

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

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Property Address:	<b>Square 77: 2119-2121 H Street and 2124 I Street NW</b>	<b>X</b>	Agenda Consent Calendar
Landmark/District:	<b>GW/West End HD (pending)</b>		
Meeting Date:	<b>March 7, 2013</b>	<b>X</b>	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	<b>-</b>	<b>X</b>	Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Kim Elliott</b>	<b>X</b>	New Construction

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Architect Ayers Saint Gross, on behalf of the George Washington University, seeks conceptual design review for a partial demolition of three buildings, façade retention and restoration, and new construction of a residential dormitory connecting all three buildings to house approximately 850 students. The project sits on Square 77, between H, I, 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Streets, within the pending George Washington/West End Historic District. The project will be submitted to the Zoning Commission as a Planned Unit Development.

### **Proposal**

The applicant presented the project at the December HPRB meeting. The Board approved the mass, footprint, and design direction with comments calling on the architect to address the following:

- continue studying the architectural character of the addition, with consideration given to materials, color, and entry canopy design and window frame selection;
- continue working with HPO to further develop the building materials and details;
- continue to study the green roofs and roof deck design and confirm that the roof deck railing will not be visible from the street;
- minimize the penthouse both in height and length;
- continue to study the fenestration composition on all elevations;
- study activation of the west elevation from the pedestrian perspective;
- create more of a presence of the retained existing buildings

### **Evaluation**

The applicants have been working with HPO for the past two months to progress the design and address the comments from the December meeting. The revised design for the new construction achieves an improved balance with the retained historic buildings creating a more cohesive and compatible project. The design presented today responds to the Board's comments focusing primarily on the following areas:

#### **1. Revised facade articulation**

The revised elevations are respectful of the historic buildings and maintain a modern clarity. With a more regular fenestration composition, the south elevation at H Street no longer competes with the Schenley and Crawford facades as it did in the previous design. The same window rhythm finds its way to the west elevation in the accent projections. These projections appropriately reference the proportions of the historic bays while creating relief from the long façade through a change in materials and plane. At the top three floors there are also subtle plane changes. This revision is a step forward but continued refinement resolving the depths of the projections and the uneven planes of the main field would improve this elevation.

While this elevation is visible from H and I Streets, the alley way will not be accessible for pedestrian traffic and therefore activating the lower level of this façade is not critical to the design.

The east elevation has also been revised with a cleaner and more resolved façade. The glazed slots indicate the vertical circulation in the building and successfully break up the long masonry elevation.

The palette of the new construction is a light masonry material with a lighter color for the accent areas and a darker anodized aluminum color for the window frames. These lighter masonry colors are effective in providing a contrast to the historic masonry buildings, and also in lightening the mass of the long bar building.

## 2. Revised penthouse design

The large penthouse was the subject of much discussion at the December Board hearing. The new thoughtfully considered penthouse is more successful due to its smaller size, scale, and shifted location. Compared to its previous iteration, the new penthouse is 32' shorter in length and 3'-6" shorter in height. By shifting the smaller penthouse to the east side of the bar building, its mass is more integrated and compatible with the other elements of the bar building. The plans call for a champagne anodized aluminum cladding for the penthouse which references the new window frame material.

## 3. Entry sequence and connection to the existing buildings

The entry sequence has been improved with a revised entry canopy design, revisions to the glass lobby wall, and a strengthened visible connection to the historic Schenley and Crawford Halls. By rebuilding the west brick side wall of Crawford, and the east brick side wall of Schenley, there will be a stronger awareness of the historic buildings. Although this will be a partial rebuilding and not the original wall, this visual connection gives more of a presence to the existing buildings and how they are integrated with the new construction.

The revised design addresses the concerns raised by the Board in improving the design through more rigorous elevations, solving the problematic penthouse through smaller scale and intentional design, and improving the compatibility of the new construction and its relationship to the existing structures through a revised entry sequence.

## **Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Review Board:*

- *Find the concept to be compatible with the character of the historic buildings, direct the applicant to continuing working with HPO on design development, and delegate final approval to staff.*

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD



**HPRB ACTIONS**  
**February 28 and March 7, 2013**

The Historic Preservation Review Board met to consider the following items on February 28 and March 7, 2013.  
**Present: Gretchen Pfaehler, Chair; Andrew Aurbach, Maria Casarella, Graham Davidson, Nancy Metzger, Robert Sonderman, and Joseph Taylor. Absent: Rauzia Ally.**

**FEBRUARY 28 AGENDA**

**LANDMARK DESIGNATION HEARING**

Harbour Square, Square 503, Lot 116, Case #12-05.

