



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

Representing the communities of Burleith, Georgetown and Hillandale

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October 4, 2017

Ms. Marnique Heath
Chair
Historic Preservation Review Board
1100 4th Street SW, Suite E650
Washington, DC 20024
historic.preservation@dc.gov

**RE: Permit Application for Partial Demolition, Third-Floor and Rear Additions at
1728 Wisconsin Avenue NW (HPRB #17-446)**

Dear Chair Heath,

On October 2, 2017 ANC 2E held its regularly scheduled public meeting, which was properly noticed and attended by seven commissioners, constituting a quorum. At this meeting the Commission adopted the following resolution by a vote of (6-0-1) with regard to the above-referenced matter:

The Historic Preservation Office (HPO) recommendation will place undue hardships and unnecessary burdens on the applicant. If the HPO recommendation is followed then the precedent of possibly having every ANC 2E and Old Georgetown Board (OGB) approved project overturned or severely modified will be untenable for the ANC 2E community. The historic preservation regulations (§ 305.1) applied to this project are minimal at best. Out of the seven cited in the HPO recommendation, only two are completely confirmed to apply according to HPO. Those two are: (1) “the removal or destruction of all or a substantial portion of the structural components of the building, such as structural walls, floor assemblies and roofs” and (2) “the removal or destruction of all or a substantial portion of the roof along with all or substantially all of one or more exterior walls.”

These two citations for this property will have no detrimental historic effects on this building. The 1958 facade is basically a massive storefront. The massing of this storefront, in relation to the commercial streetscape, virtually obscures the entire building. The original 1899 structure is totally hidden by the 1958 storefront. Thus, for HPO to state that this property contributes to the character of a historic landmark is not a precedent our community can afford to have guide future applicants.

COMMISSIONERS:

Ed Solomon, District 1 Joe Gibbons, District 2 Rick Murphy, District 3
Mara Goldman, District 4 Lisa Palmer, District 5 Jim Wilcox, District 6
Monica Roaché, District 7 Zac Schroepfer, District 8

The purpose of preservation law is to serve the public interest “in the protection, enhancement and perpetuation of improvements... of (historic) districts.” (D.C. Official Code § 6-1101). For HPO to apply the most severe, unyielding definition of preservation law in this specific case would be harmful to the ANC 2E community and the entire process of ANC 2E and OGB’s review procedures. ANC 2E believes that the applicant has picked a building that materially does not contribute to the historic district, has fully complied with all the review procedures, including changes asked for by OGB, and is going to revitalize, through mixed use, a very tired building.

ANC 2E strongly supports the applicant’s project as previously approved by the ANC and OGB.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Gibbons", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joe Gibbons
Chair, ANC 2E