Revised

HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Property Address:	**1229 E Street, SE**	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	**Capitol Hill Historic District**		Consent Calendar
		X	Concept Review
Meeting Date:	**April 28, 2005**	X	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	**05-115**		New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	**Emily Paulus/Nancy Kassner**		Demolition
			Subdivision

The applicant, developer JPI with architects Torti Gallas and Partners, seeks on-going conceptual design review for rehabilitation and an addition to a mid-nineteenth century frame dwelling in the Capitol Hill Historic District. The addition would be partially visible from public space.

The previous proposal included the complete rehabilitation of the historic shotgun house and its additions, for conversion into a studio apartment. The proposal also called for a three-story addition at the far rear of the lot, which was to be clad in lap siding and feature single and paired double-hung windows, dormers that break the cornice line, a two-story bay window on the front, and an oriel window on the rear. The Board enthusiastically supported the rehabilitation work, but expressed several concerns with respect to the rear addition. Those concerns included the size of the third floor, number of projections, and overall lack of simplicity. Recommendations from the Board included reducing the size of the third floor, erecting a second story "camelback" addition atop the existing masonry addition, to provide a transition to the taller new addition, as well as paring down the projections to create a more vernacular addition. As suggested, the architect has studied various examples of more planar architecture – such as Shaker-style architecture and that of Hugh Jacobsen. This exercise has resulted in a very different, and ultimately more successful, design.

The revised proposal eliminates the full third floor in favor of a smaller attic level, which has reduced the overall size and scale of the roof. A small shed dormer punctuates the roof at the front and rear slopes. With the exception of the dormers, all projections have been eliminated. Fenestration is composed of fixed and casement multi-light windows, with flat metal lintels. Material changes include brick walls and a standing seam metal roof. The addition atop the existing masonry addition would be a simple side gable roof, clad in standing seam metal, with brick walls.

The revised approach is a thoughtful and substantive response to the Board's concerns, and has resulted in an addition that communicates with the Shotgun house with ease and clarity. The overall approach is more akin to what one would have historically expected to find behind the Shotgun house. In short, the addition has succeeded in becoming more of a backdrop building to the shotgun house, while no less architecturally interesting or satisfying than the previous design. Finally, the inclusion of the "camelback" component

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provides a more graceful transition from the one-story shotgun house to the 2½-story addition.

The staff recommends that the Review Board approve the project in concept as consistent with the purposes of the preservation act, and delegate final approval to staff.

Archaeological Issues

The shotgun house dates to pre-1857, and is one of just a few surviving houses of this type in the District. Historical research on this house may give us the names and occupations of its residents, but the archaeological resources have the potential to provide information on a more personal level about the people who lived here. According to the census records, the German-born head of household who lived here for 40 years was a peddler and illiterate. More often than not, the only records we have left of illiterate or repressed groups is the archaeological record. While it may not tell the whole story, at least some part of their lives may be studied and preserved. A walkover of the site shows that there are areas that are undisturbed which have the potential to contain archaeological information about the early occupation of the site.

Before any construction begins it is recommended that archaeological work be conducted on the site in order to determine if resources from this early period remain, and, if so, develop a limited plan for the retrieval of some of these resources. Staff in the historic preservation office will work with the applicant to develop the most efficient and cost-effective plan toward this end.

Staff recommends that the Review Board recommend that the applicant be encouraged to conduct archaeological testing on this property because of the valuable information it may contain.