*The Board designated Harbour Square a historic landmark to be entered in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites and recommended that the nomination be forwarded to the National Register of Historic Places with a recommendation for listing as of local significance, with a period of significance of 1966, the date of the complex's completion. Vote: 7-0.*

**SAINT ELIZABETHS HOSPITAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1100 Alabama Avenue (2700 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue), SE, HPA #13-032, revised concept/construction of pavilion.

*The Board approved the concept as not incompatible with the character of the historic district and requested that the project return to the Board when it is further developed. The Board supported the idea of a bold, even stark structure of the size and location proposed and stated that the reduction in length and the reorientation were improvements. The Board expressed some concern about the starkness of the northern termination of the structure in a point or edge across the Redwood Drive axis. The Board emphasized the urgency of maintaining the landscape and considering the maintenance needs of such a structure and its grounds post construction. The Board also stressed the importance of aligning the paths to, under and through the structure with the natural connections to the building entrances and existing circulation paths behind. Finally, the Board wishes to see the details of materials and their assembly as the design is further developed, stressing that the details would be crucial to the success of the building for itself and how it affects the visual character of the campus. Vote: 7-0.*

**HISTORIC LANDMARK**

Spingarn High School, 2500 Benning Road, NE, HPA #13-004, revised concept review for proposed streetcar car barn.

*The case was deferred at the request of the applicant, the DC Department of Transportation.*

**CAPITOL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

820 C Street, SE, HPA #12-615, concept/new construction on vacant lot.

*The Board approved the concept as consistent with the purposes of the act and delegated final approval to staff. Staff will continue to work with the applicant as construction drawings are prepared to address various comments contained in the staff report and discussed by the Board. Vote: 7-0.*

426 11th Street, SE, HPA #12-560, concept/rooftop addition.

*The Board found the current proposal to be incompatible, and determined that if the applicant wishes to revise the concept for further review, the addition should be held to, or close to, the rear ell of the house and the rear elevation should be restudied. Vote: 7-0.*

#### **U STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1300 U Street, NW, HPA #12-432, revised concept/new construction, eight-story apartment building. *The Board found the revised concept to a thoughtful and skillful response to its previous concerns. While acknowledging that it was a large building, the Board found that the design related appropriately to its context in a manner that was reflective of the neighborhood's historical development patterns. The design was found to be extremely well detailed, with an unusually well designed rear elevation. The applicant was requested to continue working on refinements to the storefronts, entrances and material selection with staff. Vote: 6-0 (Casarella recused).*

### **MARCH 7 AGENDA**

**Present: Gretchen Pfaehler, Chair, Andrew Aurbach, Maria Casarella, Graham Davidson, Nancy Metzger and Robert Sonderman. Absent: Joseph Taylor and Rauzia Ally.**

#### **MOUNT VERNON SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

650 New York Avenue, NW (Square 450), HPA #12-305, revised concept/ alteration, new construction, rehabilitation of historic buildings.

*The HPRB found the revisions to the surface skin, the treatment of the curvilinear element on the west side of the composition and the L Street elevation to improve the compatibility of the conceptual design, but expressed a preference for the treatment of the 7<sup>th</sup> Street infill element in the previous design. The applicants were directed to continue working with HPO on design development, scope of restoration work on the historic buildings, and material selection and delegated final approval to staff. Vote: 6-0*

#### **SIXTEENTH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT**

900 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, HPA #12-344, revised concept/new construction, office building and church.

*The HPRB approved the conceptual design for the treatment of the church's crystalline entrance element, asked that the changes made to the top of the building be revisited to be more consistent with the previous concept, raised concerns about the glass corners of the office building competing with the church entrance element, and directed the applicants to continue working with staff on design development. Vote: 5-0 (Casarella recused).*

#### **GEORGE WASHINGTON/WEST END HISTORIC DISTRICT (PENDING)**

Square 77 (bounded by 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, H and Eye Streets, NW), revised concept/alteration for construction of new dormitory.

