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Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16932
EXHIBIT NO.23A2

HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Property Address:	**2138 Bancroft Place, NW**	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	**Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District**		Consent Calendar
		X	Concept Review
Meeting Date:	**February 7, 2002**	X	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	**02-045**		New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	**Steve Callcott**		Demolition
		X	Subdivision

The applicant, Singletary Rueda Architects for ICG, Ltd., seeks conceptual design review for alterations to and construction of a three-car garage in the rear of a detached house at the corner of Bancroft and Phelps Place in the Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District. The alterations and new construction would be visible from public space.

The Renaissance Revival mansion was designed in 1898 by Hornblower & Marshall, one of Washington's most distinguished firms at the turn of the century. The façade reveals that the house was constructed in two phases: the main block located on the corner, and an addition to the east that continues the original façade treatment added a few years later. Currently vacant, the property was most recently used as the Kingsbury School.

The proposal calls for dividing the house down the center – along the line that distinguishes the original portion of the house from the addition – to allow for its conversion to two single family houses. Subdividing individual buildings can be problematic; it can result in a demand for inappropriate alterations, such as new door openings in primary elevations, or result in an inconsistency of appearance over time as different owners maintain and paint their portions of the building differently. However, the applicants' have responded to these concerns by maintaining the existing front door into the building as the common entrance for both units, and by proposing to establish an easement on the façade that requires consistency of maintenance and appearance between the two units.

<u>The staff recommends that the Review Board approve the subdivision to create two lots contingent on the recordation of an easement that provides for common maintenance and consistency of appearance for this property.</u>

Minimal alterations are proposed for the street-fronting elevations. The most welcomed aspect of the proposal is the removal of the white paint which obscures the building's handsome dark red brick. On the rear, portions of a two-story wing (the second floor of which is not original) would be removed, and replaced by a four-story addition. The vocabulary of the addition would be porch-like on the upper three floors, but with a slightly industrial edge that plays off the austerity of the building's design. Lintels are proposed as steel "I" beams, with metal casement windows above metal spandrel panels.

The one interesting and character-defining aspect of the rear façade that would be lost by the construction of the four-story addition is a porch (now enclosed) on the 2nd and 3rd floors, with massive enframing piers and a balustrade. While this feature would no longer be visible, and it is unlikely that the balustrade could remain, the staff would encourage retention of the masonry enframing piers and minimizing the extent of demolition of this rear wall. This approach is consistent with the enclosed porch aesthetic of the addition, in that the rear wall of a house defines the back side of a porch. The staff would also encourage that the upper three floors of the addition be inset slightly from the masonry rear wall to clearly distinguish and create the appropriate hierarchy between the original masonry portion of the house from the later, porch-like addition.

The staff recommends that the Review Board approve the alterations and addition to the house in concept as consistent with the purposes of the preservation act.

The applicants propose a new three-car garage at the rear of the property, opening to the rear alley. Due to a sharp drop off in the grade, the garage would be at the basement level of the house, but still allow for a garden/patio area to be created on top of them that would be accessed from the first floor level. The garages are proposed to cover the entire rear yard and are subject to a zoning variance as they exceed the allowable lot coverage. The plan is also contingent on the purchase of a sliver of land from the abutting neighbor to the east, which they have agreed to in principle.

Conceptually, rear yard garages are certainly consistent with the character of the Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District, and are found lining this alley. A structure would be particularly welcomed in this corner location, as it would help restrict views into the alley; aesthetically, a garage would be far preferable to the existing surface parking spaces. There has been concern expressed by the neighborhood that the garages only be one story high and that the garden wall atop them be as low as possible in order not to give the impression of a two-story garage building. This somewhat conflicts with the owner's desire to achieve some privacy for the rear patios, which will be constructed on top of the new garage. As submitted, the plan calls for a three foot iron fence on top of the garage extending out from the rear wall of the house to the alley, and a six foot wall atop the garage at the rear. The wall would be exactly the same height as the neighbor's fence, which also sits atop their garage. While there may be a bit more that could be done to break down the monolithic quality of the wall and provide it with greater visual interest – such as giving it the same stone cap as on the lower wall and/or breaking it up with an inset panel or something – the staff is comfortable with it in concept at the proposed height.

The staff recommends that the Review Board approve the conceptual design for the garage as consistent with the character of the Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District, and delegate final approval to staff.

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD

2138 BANCROFT PLACE, N..W.

HPA No. 02-045

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Washington, D.C.
February 7, 2002

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2138 BANCROFT PLACE, N.W.

