context that is defined primarily by small-scale buildings, is a challenging design scenario. Typically it would be expected that there be some variety and stepping down of height to bridge the disparity between the existing and new. However, this approach doesn't work on a lot of this small size where there isn't sufficient space to modulate the height and mass of the new construction. Ultimately, given the small size of the lot and the character of its context, lowering the proposed height to a mid-rise building would be a more compatible approach for this location.

Surface articulation is another approach that could help alleviate heavy massing in close proximity to small scale historic buildings. As developed, the articulation is minimal, provided only by Juliette balconies which do not go far enough to reduce the building's mass within the U Street Historic District.

As it has evolved, the new construction's entire midsection cantilevers to the south. While raising the height of the cantilever above the bank's roof and eliminating it from the uppermost floor has somewhat alleviated its bulk, the heavy massing is too dominant and unbalanced for such a slender building and above the diminutively scaled bank. Particularly at the southeast corner, where a relief in scale is most needed to give deference to the bank, the overhang continues and wraps around to the 11th Street side. If cantilevering is to be used here, it should be limited to light, compact, discontinuous bays or balconies

that help reduce the overall mass, not as a continuous band five stories in height that accentuates the disparity of size and mass between the new construction and its context. Any projection to the east (on the front façade of the new construction) should be shifted northward away from the historic bank building and located over public space; no part of the proposed addition should project over the corner of the bank building.

A more pedestrian-oriented scale at the lower levels on 11th Street should also be explored. This could include a bay at the sidewalk level, reflecting the bays on the Industrial Bank's first and second floors and the porches on the abutting condominium building. The design of the new construction should also more clearly relate to the character of the bank in the apparent floor heights, in scale and uniformity of fenestration, and with some acknowledgement of the bank's cornice line.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the applicants restudy the height and massing of the proposed addition and return to the Board for further design review. The Board's recommendation should not be constructed as endorsement for any necessary zoning relief.

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STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Property Address:	2000-2002 11th Street NW	Agenda
Landmark/District:	U Street Historic District	X Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	October 22, 2015	X Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	15-535	New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Anne Brockett	X Alteration

At its October 1, 2015 meeting, the Board reviewed a concept design to demolish a non-contributing, two-story building and construct a 10-story residential tower added to the iconic Industrial Bank building at the corner of 11th and U Streets NW. In response to the Board's comments and recommendation, Neighborhood Development Company, working with Bonstra/Haresign and Freelon Architects, has revised the concept and seeks further review by the Board.

Project Description

Rather than the previously proposed 5-story continuous cantilever over the historic bank, the design now features three independent bays on the U Street side and one on 11th Street. The U Street bays project four feet over the bank on floors five through nine. Each bay is 20 feet wide, including glass-railed balconies, and is capped with a terrace for the 10th floor residents. The 11th Street bay extends from the fourth floor through the ninth floor and measures four feet in depth and 16 feet in width, including balconies.

Other changes include setting back the 10th floor by a foot to provide a bit of relief on the U Street elevation and refining the design of the 11th Street elevation on the lower floors.

Evaluation

In its previous review, the Board objected to the massing of the building, particularly as it addressed the bank, but approved the height and general approach to the 11th Street facade. The Board further directed the design team to simplify the U Street facade, strengthen the 11th Street lower level facade and entry design, and better accommodate the historic bank cornice.

The revisions are successful in addressing the comments and concerns. The proposed oriels not only break down the mass of the projection over the bank, they alleviate the planarity of the U Street facade, providing welcome surface articulation. The shallow, intermittent oriels are much more sympathetic to the scale of the historic bank building and the district as a whole. Bay projections of this type have been approved by the Board when they do not overwhelm the building below, which is the case here.

Most importantly in redesigning the overhang, the new renderings show no projections at the southeast corner, where the new and old buildings intersect. Additionally, the 11th Street bay features open balconies on its south side, further alleviating perceived weight at this corner. The applicants studied the idea of extending this bay to grade, but determined that this would add to the building's already strong verticality. Instead, the bay was lowered by one floor, which brings a major horizontal feature down to a human scale and also helps address the termination of the bank cornice by having another horizontal at a similarly low height.

Below the 11th Street bay, the façade has been reworked to incorporate fenestration to match the rest of the design and now features a pedestrian-scaled storefront bay, typical of buildings in the U Street Historic District. Separating the former bulky canopy into a single projecting bay for the retail component and a discreet canopy for the residential entrance represents a further improvement to the streetscape.

With the adjustments to the design, the project has addressed all preservation concerns and provides an appropriate backdrop to the bank. While the staff will continue to work with the applicants on details such as fenestration design, railing material and placement, and façade materials, the concept is compatible with the historic district and consistent with previous Board approvals

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept to be compatible with the U Street Historic District and consistent with the Act and delegate final review to staff. The Board's recommendation should not be constructed as endorsement for any necessary zoning relief.