

**Testimony of the
Historic Preservation Committee of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society
before the DC Historic Preservation Review Board
732 7th street, SE HPA 23-175
February 23, 2023**

My name is Beth Purcell and I am testifying on behalf of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society's Historic Preservation Committee. The applicant proposes to re-purpose one story PEPCO substation building, expand it and build a three-story addition on top of this industrial base. PEPCO substation was built in 1941. In 2015, HPRB declared this building to be [non contributing](#). [HPA 15-367](#).

The proposed design meets a challenge of reusing windowless brick box in creative ways. The painted brick addition matching over fifteen-foot-tall substation nearly doubles the ground floor area. Large new openings introduce light into proposed office spaces. Scale and design of the fenestration is industrial in appearance. The original substation stone base and door portal are retained. New residential upper floors are clearly differentiated from the base. The second and third floors are new brick with residential scaled windows. The top fourth floor is clad in metal panels and slightly set back from two lower levels. Upper floors addition over approximately two thirds of the base houses three spacious, well-lit apartments. All have some roof deck spaces.

The proposed building fits well in the context of the area adjacent to Barracks Row with its mix of uses and mix of buildings of various ages and sizes. The four-story building, visible both from 7th street and the alley, is made less massive by the mix of materials and the setbacks.

The staff recommends eliminating or reducing the visibility of the fourth floor, roof deck, and changes to the color palate and rear fenestration. While we believe that the project is compatible as presented, we support the staff's requested changes.

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

Thank you for considering our comments.