



*Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor*

**COMMISSION FOR
HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL
PRESERVATION**

Tom Liebel, Chairman



*Thomas J. Stosur
Director*

STAFF REPORT

October 9, 2018

REQUEST: Concept Review-Height, Massing and Scale of new additions and Rehabilitation of existing historic structure and facades

ADDRESS: 719-723 West Pratt Street (Ridgely's Delight Historic District)

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of Concept Designs of Height, Massing and Scale.

1. Staff recommends that the applicant explore simplifying the façade cornice level of the east addition
2. Staff recommends extending the façade plane to meet the top floor level.
3. Staff recommends that Final Design Plans return to the full Commission.

STAFF: Walter Edward Leon

PETITIONER: Zalco Properties (Yonah Zahler)

OWNER: University of Maryland Medical Center, State of Maryland

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT: The site is located on the northern border of the Ridgely Delight historic district. The district is a wedge shaped residential neighborhood just south of the University of Maryland downtown campus. It is generally bounded by Pratt Street, Russell Street, and Martin Luther King Boulevard. The residential buildings are both two and three stories high and range in size from near-mansions to alley housing. Among the earliest houses are those set back from the street and A single surviving frame house on Melvin Drive is one of the earliest in the neighborhood. Many of the buildings on Washington Boulevard feature commercial storefronts, and a few industrial buildings are extant within the boundaries of the district. The later industrial and main buildings range from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century.

Ridgely's Delight is architecturally significant in that it embodies excellent examples of traditional rowhouse architecture and industrial/manufacturing buildings. The make-up of the community has reflected the character of nearby nineteenth century employment centers, such as the University of Maryland Hospital, the B&O Railroad Yards, and Bartlett and Hayward Ironworks. Ridgely's Delight has always been a socially and economically mixed use neighborhood with both blue collar employees of local industries and professionals, such as the doctors and dentists employed at the University of Maryland's medical facilities. The district's

residential structures represent the first phase of development for Baltimore's rowhouses, as well as later versions for working, middle and upper class residents. The unusual street pattern of Ridgely's Delight produces an intimate human scale, fine vistas and irregular building sites and structures.

BACKGROUND –This project includes four lots known as 715-717 W. Pratt Street (two-story garage), 719-721 W. Pratt Street (one-story garage), 723-725 W. Pratt Street (four-story building), and 727-729 W. Pratt Street (vacant lot).

715-17, 718-21 and 727-29 W. Pratt Street are owned by the State of Maryland (for use of the University System) since 2000-2002. 723-725 W. Pratt Street is owned by the University of Maryland Medical System Corporation, a non-state entity since 1997.

715-17 W. Pratt Street was condemned in 1999. 719-21 there are no recorded building history. 723-725 W. Pratt Street (four-story structure) was repaired in 2011 where the owner rebuilt the Dover Street façade. A one-story garage was demolished at 727-729 between 2014 and 2015.

The Commission has reviewed two items for this project:

- March 2018 was the request to demolish 723 West Pratt Street. Commission denied the request.
- July 2018 was the request to demolish 719 and 721 West Pratt Street. The Commission denied the request.
- August 2018 the Commission did not approve of the request to the partial demolition of the building at 723 West Pratt Street, the retention of the adjacent one and two story garage facades and the construction of a multi-story residential addition with rear ground level parking.

PROPOSAL- The applicant proposes to rehabilitate the existing structure at 723 West Pratt Street and construct two connected additions. The addition to the west of 723 West Pratt will be five stories high and have rear yard recreational area. The addition to the east will be six stories high and have retail units on the Pratt Street side re-using historic garage front facades. This addition will also have ground level parking underneath and behind it.

APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES AND ANALYSIS

CHAP staff applied Chapter 2: Design Guidelines for Additions, New Construction, and Non-Contributing Buildings, 2.1 Guiding Principles for New Design, 2.2 Site Design, 2.3 Scale and Form.

2.2 Site Design

- Retain established property line patterns, street and alley widths, setbacks, primary and secondary building orientation, and landscape elements.