HPA No. 02-045

Thursday, February 7, 2002

441 4th Street, NW
Suite 221
Washington, D.C. 20001

The Board convened the hearing on the subject matter pursuant to notice, with Chairman Tersh Boasberg presiding.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

KATHY HENDERSON

ROBERT SONDERMAN

DENISE JOHNSON

CHARLES ROBERTSON

RONNIE McGHEE

AMY WEINSTEIN

DESA SEALY RUFFIN

JAMES S. KANE

P R O C E E D I N G S

2138 Bancroft Place, N.W.

HPA No. 02-045

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: All right, the next case on the agenda is 2138 Bancroft. Are you here, 2138 Bancroft? They may have stepped outside.

Okay, 2138 Bancroft. Let me get some idea of who would like to--who's going to be testifying on this? Mr. Rueda, if you'd come forward and get set up. Ms. French, you also were going to testify?

Okay, Mr. Callcott, why don't you start us off and then we can go to Mr. Rueda?

MR. CALLCOTT: Okay. This is a case in the Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District involving the old Kingsbury School--I'll show it to you--which is an old Hornblower and Marshall mansion at the corner of Bancroft and Phelps Place, right here. Well, that's the front, and then going down Phelps Place on the side, right there.

There are several issues with this project. The property is for sale and is--or is

being sold back for--and being converted back to residential use. The proposal calls for subdividing the house into two individual single-family houses.

The Board has rarely approved of a subdivision of a single building before, with the idea that it usually results in alterations to the building, additional doors and that sort of thing; and also, the maintenance issues related to that over time, of different owners maintaining the same building differently.

The owners have addressed these concerns. They're using simply the single door opening, the original front-door opening as a shared entrance for both of the units. There will be an interior vestibule off of which both of the units will open. And fortunately, cleaning up the building, stripping off all the paint, and installing all new windows--and then, to sort of regulate it over time, they have agreed to establish an easement on the property which would call for common maintenance of any sort of alterations to the

building, such as window repair, window replacement, painting, that sort of thing, so we won't get a situation in which half of the facade will be painted--the windows would be painted blue and half the windows would painted red, over time.

So the applicants have been working with the staff on that, and so the staff has in this instance given these concessions, prepared to recommend approval of the subdivision.

MR. KANE: Can you help me understand that just a little bit better? What's the--whose easement? What are we talking about?

MR. CALLCOTT: I can give you a copy of the draft that's been developed, but it will--I'm sorry, it's a covenant rather than an easement. Excuse me. I'm sorry.

MR. KANE: That's okay. Thank you.

MR. CALLCOTT: Sorry. Covenant. Does that explain everything?

MR. KANE: Yes.

MR. CALLCOTT: Sorry. So that will be recorded with the deed.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: And our approval is contingent upon that being recorded?

MR. CALLCOTT: Correct. Right.

MR. KANE: So when we--if we decide to approve the staff report, we will make sure that easement is actually--

MS. RIFFIN: Covenant.

MR. CALLCOTT: It will actually be a covenant, right. Sorry about that.

MR. KANE: It's an important legal term for them.

MR. CALLCOTT: You're absolutely right.

MS. RUFFIN: What are the enforcement mechanisms on that?

MR. CALLCOTT: That's--I'd have to defer to Mr. Brennan [sp]. We'll have to explore that a little bit further.

MR. : I don't think it would be. The one half would have to enforce it against the other.

MR. KANE: Right. And if they don't--

MR. : If they so chose.

MR. KANE: And therefore an easement might make sense. That was my--

MR. CALLCOTT: Okay, yeah. Yeah. We're just in the very beginning stages. This just came in a day or so ago, and we're just reading the draft language. It's the kind of thing that needs to be talked about with the Council.

MR. KANE: It's a very creative solution to try to address your concern, so it's nice to see that the owner's coming forward with those kind of things. But there might just be--need that clarification.

MR. CALLCOTT: Right. Right.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay, the point is we don't want--the reason you've been reluctant is you don't want one owner coming forward saying he doesn't have a door, you've got to give him a door. And so on and so on.

MR. CALLCOTT: Right.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: And I think Mr. Kane's point is quite well-taken. We applaud the solution, but we want to make sure that that's

there. Okay, go ahead.

MR. CALLCOTT: Yeah. Absolutely.

The second aspect of the proposal calls for some alterations to the building. These include things like window replacements, which would be in-kind; and most specifically would be some alteration to the back of the building. This is the back here. There is a later in-fill one-story piece right here. There would be an addition that would be added in this portion right here, removing that and in-filling this piece right here.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: That's an alley back there, is it, Mr. Callcott?

MR. CALLCOTT: Correct. Right. This is--that's Phelps there, Bancroft at the top, and then this is the alley running here.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: And show us what would be there.

MR. CALLCOTT: This is the in-filled addition. This shows how the units would be divided on the inside of the property. And then

this is the in-filled portion here, where this is the existing masonry wall, this is the existing back wall of the house right here, and then this would be filled in on all three levels.

