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

Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	525 A Street, NE	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	June 22, 2017	<input type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	17-417	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Gabriela Gutowski	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

The applicant, Capitol Hill Baptist Church, with plans prepared by PGN Architects, seeks concept review for the construction of five townhouses in the Capitol Hill Historic District.

Property Description

The proposed location of the townhouses is on the same lot as the Capitol Hill Baptist Church. The church was built in 1911 and is located at the corner of A and 6th Street, NE. Currently, the portion of the lot is undeveloped and features a playground and a paved parking lot. Mature trees screen the playground and parking lot from view on 6th Street.

Proposal

The plans call for the construction of five three-story townhouses fronting 6th Street. The northernmost house would abut the rear of the church and the southernmost house would terminate at an existing driveway. Each building would measure approximately 20' wide and 37' tall. The primary elevations would alternate from three to two story projecting bays in an A-B-A-B-A pattern. All five townhouses would be clad in brick and share continuous cast stone string-courses and a decorative cornice punctuated by the three-story bays. The "A" houses would feature one-over-one double-hung windows and the "B" houses two-over-two double-hung. The plans also show three varieties of brick color distinguishing each building from the other.

The rear elevations would be clad in siding and feature cast-stone window sills and lintels and one-over-one double-hung windows. The rears of the properties would be visible when looking east from 5th Street through the existing parking lot located behind the church. The south elevation at the southern-most townhouse will be brick punctuated by one-over-one double-hung windows and a covered side porch supported by square wood columns. Each townhouse would have a basement, and two of the five townhouses would feature a basement entrance at the primary elevation. The existing curb-cut and driveway would be eliminated and replaced with concrete paving. A new metal fence would be installed at the property line with two gates leading to concrete walkways. Behind the metal fence and gates would be grass and plantings.

Each roof would feature a green-roof. Two of the townhouses would have stair bulkheads allowing access to rooftop decks. The other three roofs would support HVAC equipment. The

deck railings would be set back significantly from the primary and rear elevations and would not be visible from 6th Street over the primary elevations; the bulkheads and mechanical equipment would also not be seen from street view.

Evaluation

The proposed townhouses have been designed to reflect a common historic development pattern in the Capitol Hill Historic District where rows of multiple houses were built at the same time. Like many historic rows in the district, the houses have a common language but with minor variations to increase the picturesque quality of the composition. The shared designed aspects of the houses, including the continuous use of brick, string courses and cornice, and double-hung windows unify the buildings; the slight variations in window configuration, bay height, and brick color work to create visual diversity and help to break up the massing.

The proposed three-story plus basement height is in keeping with the height of other houses within the streetscape. The use of brick, traditional cast-stone details, double-hung windows, and projecting bays would relate well to the historic buildings within the district.

The proposed rooftop extrusions will not be seen from the any streets. The rear elevation at the church is currently brick with no fenestration; therefore the construction of the northernmost townhouse directly up against the rear of the church will not damage or destroy significant architectural features. The removal of the curb-cut and driveway is positive, however, the plan would be further improved by removal of the concrete paving, returning this portion of public space to landscape, and extending the iron fence that runs in front of the houses in the same plane.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept as consistent with the purposes of the preservation act, contingent on the applicant continuing to work with HPO on design development, materials selection and finalization of the public space plan, and delegate final approval to staff.