HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Property Address:	**2101 14th Street, NW**		Agenda
Landmark/District:	**U Street Historic District**	X	Consent Calendar
		X	Concept Review
Meeting Date:	**November 20, 2003**	X	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	**03-288**	X	New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	**Steve Callcott**		Demolition
			Subdivision

The applicants, SK& I Architects for PN Hoffman, seek on-going conceptual design review for construction of two apartment buildings on vacant land on 14th Street between V and W Streets. The conceptual plans for renovations of and additions to the laundry complex located along the mid-block alley were approved at a previous meeting. As the Board will remember, the design of the new construction is organized to break down the block-long frontage along 14th Street into three separate elevations; the Board's most recent comments and suggestions were made with the intension of sharpening the distinction between these three elevations, and to strengthen the appearance of the middle building so that it appeared as more than simply a bridge connecting the contemporary styled building to the south and the traditional building to the north.

As suggested, the tripartite organization of the elevation on the traditional (north) building has been made more pronounced, with coursed brick on the first two floors, and further development of the top of the building with decorative pergolas at the eighth floor. The bays – previously proposed as oriels – have been brought down to the ground and made more solid, now with punched windows in a brick bay rather than as metal bays. The proportions of the corner tower have been improved, with oriels used on each of its two sides.

The middle building has been developed to provide it with a more solid, rectilinear base, and the bridge element redesigned as a large elliptically-shaped bay projection anchored by solid masonry elements on each side. The differentiation between the vocabulary of the bay and the masonry elements on each side gives this center building a stronger, more traditional organization that helps it read as its own building rather than simply as a hyphen between the other two buildings. The sloped roof element has been scaled down in size, relating to the narrower proportions of the tower. As recommended by the Board, the void at the 8th and 9th floor levels above the bridge has been in-filled in order to gain slightly greater setbacks for the upper floors elsewhere in the project. However, as some differentiation in height between the three elevations would maintain some variety at the roof line, the staff has suggested the applicants also look at an option that would add only a single story above the bridge element, rather than two.

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The submission also includes further development of the building skin, with blow-up sketches of each of the three buildings to show general materials use and detailing, as well as differentiation between the buildings. One area that might warrant further differentiation is in the use of fenestration on the three buildings; with the increasingly traditional character of the northern building, traditional double hung sash windows might be worthy of consideration.

The staff recommends that the Review Board approve the revised concept design as consistent with the purposes of the preservation law.

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