MR. RUEDA: The addition in-fill's over here. And the facade of that addition would be like that--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay.

MR. RUEDA: That's basically how it--

MR. CALLCOTT: Right. So it's got sort of an enclosed sleeping porch-like character, albeit in sort of a somewhat industrial sort of a take on that, and I'll let the architect talk about that.

So those are the alterations and the additions to the main house.

Then the third aspect of the proposal is to add a garage. Right now, the back lot is all paved. Tons of cars are parking back there, big Dumpsters, that sort of thing. And so the applicants are proposing to build a new three-car garage that would come out, be facing out onto the alley. And then on the Phelps Place side, that

would result in a little garden wall--well, not a little garden wall; a garden wall here, and then this is the back side, this is the entrance into the garage right here.

On top of the garage, up here, would be a garden space--so it would be located on the roof of the garages--that would be accessed from the main, or first floor of the houses. So they're trying to create an outdoor living space on top of these new garages.

This has actually been the element of the design that has needed the most, sort of, massaging. There have been some community concerns about this. There have been negotiations with the abutting property owner, who actually need to, under this scenario, sell a very small sliver of land to the applicants in order for the three garage spaces to be created. So there have been a number of discussions back and forth between the various parties to try and resolve this.

I'm actually going to defer to the applicants. They can explain the latest solution I

hope that they've arrived at.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay. Mr. Rueda, why don't you--welcome. Welcome. Yeah, you've got to talk into the mike so we record your precious words.

MR. RUEDA: Well, Mr. Callcott, obviously, described the, sort of, the scope of the project fairly well.

The pictures here basically try to show a little bit of the context of Bancroft Place and to show Phelps Place as well, which really has a very--this particular development at Kalorama Square has a very dominant effect on the streetscape, here on these properties.

The other problem with Phelps Place, unfortunately, is that because it's a diagonal, you get quite a few openings due to alleys and streets. And so the street rhythm and facade on this side of the street, on the east side of Phelps, doesn't tend to have the fluidity that maybe you would expect on a residential street.

And so what ends up happening, as you can

see here, is that--well, you can see here that, as you turn up off of S Street, up Phelps, you get quite a good view at this rear facade, which meets rather awkwardly, given the change in elevation from Bancroft to Phelps.

As Mr. Callcott said, there is a desire by the client to basically maintain--I mean, the value of the development decision was to maintain the character of the Hornblower and Marshall design. However, it isn't really, sort of, high--it isn't an example of their best work. I mean, it's fairly ordinary. We seem to think that it was probably a builder version of maybe one of their designs.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Was it built in two stages or just one?

MR. RUEDA: I was just going to say, it was in fact built in two stages, the first part being this part just left of the door; the second part as an addition in 1910--the first part in 1898, second part in 1910.

Basically replicating, you know, somewhat banal openings, but the general idea of Hornblower

and Marshall, which is to have a very solid-appearing mass, very classically proportioned--maintaining that and having access to the two units from inside. So you would have an interior hall, which would then--you would then make a--you know, obviously have a decision to go one way or the other into the different units.

MR. SONDERMAN: Where's the garage in that view?

MR. RUEDA: The garage is underneath this recreation space here, green space.

MS. WEINSTEIN: Do you have a garage plan?

MR. RUEDA: Not at this scale. It is in your package.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: You just might trace on that for everybody Bancroft street, Phelps Place, and the alley.

MR. RUEDA: This would be the alley, this would be Phelps Place, and this would be Bancroft Place. And the three parking spaces would be directly underneath this landscape and hardscaped area.

MR. SONDERMAN: So you don't exceed your lot?

MR. CALLCOTT: Correct.

MR. RUEDA: As a result of the change in elevation and not actually enclosing any space above this, we do not exceed lot occupancy. We do encroach into the rear yard, which we would be seeking a variance from BZA. We have the required setback from the alley of--in this case it would be 4-1/2 feet.

The other thing I think it's important to note before, I guess, I move forward on this is, as Mr. Callcott said, there is a series of additions, this one being the last, at the same time these porches were probably enclosed. You do have two porch features on this project: one on the corner facing Phelps, and the other one facing what was an open lot next to the property before it was converted to residential.

I will note that the property itself has been used as a school pretty much since the mid-'20s. And so now the conversion back to

residential necessitates a few of the changes that our client's asking for, which--if you want to highlight.

As I had stated before, the entry into the two units would be through a central hall. The addition of 200 square feet at the back is a desire to balance the square footage, in that sense, of the two properties; at the same time, having them be very--well, and to sort of balance it out, too, with the rest of the block, which on this side of Bancroft you do have fairly large residences, a lot of which actually do maximize their lot occupancy beyond what the current zoning contemplates.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: The in-fill is just the bottom rectangle there, isn't that right?

