

**Testimony of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society
before the DC Historic Preservation Review Board on June 3, 2021
420 11th Street, SE HPA 21-253**

My name is Beth Purcell and I am testifying on behalf of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society's Historic Preservation Committee. We reviewed the plans for the project dated November 1, 2020.

The staff report notes that in 2019 three windows were replaced without a building permit: Two window openings in the front elevation were altered and aluminum one-over-one double-hung windows were installed, On the side elevation a large undivided sash was installed. All these windows violate HPRB's regulations on windows. A violation was issued and the case is before the Office of Administrative Hearings.

This two-story semi-detached frame house, a contributing building, was constructed in 1874 or 1875 . The applicant proposes to demolish a rear addition (which appears to be in poor condition), and build a new two-story addition, which should not be visible from public space, with the exception of the adjacent alley.

On the front elevation, the windows and transom would be retained, and the door replaced. The applicant plans to remove the stucco and replace it with new siding. The project architect provided helpful information on the condition of the siding under the stucco and specifications for replacement siding. Under the existing stucco is six-inch wood siding in very poor condition, rotten and falling apart; some vertical studs are also in poor condition, which the applicant intends to replace or sister with new studs. There is no sheathing layer under the siding which also prevents applying a proper air-barrier with the new construction. The applicant intends to remove the existing stucco, and the existing siding layer down to the studs, add 3/4" plywood, air-barrier, and new siding, with batt insulation on the inside. The siding under the stucco is a six-inch exposure flat siding. According to HPO's *Walls and Foundations Guidelines*, the closest match is the beveled siding, but as seen in the photos the applicant provided, it appears to be a flat, non-tapered, wood plank. The plan is to match the same existing six-inch exposure flat/beveled style for the new siding to recreate the original look, and we agree with the staff on this point.

On the alley elevation, window openings will be closed in the historic house and new windows installed, which aids the transition to the rear addition. This is not a primary elevation, and therefore, to us, these features do not raise historic preservation concerns. In the addition, the hyphen adds light. The rear roofdeck, reached by an exterior stair, is sited away from 11th Street. We agree with the staff that the parapet walls should be reduced in height, and that the proposed replacement door should comply with HPRB's *Door Repair and Replacement* guidelines. The rear elevation's design and materials are appropriate.

While this appears to be a commendable and thoughtful project in many respects, we strongly agree with staff that no approval should be granted until after the applicant corrects the violations. The Historic Preservation Committee expresses no opinion on zoning issues.

Thank you for considering our comments.