

**Testimony of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society before the DC Historic Preservation
Review Board July 28, 2016
1229 E Street & 1220 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE HPA 16-379**

My name is Beth Purcell and I am testifying on behalf of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society's Historic Preservation Committee. Thank you for letting us share our views on this project.

1229 E Street, SE

Our letter to the HPRB with attached images, sent on July 21, 2016 describes the history of the shotgun house. In 2014, CHRS opposed the application to raze the building (HPA 14-435). HPRB denied the raze application. The applicant has purchased the building from the prior owner and plans to reconstruct the building, saving an important historic building.

The applicant plans to move the shotgun house three feet to the west, adjacent to 1227 E Street, SE. Ordinarily, moving a historic building is discouraged. However, in this case, we believe this step is appropriate because the move is a short distance, the applicant plans to reconstruct the building (which has suffered from demolition by neglect), retaining as much original fabric as possible, and the move will make it possible to construct a new rowhouse adjacent to the shotgun house, creating a unified and continuous line of residential buildings on E Street.

The reconstruction of the shotgun house will be based on available documentation, and will retain the first section of the house, 26 feet deep. A brick addition in poor condition will not be reconstructed. The wood siding will be retained wherever possible, and new wood siding will be custom-milled to match the original. The eaves will be preserved. The roof will be hand-crimped metal. The porch will be reconstructed; the applicant plans to install wood balusters and antique wood columns, matching the columns shown in a 1925 repair permit as closely a possible. The windows will be wood Marvin custom-made windows with a single pane and storm window on the interior. The plans show a six-over-one window on the front of the first story. Although there is no record of the original windows, we know from the 1999 photograph that there was a six-over-one window in front. Although six-over-one double-hung windows were often used on Craftsman houses, which postdate the original construction of the shotgun house, we know that the house had this type of window in the past.¹

A new three-story addition will be constructed at the rear of the shotgun house, a modern interpretation of camelback additions to shotgun houses. The addition, which reads as modern, will have a shed dormer in front and rear, a standing seam metal roof (machine crimped), and four-pane windows in the front. The applicant plans to construct a new three-story rowhouse adjacent to and set back from the shotgun house and slightly higher, further differentiating the two houses. This house will have synthetic siding, a porch, with columns similar to the shotgun house, and four-over-one windows.

We believe that the project is compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District.

1220 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, new apartment building

The applicant holds a ground lease for 20,370 square feet on Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, which is vacant with the exception of a contributing brick rowhouse. The applicant plans a new building with 114 rental units and ground-floor retail space in the easternmost section of the building. The project will be four stories, brick with angled bays, cast stone lintels, and penthouse. A retail

¹ See The Craftsman, Jan., Feb. 1905.

building in four shades of gray brick with decorative brick panels evocative of the color scheme of the Amy Weinstein project at 660 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. The westernmost section will have an oriel window replicating the pattern of the bays and on street level, a firehouse-type folding garage door and new curb cut will lead to underground and surface parking in the rear of the building. The entrance to the apartments will be clearly marked with a canopy.

The brick on the main section will be Flemish bond on the lower story, and above, running bond red brick similar in color to the brick rowhouse; the mortar will match the color of the new brick. It should be possible to distinguish the apartment building as modern construction differing from the existing rowhouse.

The penthouse will be clad in dark gray vertical slate (or synthetic slate) shingles, and pulled back from the front of the building, allowing the cornice line (sheet metal) to meet the sky. The mechanical units will be on the roof and screened from view. The patio and pool will be on the Pennsylvania Avenue side of the building, away from the residences on E Street. We suggest however, that patio appurtenances be screened from view.

A two-story red brick rowhouse, 1234 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, approximately 18 x 36 feet will be rehabilitated, closing in a dogleg, retaining as much interior fabric as possible, and rented as a single live-work space. There will be a terrace on the roof, for one of the apartments. The applicant is working with neighbors to provide them a license to use the garage door and access to rear of their lots (not currently available), in effect a private alley. The applicant has offered to plant trees at the rear of the property and to construct a garage door at the rear of each neighbor's lot if they wish.

The project will create an attractive apartment building and retail that follows Capitol Hill building forms, but clearly reads as a modern building.

We agree with the recommendations in the staff report and we believe that the project is compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District.

Thank you for considering our views.