MR. RUEDA: That's right.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: That goes up three stories?

MR. RUEDA: It goes up--yes, beyond the existing one-story base.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay.

MR. RUEDA: The alley here--this is a shot

of the entrance to the alley, our lot being the one immediately in the foreground. And then, as you can see, the rest of the alley being lined with garages, in some cases with open recreation space, in other cases with enclosed either living space or also some enclosed recreation space. And in some cases, decks on top of that as well.

MR. KANE: Let me understand that again. Could you leave that up?

MR. RUEDA: Yes, sir.

MR. KANE: So what you're saying is that other places in the alley they've enclosed from the building line above their garage?

MR. RUEDA: Yes, sir. And this photograph does show sort of the carriage house solution that's typical of the rest of the alley.

MR. KANE: Okay. If you had to make a guesstimate, how many garages have recreation space and/or living space on top of the garage along that alley?

MR. RUEDA: I'd say 90 percent of them.

MR. KANE: Ninety percent?

MR. RUEDA: Yeah, maybe even 95.

MR. KANE: Ninety-five percent.

MR. RUEDA: One in particular that has a fairly creative solution without putting a garden space at the alley level, with a couple of decks but nothing enclosed.

MR. KANE: It's 95 percent of the buildings?

MR. RUEDA: Of that side of the block, yes.

MR. KANE: Okay. Thank you.

MR. RUEDA: One of the things that we tried to do was, in looking at the fact that this was a Hornblower and Marshall, which was obviously of significance to us, we did sort of look around. There are some examples in the neighborhood of similar buildings, although I think that there are probably, you know, better examples of their work. And in particular, we went to Hornblower's house in particular and sort of picked up on a few of the details that he incorporated in some of his designs and extrapolated that into the in-fill that you see

in our submission, at the rear elevation.

Again, showing you the elevation from Phelps street, you get to see sort of the magnitude of the addition, which really has a very hard time, given the mass of this building, sort of trying to compete, especially at one story. The desire, obviously, was to fortify the street a little bit with a little more street front--you know, with building frontage and, at the same time, trying to play off some of the simple massing moves that Hornblower used on this particular residence.

This back elevation shows the three entries into the garage. The garden wall does align, as negotiated with the neighbor, with the highest portion of their fence, which is something that we've been sort of ongoing--there was a desire to sort of move higher, but basically, through talking with the neighbor, there was an agreement to sort of come lower.

MS. WEINSTEIN: Really? Is that--you're bringing your new brick above the garage doors up to--

MR. RUEDA: The level of the fence.

MS. WEINSTEIN: How high is that?

MR. RUEDA: This is 4-1/2 feet above the deck level.

There's quite a radical change in elevation between the rear facade and the alley facade. Here you can see better that rear facade, where we pick up some of the motifs from Hornblower--the, you know, use of planting areas, obviously--a little bit thicker structure at what we're calling the muse level, which would be directly adjacent to the main level of the building.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: You won't see that bottom part when you're outside of the alley, will you?

MR. RUEDA: Which bottom part?

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: The bottom of that drawing?

MR. RUEDA: These?

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Yeah.

MR. RUEDA: This is a section through the

garage--elevation in the back.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay. Okay.

MR. RUEDA: So this elevation, the majority of it is flush with the mass of the existing building. We do set it off by a reveal as a way of trying to--as a way of showing the difference between the old and the new.

And we did try to address this from a three-dimensional point of view. There is a request--there is shown on the drawings, on the roof level, a use of a deck, with an enclosed stair up to the deck level. We do set back appropriately, as per zoning, on all sides. We don't believe, because of the height of the parapet that we are dealing with, we're having the deck--we're basically taking out the attic level to lower the deck so that it can fit inside of the parapet wall of the existing structure. So any sight lines to the deck would be very incidental.

MR. KANE: And there wouldn't be any railings at the top?

MR. RUEDA: There would be a railing

across the top, which we show in elevation--we show it across here and across here.

MR. KANE: But that's in the rear. There's no railing down here, this way?

MR. RUEDA: You wouldn't--

MR. KANE: Yeah. There's no railing across the front or anything that's visible from the primary facade?

MR. RUEDA: No--that's correct, because of the--because we do recess--

MR. KANE: Okay. All right. We had a case earlier today where they moved out railing to the edge. And you're not going to need to do that.

MR. RUEDA: We don't need a railing because of the parapet.

MR. KANE: Thank you.

MR. RUEDA: The railing would sort of pick up on some of the existing railings on the facade, you know, metal and--you know, painted metal, the way that they currently exist.