The west addition is proposed to setback about a foot or so from the sidewalk edge as the adjacent historic façade of 723 West Pratt Street does.

The east addition will incorporate the historic facades of 2 garage structures that were approved for rear demolition. And the addition above will be setback 3-5 feet.

- Incorporate character-defining site design features of the historic district into the designs of new construction projects.

The west addition will follow the frontage pattern of all the facades along West Pratt Street,

The east addition will be setback from the historic garage fronts and follow the same frontage pattern as other West Pratt Street facades.

- In areas with varied setbacks, the setback for new construction should be within ten percent (10%) of those of neighboring buildings. Variations to these setback guidelines may be warranted in some cases, but decisions should be carefully considered with respect to their impact on the overall streetscape.

The west addition will be set back slightly from the sidewalk edge prominence of 723 West Pratt Street, which allows for emphasis of the historic façade as the focus of the new development.

The east addition is setback 3-5 feet from the front plain of the historic garage front so that continued prominence of these facades continues for the walking public.

- Primary buildings should have a similar orientation and relationship to the street as the existing buildings. Primary entrances and facades should be located, oriented, and sequenced to be consistent with the pattern of entrances and facades in the neighborhood.

Both the east and west additions face West Pratt Street with rear elevations facing directly onto Dover Street in a secondary treatment.

- New construction projects should reinforce existing patterns of open space and enclosure created by existing vehicular and pedestrian circulation routes, fences, walls, yards, courtyards, gardens, and landscaping.

The rear of the east addition will be set back and a simple fenced off ground level parking area will be situated with access off of Dover Street.

The west addition will be set back from Dover Street and have an outdoor recreational area for tenants of the project.

2.3 Scale and Form.

- The scale and form of new buildings must be compatible with the height and depth of surrounding buildings. Where there is variation of building height within the immediate neighborhood, the new building should generally relate to the predominant pattern.

Both the east and west additions scale and form are compatible with the existing historic structure at 723 West Pratt Street. While each one is a floor or more higher, neither one conveys a looming feeling over the historic structure.

- New buildings must complement the massing of surrounding buildings, including the proportion of solid surfaces (walls) to voids (window and door openings.) Respect the characteristic rhythm (fenestration, bays, rooflines, etc.) of existing buildings.

The massing of the west and east additions does not overwhelm the historic building or the site. The mass of each addition is substantially setback from the rear public right of way of Dover Street.

- Design the new building to be proportional to surrounding buildings. Consider important building proportions such as floor-to-floor heights, the size and placement of windows and

doors, the scale of articulated elements such as porches, overhanging cornices, and bay windows.

The proportions of both additions are in keeping with the proportions of the historic building being incorporated into the project at 723 West Pratt St.

- Floor-to-floor heights in new construction should be within ten percent (10%) of the floor-to-floor heights of adjacent historic buildings.

The floor heights of the west and east additions have been lined up to match the interior floor heights of the historic building at 723 West Pratt Street.

- Design rooflines to be compatible with those found on surrounding buildings.

The rooflines of both additions are flat as are the majority of the immediately surrounding structures.

ANALYSIS: CHAP Staff has determined that the proposed east and west additions meet the CHAP guidelines for height, massing and scale. Both additions address and comply with the guidelines and staff recommends that the concept plans be approved by the commission. Staff notes that numerous elements exist on the façade and the applicants should examine simplifying the elements as they have done so on the rear elevation. Staff also believes in moving the top floor level into the same plane as the majority of the façade on the east addition.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The Ridgley's Delight ARC was notified of this proposal and will provide comments.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of Concept Designs of Height, Massing and Scale

4. Staff recommends that the applicant explore simplifying the façade cornice level of the east addition
5. Staff recommends extending the façade plane to meet the top floor level.
6. Staff recommends that Final Design Plans return to the full Commission.

