

**Testimony of the Historic Preservation Committee of the
Capitol Hill Restoration Society
601 Massachusetts Avenue, NE HPA 23-040**

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 dated September 16, 2022, October 18, 2022, February 2, 2023 and March 1, 2023. Figure 1.

This one-story masonry corner building was built as a store in 1954 and is a noncontributing building currently occupied by a cleaners. The applicant is seeking a permit to demolish the building. 601 Massachusetts Avenue, NE is a corner site at a major intersection, in a very visible location.

The design is greatly improved.

We believe that demolishing the cleaners and constructing a new three-story brick building is a huge step forward. The March design is in smooth urban red brick, and offers detailing—English bond pattern with fifth row turned, segmented brick arches. We are extremely gratified that the applicant has made the revisions that we advocated: The design creates a corner element at the meeting of Massachusetts Avenue and 6th Street with angled bays and triple windows. While we believe that the design and materials are compatible with the Capitol Hill Historic District, we support the staff's suggestions on consistent window and door typology, windowsills, and mortar color matching the brick, and eliminating the above-ground railing.

The new brick building should remain unpainted.

The staff report approves the brick color palette and suggests mortar matching the masonry. We agree with these suggestions, and, because this applicant has a track record of painting its new brick buildings, we request that the Board require this building to remain unpainted.¹ In a similar case, on another

¹ The applicant has in the past built new brick houses and then painted them. See for example, Figure 2, 1624 E Street, SE (2021), 1330/1332 K Street, SE, (2022) and 1312 Constitution Avenue, NE (2021). Please see Figure 2, 1624 E Street, SE.

corner building, 300 8th St NE (HPA 16-443), a new four-story brick apartment building wrapping a corner, the Board agreed with us that the brick should remain unpainted. (2019). For these reasons we urge the Board to require that this new brick building remain unpainted.

Thank you for considering our comments.

If you count what appear to be the applicant's predecessors or related companies, there are at least six more new painted brick buildings 706 15th Street, SE (C&S Development, 2016); 1620, 1622, 1622 ½ E Street, SE (NA C&S Development,

2016); 1529 E Street, SE (C&S Development, 2018); 1524 C Street, SE (C&S Development, Jonathan D. Schmidt, 2012).

Figure 1. 601 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, center. Left of the cleaners are red brick rowhouses, 603 Massachusetts (1885), 605 Massachusetts (1885) and 607 Massachusetts (1890).



Figure 2. 1624 E Street, SE, center house, outside the Capitol Hill Historic District, painted brick, constructed by Schmidt Development, 2021.