MS. WEINSTEIN: May I ask another height question of these railings and parapets over the

garage? Facing Phelps Place, there is a metal railing?

MR. RUEDA: That's correct. Again, similar character to this.

MS. WEINSTEIN: And the top of that railing presumably is 3 feet above the deck?

MR. RUEDA: Thirty-six inches, correct.

MS. WEINSTEIN: Okay, and then--so you're coming south, and then the brick wall juts up to 5 feet?

MR. RUEDA: Just under 5 feet.

MS. WEINSTEIN: Just under 5 feet. Okay, that answers the question.

MR. RUEDA: The profile of that garden wall is shown here.

MS. WEINSTEIN: Okay. Your garage doors on the elevation, they're just shown as flat panel?

MR. RUEDA: Correct.

MS. WEINSTEIN: Did you give any consideration to something with a little bit of Hornblower detail?

MR. RUEDA: Not yet. Certainly we could

pick up on some of the carriage house motifs that you see. I think that would be appropriate. A lot of the attention of the garage has been with regard to height, so some of the exploration has suffered as a result.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay, thank you very much, Mr. Rueda.

MR. RUEDA: You're welcome.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Let's see what other comments might be. Ms. Singletary? Ms. French? You have to give your name for the record.

MS. FRENCH: My name is Kindy French. I'm here on behalf of the Sheridan-Kalorama Historical Association. And I actually had my concern in writing, because I have a cold and it's really hard to talk. And I'm sorry, if I can borrow some of their copies back, I can...

MR. RUEDA: Can I make one addition? I apologize for interrupting.

MS. FRENCH: Please.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Yeah, go ahead.

MR. RUEDA: We did--your drawings do show

a different profile for this garden wall than what we have on the board. I just wanted to point that out. We have sort of explored a little bit in more detail how that garden level would work.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Let me also ask Mr. Rueda, have you had a chance to meet with Sheridan-Kalorama ANC and the neighborhood association?

MR. RUEDA: We have been in discussions with them.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: And the historical society?

MR. RUEDA: Correct.

MS. FRENCH: They have met many times with the Historical Association. And for the BZA order, they will have to go before the ANC.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: They haven't gone before the ANC yet?

MS. FRENCH: No. They did meet with one of the commissioners at the very, very beginning. They called us over to please come and look at the property, and met with us.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: The ANC's had notice of this, obviously.

MR. RUEDA: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay. Go ahead, Ms. French.

MS. FRENCH: First, I want to applaud the development in principle, especially returning the building to residential. Of course, we're very, very excited about that.

We have very--just a very few issues. The main is dealing--first is with the deck. We feel that we should see a sight line so that we understand--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Give us--point out what you're talking about, because there are a lot of decks.

MS. FRENCH: I'm sorry, the roof-top deck.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay, just point out where--can you show it on a picture?

MS. FRENCH: I know that this is a flat picture, so I really can't tell whether this elevation, which is where the staircase comes up,

you have to have a building to house the staircase. We would like to know where, if anywhere, this could be seen from. This is a very, very visible piece of property from three streets. I know that you usually might just address Bancroft, but Phelps Place is very big. And the whole back of this building is completely seen from S Street. Even though it's called an alley, every bit of this property is actually seen from that street. So it's not what I would call an ordinary alley review.

MS. WEINSTEIN: Does that stair show on the perspective that's lurking behind all the drawings there?

MR. RUEDA: You wouldn't see it from that perspective. It is set closer to the front of the building. If you look at your plans, you can see the position of the stairs.

MS. FRENCH: We understand that the intent is for it not to be seen.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: He's saying you can't see it.

MS. FRENCH: I understand that they're saying the intent is that it cannot be seen. What we would like is that we know it really can't be seen.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Mr. Rueda, what--all right.

MS. FRENCH: Don't they just do some kind of sight line? I know that he's talking about a formula, but to me that's different. We've asked other developers, and...

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: In your opinion, can you see that from the--can you see the fence--the roof deck from the street?

MR. RUEDA: In our opinion, you would be able to see the railings at the rear side of the building.

MS. FRENCH: And on the side.

MR. RUEDA: But you really would not--you're not going to have a view line, a sight line to the structure itself because of how far recessed it is under the parapet line.

MR. KANE: But it wouldn't be difficult

for you to prepare that, would it?

MR. RUEDA: That's absolutely true. We could prepare it.

MR. KANE: Is that something that you could do and share both with Ms. French and Steve Callcott in an easy manner?

MR. RUEDA: That is not a problem. Absolutely.

MR. KANE: Sounds great. Sounds like that's the solution we're looking for.

MS. FRENCH: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay, issue number 2.

MS. FRENCH: The garage wall itself, which is--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Maybe Mr. Rueda could help get these things in order. That'd be great.