Eric L. Holcomb
Executive Director

Site Map- Historic District



Aerial View



View from the north



View from the west



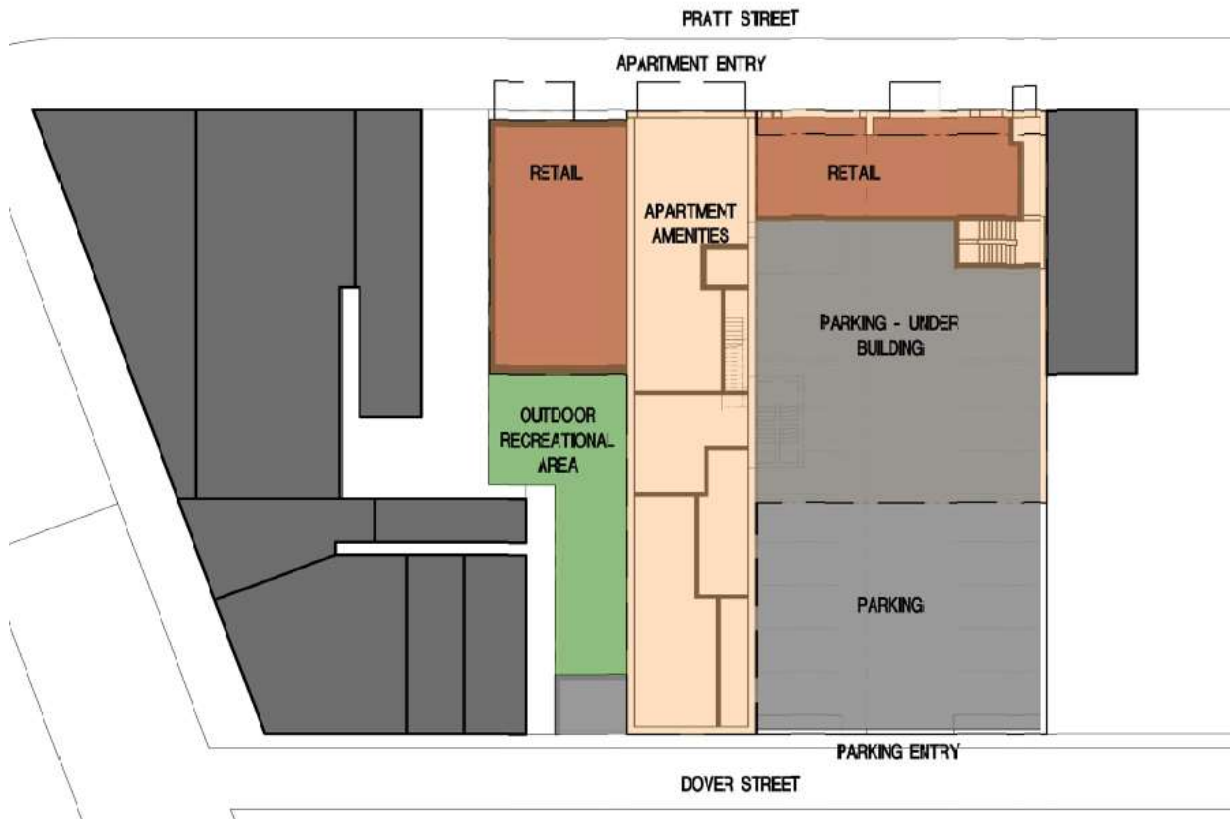
View from the south



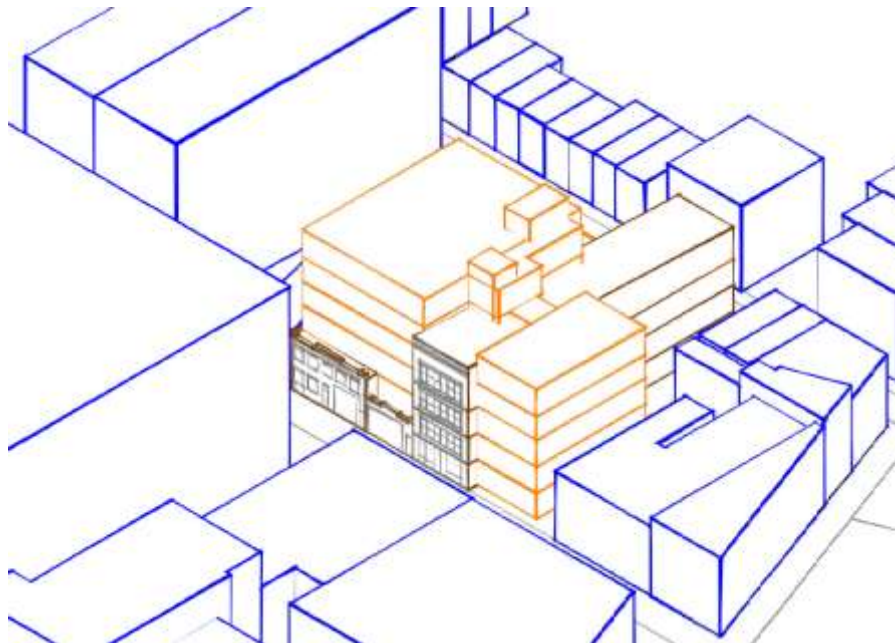
