



Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor

**COMMISSION FOR
HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL
PRESERVATION**

Tom Liebel, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

September 11, 2018

REQUEST: Concept Review – Construct New Elevator Penthouse and Extend Height of Stair Tower at Roof

ADDRESS: 2 East Read Street (Mount Vernon)

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Caitlin Audette

APPLICANT: Jen Webber, HM Charm City LLC

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT

Mount Vernon Historic District: The Mount Vernon Historic District encompasses roughly 40 blocks surrounding Mount Vernon Place. The contributing buildings within the district include a diversity of styles and building types including mansions, apartments, offices, and religious structures. The period of significance for the Mount Vernon Historic District extends from 1810 to 1945.

Site Conditions/Architectural Description:

The property at 2 East Read Street, known as the Latrobe Building, was designed by prominent Baltimore architect Edward Glidden as a nine-story Italianate apartment building. Constructed circa 1911, the building's name derives from the Latrobe House, torn down to allow the construction of the modern apartment building. The painted masonry building features recessed mortar joints, terra cotta belt courses and window surrounds, and a deep, highly ornate cornice.

In the early 1980s, a large scale renovation was completed to the property to convert the building entirely to offices, a use that had begun to infiltrate this apartment building in earlier years. The renovation made use of Federal Historic Tax Credits. This renovation had a limited effect to the exterior of the building, save for the north elevation where a nine-story addition was constructed of CMU.

The original rowhouse on the site was constructed for John Hazelhurst Boneval Latrobe a successful attorney and civic leader as chair of the Public Park Commission and president of the Maryland Historical Society. John H.B. Latrobe was the son of Benjamin Latrobe, the architect of the Baltimore Cathedral, and father to Ferdinand C. Latrobe, five-time Baltimore mayor. It is likely that John H.B. Latrobe had constructed this house for his son or another family member as his home is still intact and located on Mulberry Street.

BACKGROUND

- In 1983, several approvals were issued related to the large-scale renovation of the building including the construction of a nine-story rear addition, restoration of main entrance, removal of fire escape, and the alteration of 16 doors into windows.
- In 2007, an ATP was issued to repair stucco at the rear of the building.
- In 2014, an ATP was issued to construct an ADA ramp on the east elevation of the building, facing the alley.
- In 2016, an ATP was issued to re-cover the arched canopy at the rear of the building.

PROPOSAL & APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

As part of the building's conversion to a hotel, the applicant proposes a number of minor alterations to the building that can be approved at the staff level. In addition to these minor alterations, the applicant proposes to demolish and reconstruct the building's elevator penthouse and extend the stair tower, increasing the height by approximately 6'-9". This alteration will result in a larger footprint for the penthouse, providing access to a proposed new roof terrace for use by hotel guests.

The existing penthouse was constructed as part of the north addition during the 1980s large-scale renovation. This CMU addition infilled a rear set back and allowed for necessary modern amenities that were installed in the 1980s.

Staff applied Design Guideline *1.18 – Alterations and Additions* which states the following, "Design alterations and additions to be compatible and sympathetic to the character of the historic building." The proposal meets this guideline, as it is in keeping with the existing aesthetic. Additionally, the new penthouse is located along the north elevation, minimizing its visibility from the public right-of-way. The new penthouse will not be visible from the south, east or west and will have limited visibility from the north.

ANALYSIS

The reconstruction of the penthouse is completed in such a way that the new penthouse will have limited visibility from the public right-of-way and its architecture is in keeping with its utilitarian nature. Additionally, the location is adjacent to the non-historic addition. As such, staff finds that the proposal meets the guidelines for Alterations and Additions.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The Mount Vernon ARC has not yet provided comment regarding the proposed modification.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the alteration as it will be minimally visible from the public right-of-way. Staff recommends all final details be reviewed by staff.