MR. CALLCOTT: Is that one better to show?

MS. FRENCH: Yeah, this one would work fine. To start with, in this picture it shows that there's grass. But in actuality, if you look at the site plan, the building is right up to the cement. So there is no place to put this

landscaping, which would be wonderful if there was but there isn't anyplace to put the landscaping.

And what we would really like is, this is a huge massive wall. It might not look like it in this picture, but especially it being solid like this, we would like to see some kind of design that makes it look less massive.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: What are we looking at? It looks like a--what is that, for a trellis, or is that a--

MS. FRENCH: Yes. It's a trellis, because they're showing that there's grass here.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Mr. Rueda, are you going to have grass there to grow the trellis on?

MR. RUEDA: We do have a planting strip. And it may not be grass; it may be actually bushes and whatnot. But the planting strip itself is--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: But you've got something to sink the trellis in, the vine?

MR. RUEDA: Oh, yes.

MS. FRENCH: There isn't anything. I beg to differ.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: You say there's nothing, you say there is something. Okay.

MS. FRENCH: This is the site plan that they presented the neighborhood with. And the building is right on the sidewalk. If you go out and actually you look at the building, it will be right on the sidewalk. So I just--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay. And Mr. Rueda is saying that they can do that, is my understanding. There will be something--

MS. FRENCH: The only thing left is move the wall back. He can't dig the sidewalk out. He'd have to move this wall back.

What we're suggestion, regardless--

MR. KANE: Could you address the question?

MR. RUEDA: I can address the question. This site plan accurately depicts the extent of the sidewalk in relation to our wall. So we do actually have a planting strip contemplated, and access to the door at the ground level.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: We just didn't give that document to Ms. French, is that--it's not the

same thing.

MR. KANE: No, she has it.

MR. CALLCOTT: 2.01 in our--

MR. KANE: But whatever it is, Steve, can you confirm that there's a planting strip there? It seems like there is, and...

MR. RUEDA: Well, I can even show it to you in the photograph.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Well, we certainly feel that there should be a planting strip. We agree we don't want a blank wall. If there is a planting strip there, then are you okay?

MS. FRENCH: If there's a planting strip, and assuming that they keep their landscape--it isn't going to be them that keeps the landscaping in.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: I assume, but the point of the matter is there is a planting strip there and--like everybody else. There is going to be on.

MR. RUEDA: This is the elevation with the planting on it, and you can see all the

different...

MS. FRENCH: There's a planting area where the Dumpster now is that certainly could be dug out, but I disagree that there would be--if there's any planting area, that there would be more than a few inches. I just disagree with--I mean, if you go out and you look at the property, I don't think there is one. I think that they should address some kind of design in the wall itself to mitigate this massive masonry wall.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: If there is a planting strip and they do plant it with vines, that's okay?

MS. FRENCH: That would certainly be--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay. Okay. Point number 3?

MS. FRENCH: It has to do with concern about the height of this wall. And I'm not sure--in my plan I have it two different ways--at least in this plan, I'm sorry--it has two different ways that they have addressed this area. In one plan, it shows that this is the whole side and then it turns a 90-degree angle to the brickwork. In

this plan, it shows that the ironwork and this brick wall is all along this side, and then it turns its 90 degrees. So I'm not sure which plan they're actually proposing.

In addition, I feel that all of this should be the same 36 inches that the iron railing is--which I assume would be iron and not metal. Anyway--well, whichever, but that this wall is too massive.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: You're talking about lowering it about 6 inches?

MS. FRENCH: Lowering it to the 3 feet, which would be actually a foot and--I'm not--the reason I was told it was 6 foot--he said it was 4-1/2 feet. I don't know--

MR. KANE: You would want it lower so that it would be--so it wouldn't be the same as the garage to its far right. And so you have a visual discon--you're not going to have the same line coming across the garage as the--

MS. FRENCH: Correct.

MR. KANE: And you're comfortable with

that?

MS. FRENCH: Very. Because the garage--the people next-door have a section that's higher and then it goes down to a lower section. So there's like a zig-zag. What they're doing is they're matching to this higher section that's on the corner. I think that they should zig-zag up. It makes it much more of a design--

MR. KANE: I think you'll see that.

MS. FRENCH: Here, this is what I'm saying. This is the rest of the neighbor's fencing.

MR. KANE: And did you say, sir, that you had that size to accommodate the request of the immediate neighbors?

MR. RUEDA: One of the problems here is that because the alley does descend, you also have a--you have a difference in elevation of the two deck levels. Well, actually, not deck levels, you have a difference in elevation of the two first floors, of about 36 inches, from the first floor of 2138 and the first floor of 2134. So the privacy

that they are able to achieve with a 7-foot fence, which is that corner piece that Ms. French is referring to, that means that for the development west of it is actually only 4'6". So the request from SKHA would be to lower the brick wall another 18 inches.