View from the east



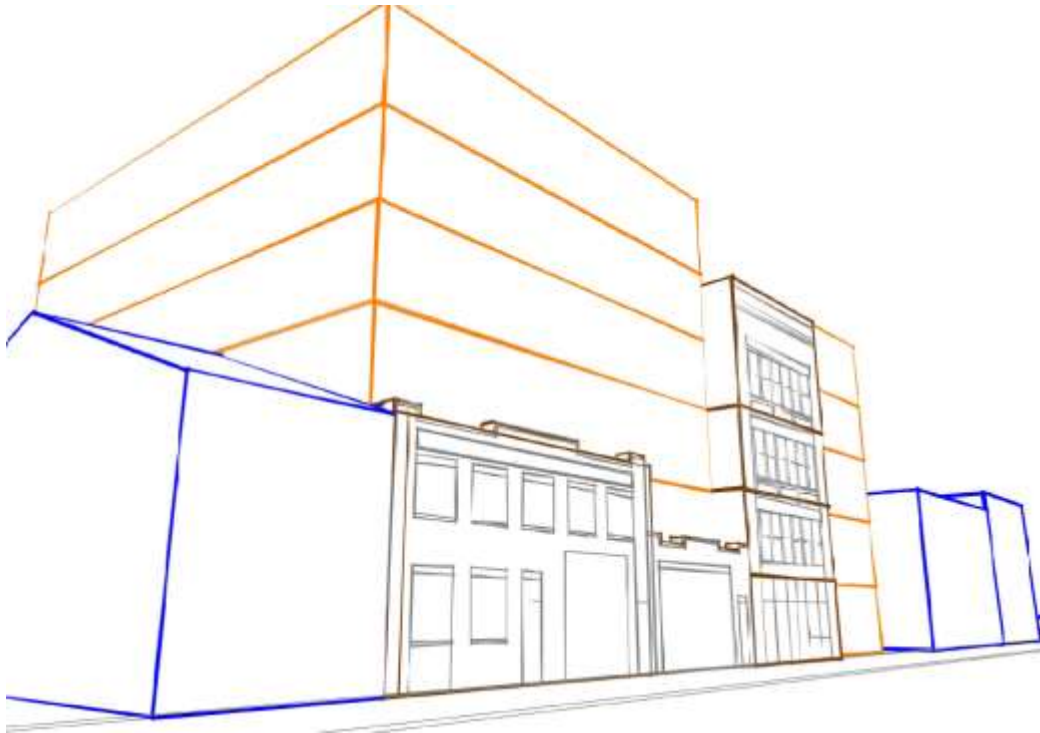
Site Plan



Massing Model from northwest



Massing model from northeast



Concept View North Elevation- Pratt Street



Concept View North Elevation



Concept Drawing