*HPRB found the concept to be compatible with the character of the historic buildings, and directed the applicant to continuing working with HPO on design development of the elevations, and delegated final approval to staff. Vote: 6-0.*

**DUPONT CIRCLE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1337 Connecticut Avenue, NW, HPA #12-421, revised concept/additional floors added to non-contributing building.

*The HPRB found the revised concept for one additional (sixth) floor to be generally compatible with the character of the historic district, but asked that additional efforts be made to simplify the massing and architectural language. The Board also asked that a restoration strategy and scope be developed for the building, and that the project be delegated final approval to staff. Vote 5-1 (Davidson opposed).*

**HISTORIC LANDMARK**

Hecht Company Warehouse, 1401 New York Avenue, NE, HPA #13-065, concept/site plan and construction of parking garage.

*The HPRB found the site plan and general height, mass and location of the garage to be compatible with the character of the landmark, and gave flexibility to the applicants to remove the one-story façade wall of the 1961 wing rather than retaining it. The Board expressed their preference for eliminating the elevated walkway over the new road, and asked that the applicants return for further review when appropriate. Vote: 4-1 (Metzger opposed)*

**DC GOVERNMENT PROJECT**

Hearst Elementary School, 3950 37<sup>th</sup> Street NW, concept/addition.

*The HPRB approved the concept but suggested that the massing of the addition could be simplified and recommended that the elevations, fenestration and materials should be revised, simplified and regularized to be less disjointed, more cohesive as a whole, and better related to the historic school. The addition was acknowledged as a substantial change along Tilden Street, but the Board also noted that the proposed two-story height was relatively small and set back far enough from the street to be appropriate, and that the visual impacts should be minimized and mitigated through revisions to the north façade and through retaining/planting trees and landscaping. Finally, the Board recommended further study be undertaken to make the exterior balconies more a part of the overall composition, to improve the current proposal for truck access and to refine the overall landscaping plan so that it will establish a more definitive boundary for the site. Vote: 5-0*

**CAPITOL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

208, 214, 236 Massachusetts Avenue, NE and 420-430 3rd Street, NE, HPA #13-107, concept/raze, alterations, subdivision, new construction.

*The Board approved in concept the proposed raze, subdivision, addition, courtyard, and service structure behind 208 and 214 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, garage entrance structure fronting 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and underground parking garage, door and canopy alterations facing Massachusetts Avenue, penthouse expansion at 236 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, public space alterations on Massachusetts Avenue and at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Massachusetts Avenue, NE. The Board also found the conceptual massing, footprint, and design direction of the new townhouses on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street compatible with the character of the historic district, and asked the applicants to return to the Board for final approval of materials and design details when ready. The Board did not find the proposed removal of the berm on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to be compatible with the purposes of the preservation act, as proposed. Vote: 4-0 (Casarella recused; Sonderman absent)*

410 E Street, NE (Stuart Hobson Middle School), HPA #12-616, concept/ongoing review of addition. *The Board approved the concept proposal, with comments, and delegated final approval to staff. Vote: 4-0 (Aurbach and Sonderman absent)*

**SHAW HISTORIC DISTRICT**

~~1000 N Street NW, HPA #13-146, permit/turret roof, replace asphalt shingles with standing-seam copper. [withdrawn at request of the applicant]~~

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**The Board announced its intention of moving 1938 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, NW (HPA #13-108) from the March 7<sup>th</sup> agenda to the consent calendar at the March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Board approved the following items on the consent calendar on February 28:**

**CAPITOL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

901 D Street, NE (former Edmonds School), HPA #13-028, concept/ongoing review of alterations and new construction.

225 9th Street, NE, HPA #13-158, concept/rear addition and balcony railing on front bay.

**CLEVELAND PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT**

3635 Ordway Street NW, HPA #13-151, concept/widen driveway and move retaining wall. *(Casarella recused)*  
3324 Newark Street NW, HPA #13-153, concept/side addition, side porch infill.

**MOUNT PLEASANT HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1709 Harvard Street NW, HPA #13-149, concept/one-story rear addition *(Dennee)*

3145 Mount Pleasant Street, NW, HPA #13-157, concept for new construction and rehabilitation.

**U STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT**

939 T Street, NW, HPA #13-150, concept/three-story rear addition.

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