MS. FRENCH: The request from the neighbor, if I can clarify that, is what they requested is that this wall not be any higher than their wall. They made no other request. The Historical Association is adamant that it be as low as possible, so that it's less mass.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay, you're--

MS. FRENCH: And they can always put plantings--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay, you're talking about lowering it to the height of the metal fence on that side.

MS. FRENCH: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Which would be a lowering, at least on the left side, of 18 inches, is that what we're talking about?

MR. RUEDA: Eighteen inches, correct.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay, thank you. Ms. French, anything else?

MS. FRENCH: The only other concern is matching up the brick, that, you know, they'll--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay.

MS. FRENCH: I guess we'd rely on Steve--

MR. KANE: But as you said, Ms. French, if they put planter boxes or something along the top of that, they're going to achieve the same visual effect, it's just not the mass.

MS. FRENCH: It's not the masonry mass.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Thank you. And thanks for taking the time to come down and--as you always do, a guardian of the neighborhood, and we're delighted to have you.

Okay, Board members, what do you think? We've got sort of three major issues here. What are your comments on them? Ms. Weinstein?

MS. WEINSTEIN: I concur with those who've suggested that the brick mass of the extension of the garage wall up is way too high. I've walked by

here almost daily for 18 years. And the unfortunate development across the street on Phelps Place, which has that massive brick garage, is so unfortunate on the pedestrian livability of this block that it seems to me the last thing that would be a good neighbor would be to put, again, tall brick walls like that over there.

I think what's interesting is that the house that you're discussing to the east isn't a monolithic brick wall. It's piers with some kind of wood in-fill. And I would strongly suggest looking at taking the brick all the way down to the actual deck level itself and do brick piers with some type of appropriate wood in-fill to lighten it up and to--and even then, most of that should only be the 3-foot railing height. And then do additional screening, visual screening, that the owners will want to do with plant material.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: So you would lower that maybe at least 18 inches, or are you talking about lowering it more?

MS. WEINSTEIN: I think I'm suggesting

lowering it to the top of the brick where the trellis is. Right. Steve's got the line. Except for brick piers that would rise up.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: And using different materials, not all brick, for the thing, and then above that line, you're talking about some kind of plant material or something else that could be used, not all brick.

Okay. Any comments on the in-fill at all or anything else? The garage doors you would like to have a little more detail on, I take it. Anything else? Is that doable? And are concerned about the strip. We do want a planting strip there, because I think that, you know, it goes without saying we want to be able to plant something against those walls.

MR. KANE: And we'd like some sight lines for the roof structure.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: We'd like some sight lines for the roof railing--

MR. KANE: He's already agreed to provide that for us.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay. So with those modification, then as to that height of the garage structure as it meets the street and carries through into the alley, and the materials, are we ready to go forward?

MR. KANE: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Mr. Kane, do you want to make that motion?

MR. KANE: I move that we--this is a tri-partite, so, Steve, do you want to split three ways or do you just want it--

I move that we adopt the staff proposals as presented.

MS. WEINSTEIN: Second.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Is that the staff report?

MR. KANE: Yes, excuse me. There are three, so it is the staff report, yes.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: All right, so we adopt the staff report. That would include the subdivision and the other elements, and then are you adding Ms. Weinstein's comments as well?

MS. KANE: Yes. That's what you had asked, that those be--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay, and adding Ms. Weinstein's comments about the height.

MS. RUFFIN: I've got a certain level of concern about the subdivision and this covenant that we haven't seen, and the enforceability. You know, it's fine to have a covenant on the building, but if one owner decides to break the covenant, I want to understand--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Would you allow that to be subject to the approval of our counsel?

MS. RUFFIN: Sure.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Okay. Then let's make it into two different motions. We're going to adopt the subdivision, provided that our general counsel signs off on the enforceability, because we are concerned that these people not come back separately. And then Mr. Kane's is to adopt the staff report with Ms. Weinstein's addition and the green planting strip. Is that right? And the garage door.

Okay. Is there a second to that?

MS. WEINSTEIN: That was seconded.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: That was seconded?

MS. WEINSTEIN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Is there any further discussion?

All in favor signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Opposed. All right, then, it's unanimous.

Let me just say thank you very much for--

MR. SINGLETARY: Can we get a little bit more clarification on the height--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Well, what I suggest is you work with Mr. Callcott on this. I think that we are talking about--Ms. Weinstein, do you want to--

Do you understand what Ms. Weinstein was talking about in terms of the height?