**Eric Holcomb,
Director**

MAP AND IMAGES

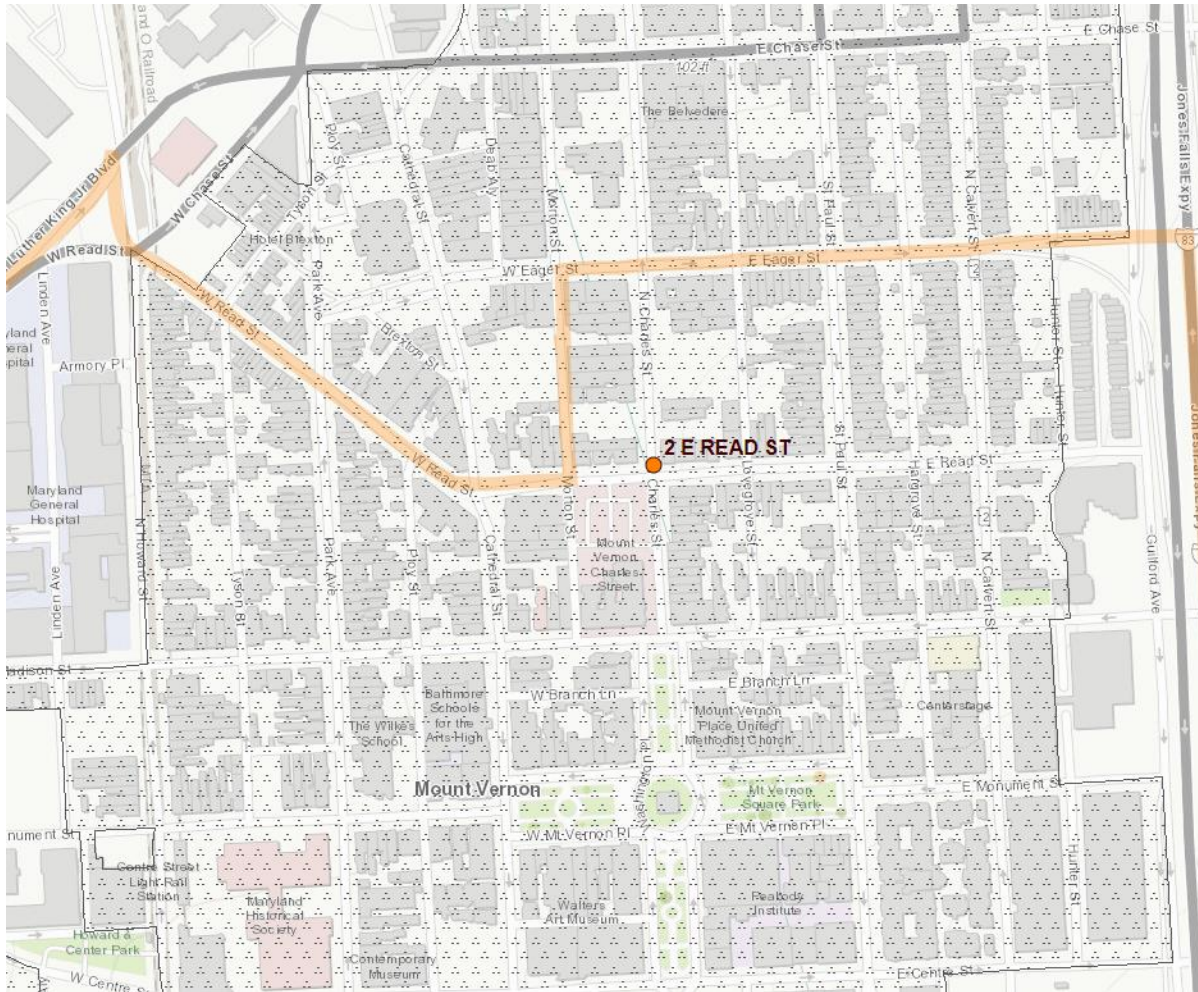


Image 1– 2 East Read Street in the Mount Vernon Historic District

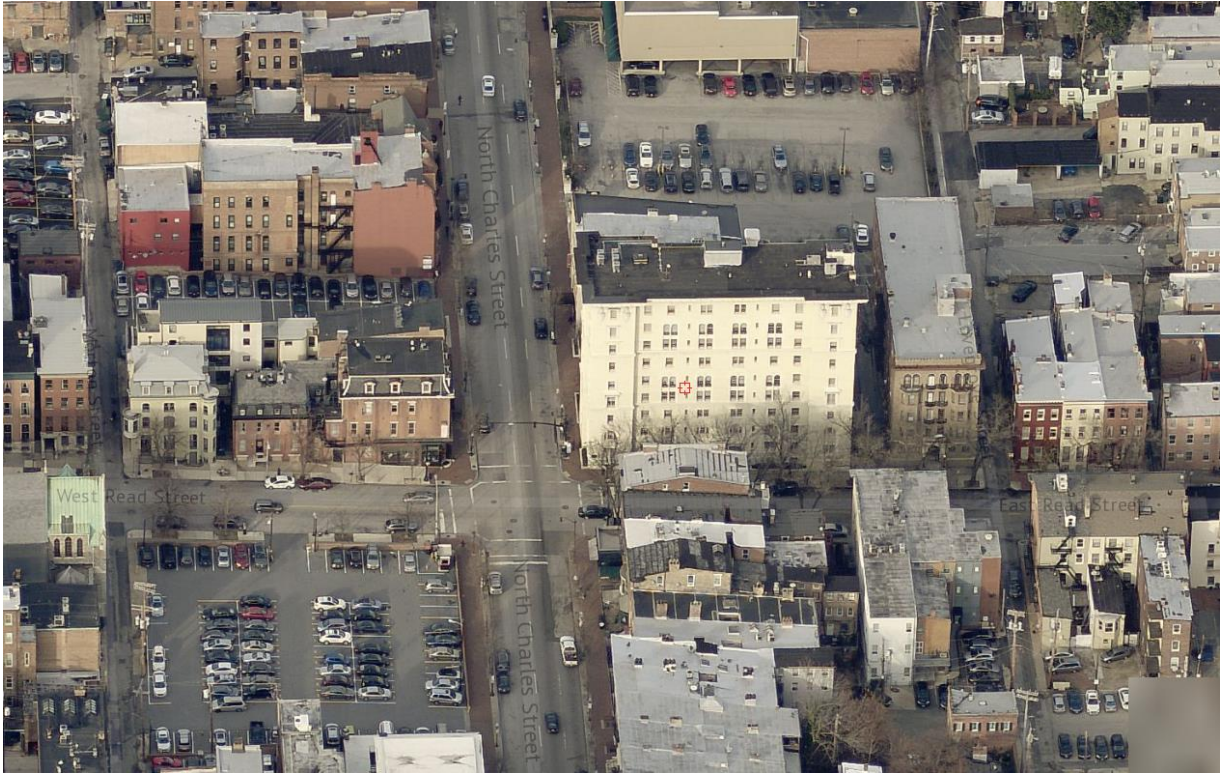


Image 2– Aerial view of 2 E. Read Street as seen from south.

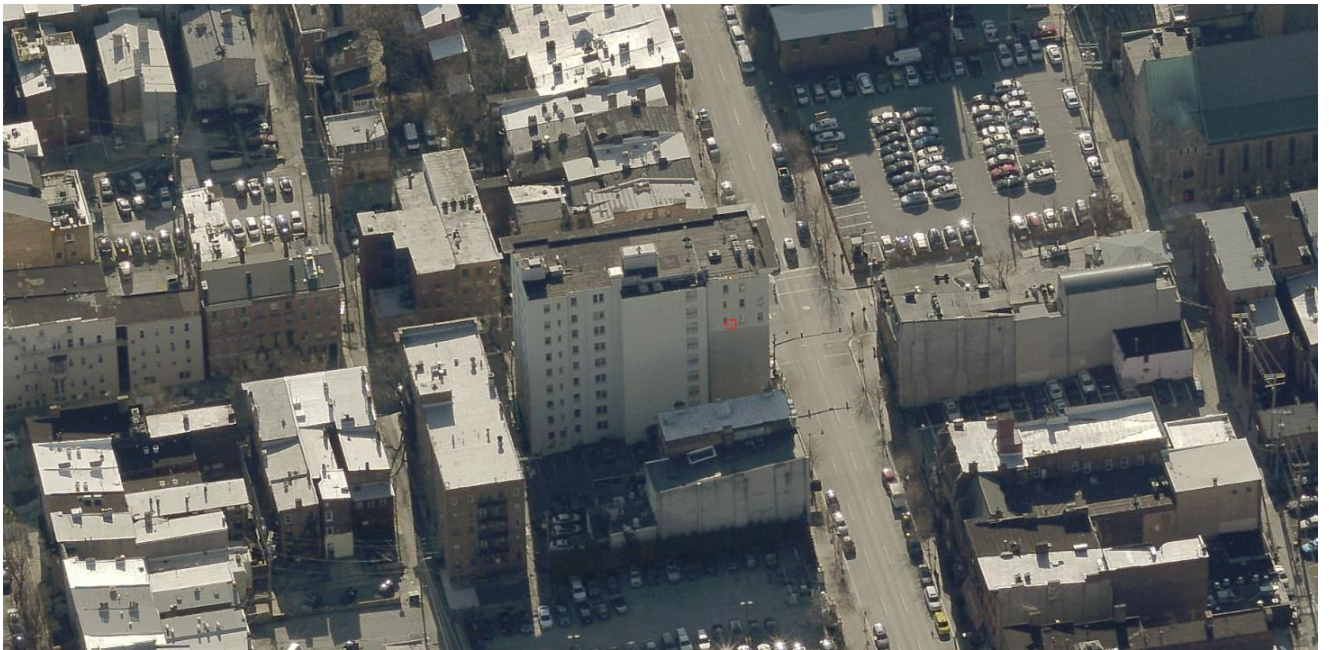


Image 3– Aerial view of 2 E. Read Street as seen from north. Existing addition and penthouse visible.