MR. CALLCOTT: My understanding was that you were--and maybe this is good to clarify this. My understanding was that you were going to bring

what essentially looks like the garage structure down to this level here, and then brick piers could be established that go the height of--that goes to this 18 inches higher than the ironwork. And then there'd be sort of--it would be a different architectural treatment.

MS. WEINSTEIN: It would be a different architectural treatment. And I don't mean to say, you know, "must be this height" because I think a bit of this rear fence, two piers could come up with a little metal Hornblower trellis to create an architectural end to what is clearly being developed as a access through the dining room, kitchen, you know, rear wall. I mean, I don't want to say it has to be cut off here.

But I think the majority of it should be at the 3-foot--

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Well, why don't you leave that up, Mr. Rueda. Can we leave that up while we're talking.

MR. RUEDA: I wanted to show one thing. I'm sorry--

MS. WEINSTEIN: Steve, I was just saying that the majority of the railing should be at the 3-foot--a little of it could go above, and that it should be broken down, not be monolithic brick wall.

MR. CALLCOTT: Right. The staff had recommended maybe articulating the wall differently, and I had asked them to look at sort of like a perforated brick wall or even treating it as a garage with, you know, like a pent or something like that. Which is--I think what I was trying to get them away from, and which I don't think they want to do either, is something that looks like a garage with a fence on top. Because that, just architecturally, I think, is going to be very awkward.

I certainly understand the concerns about it looking sort of too big or too monolithic.

MS. WEINSTEIN: It's the monolithic brick that so clearly recalls what's happening across the street. And so how you dice it up and play with it is, you know, the architect's purview.

MR. CALLCOTT: Okay. I mean, the reason it's helpful to discuss this, because it's obviously very contested. It's something that the historical society feels very strongly about. They don't want it to be at this height at all.

MR. KANE: It doesn't seem contested, it seems that both groups are willing to work together--

MR. CALLCOTT: Well...

MR. KANE: --to come up with a reasonable solution.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: The Board has said we want that height lowered. And lowered as a solid brick substance, wall. And whether you can use other architectural materials or kind of detailing, but the problem is the height of that solid brick wall, which mimics the Phelps Place wall across the street, we would like to reduce as much as possible. I understand that's what Ms. French wants to do, too.

MR. CALLCOTT: So regardless of the treatment, you want it lowered?

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: Well, I think what Ms. Weinstein is saying is that there may be ways of putting flower pots on top, maybe putting railing on top. There may be a variety of ways to deal with it, but that--

MR. CALLCOTT: Unless you're very, very specific, it's coming back to you. I mean, it's not going to get resolved here. So if you want it lowered regardless of the treatment of it, then let's say that. If it can stay at the height, but you want a different treatment that makes it less monolithic, then that's keeping it at the existing height.

MS. WEINSTEIN: I think we have two very talented architects here, and I think if they wanted to find a solution to breaking up the wall above the garage doors without making it look silly on top of a garage, I know they can do it. They're very talented.

MR. SINGLETARY: Can I make one point? I think the one concern that we've been trying to do is to break this into two pieces, so that we get

that sort of carriage house mass and that little connector wall. So that it is broken.

MS. WEINSTEIN: That's not working, though. So maybe you need to step back and look at it again.

MR. SINGLETARY: Right. Okay.

CHAIRMAN BOASBERG: I really think it's a huge project, this is one rather small but important detail, and I think that can probably be left to staff and the architects work out. Ms. Weinstein's on the other end of a phone if that need be.

Okay, it's been passed, the motion's been passed. And thank you again.

[End of excerpt.]

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OUTLINE OF TESTIMONY OF
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL GROUP

I. Introduction

- A. Infrastructure Capital Group
- B. Washington Historic Projects

II. Redevelopment in Sheridan Kalorama Neighborhood

- A. Phelps Place
- B. Bancroft Street Project
  - 1. Restoration of Residential Use
  - 2. Renovation and Rehabilitation of Historic Property

III. Community Meetings

- A. Advisory Neighborhood Commission
- B. Sheridan Kalorama Historical Association
- C. Others

IV. Conclusions

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OUTLINE OF TESTIMONY OF
GUILLERMO RUEDA AND/OR ANDREW SINGLETARY
SINGLETARY RUEDA ARCHITECTS

I. Introduction

II. Existing Conditions of Subject Property

III. Proposed Plans

- A. Conversion to Two Single-Family Attached Dwellings
- B. Replacement of Rear Addition
- C. Construction of Three-Car Garage with Roof-Top Terrace

IV. Compliance with Special Exception Standards

- A. Light and Air
- B. Privacy of Adjacent Properties
- C. Compatibility with Surrounding Area
- D. Lot Occupancy Does Not Exceed 70 Percent

V. Conclusion