



CATHERINE E. PUGH  
MAYOR

**COMMISSION FOR  
HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL  
PRESERVATION**

*Tom Liebel, Chairman*

**STAFF REPORT**



CHRIS RYER  
DIRECTOR

**April 9, 2019**

**REQUEST:** Concept Review: Height, Massing, Scale for New Construction of One-Story Rear Addition and Raising the Main Roof.

**ADDRESS:** 1707 Eastern Avenue (Fells Point Historic District)

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval of height, massing and scale of new one-story rear addition and raising roof of main structure, with concept design to return to the commission.

**STAFF:** Walter Edward Leon

**PETITIONER/OWNER:** 1707 Nemo LLC

**ARCHITECT:** Nelson Crosby, Fellow Studio, LLC

**SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT:** The site is located in the northeastern corridor of the Fells Point Historic District near the Broadway corridor. Fells Point is significant as one of the original three settlements that merged to form the beginnings of Baltimore City. The area is directly linked to early maritime trade, which was central to Baltimore's growth and development. Besides the significance of Fells Point in the eighteenth century, the community has been a constantly growing and changing urban place. Many of the earliest houses were added on to in the Victorian era creating a unique blend of pre-Revolutionary War and post-Civil War architectural styles and characteristics. Fells Point has been a diverse neighborhood of many ethnic groups, each influencing the growth and development of the area throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Many of the later structures are of architectural significance and are consistent with the waterfront character of Fells Point, even if stylistically different.

**Site Conditions:** The current site has an L-shaped late Italianate styled residential/retail structure constructed after 1860.

**BACKGROUND:** This property has not been before the Commission or staff since the designation of the district in 2007.

**PROPOSAL:** The applicant proposes to construct a one-story residential addition on the rear attached L addition that fronts South Register Street and to raise the roof of the main building to create a single direction slope for water drainage.

**APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES:** 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, and 2.3 Scale and Form.

## 2.1 Guiding Principles for New Design

- *Identify the character defining features of the surrounding historic buildings and streetscape. Design new buildings to visually relate to the historic environment. Respect the established design precedent in the immediate area.*
  - The surrounding structures are primarily retail and residential in character. Smaller residential structures are mixed in the fabric of the northeast corner of the district.
- *Contemporary architectural design that reflects its current time, place, use, and culture is accepted, provided that the design is compatible with the character of the historic district.*
  - The design is very compatible in its interpretation of the residential style of buildings in this part of Fells Point.
- *New buildings that are similar to existing buildings in materials, form, massing, and architectural features are accepted as long as the new buildings can be distinguished from historic buildings.*

The proposal complies with each one of these points listed.

## 2.2 Site Design

The proposed additions are proposed for the existing structures on the site and do not exceed the building footprints.

## 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.*
  - The scale and form of the addition and raised roof conform to the higher residential/retail structures that are found in this part of the historic district, either along Eastern Avenue or nearby Broadway. The minor one-story addition will only be seen from the secondary street elevation of the Register Street alley. The new raised roof will be set back from the front wall plane that will make it not visible to the public right-of-way on Eastern Avenue.
- *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 proposed design adds a simple one-story volume to the alley street frontage and is similar in height to a nearby rear addition being constructed about 200 feet to the north. The proposed roof raising does not exceed any nearby structure and

will remain largely out of view of the public right-of-way. The overall massing is in keeping with the surrounding structures in the district.

- *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 proposed one-story addition matches the same floor height proportion of the adjacent historic residential buildings.
- *Floor-to-floor heights in new construction should be within ten percent (10%) of the floor-to-floor heights of adjacent historic buildings.*
  - The proposal's floor height is compatible with the adjacent residential structures along Register Street.
- *Design rooflines to be compatible with those found on surrounding buildings.*
  - The roofline of the proposal is flat and similar to the adjacent buildings.

#### **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS**

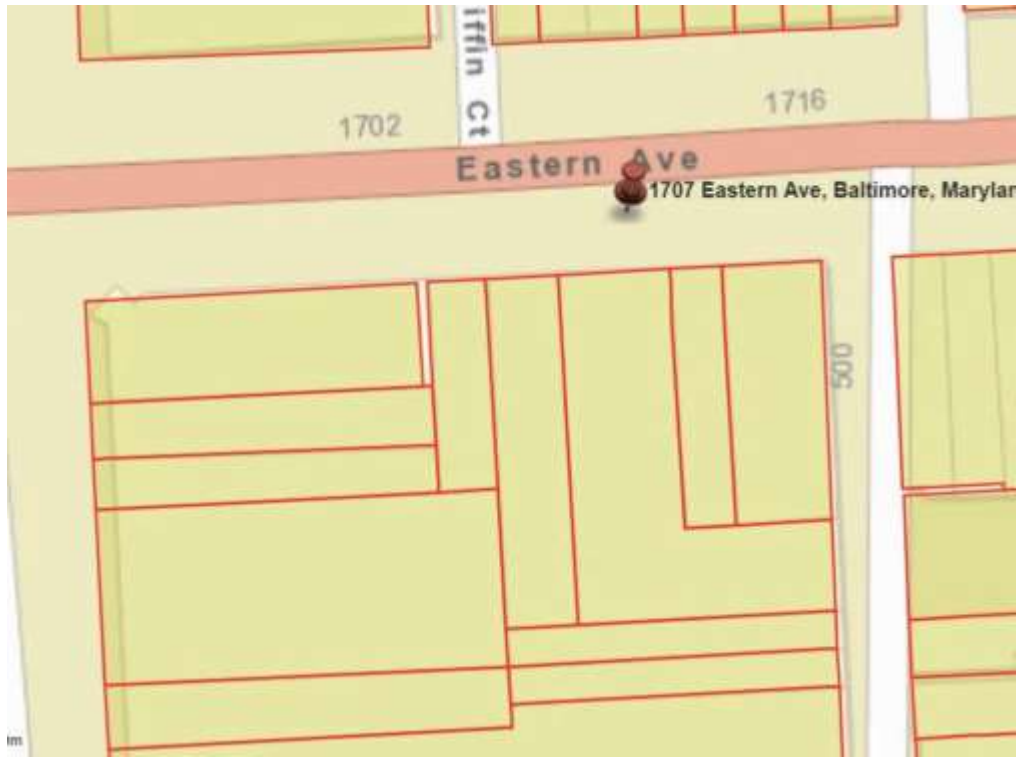
The applicants have met with the DRC and they have given favorable comments for the height, massing and scale.

**ANALYSIS:** The proposed new construction was determined by staff to be compatible for height, massing and scale for both the new rear one-story addition and the raised roof height.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval of height, massing and scale of new one-story rear addition and raising roof of main structure, with full design to return to the commission.

**Eric L. Holcomb**  
**Executive Director**

Site

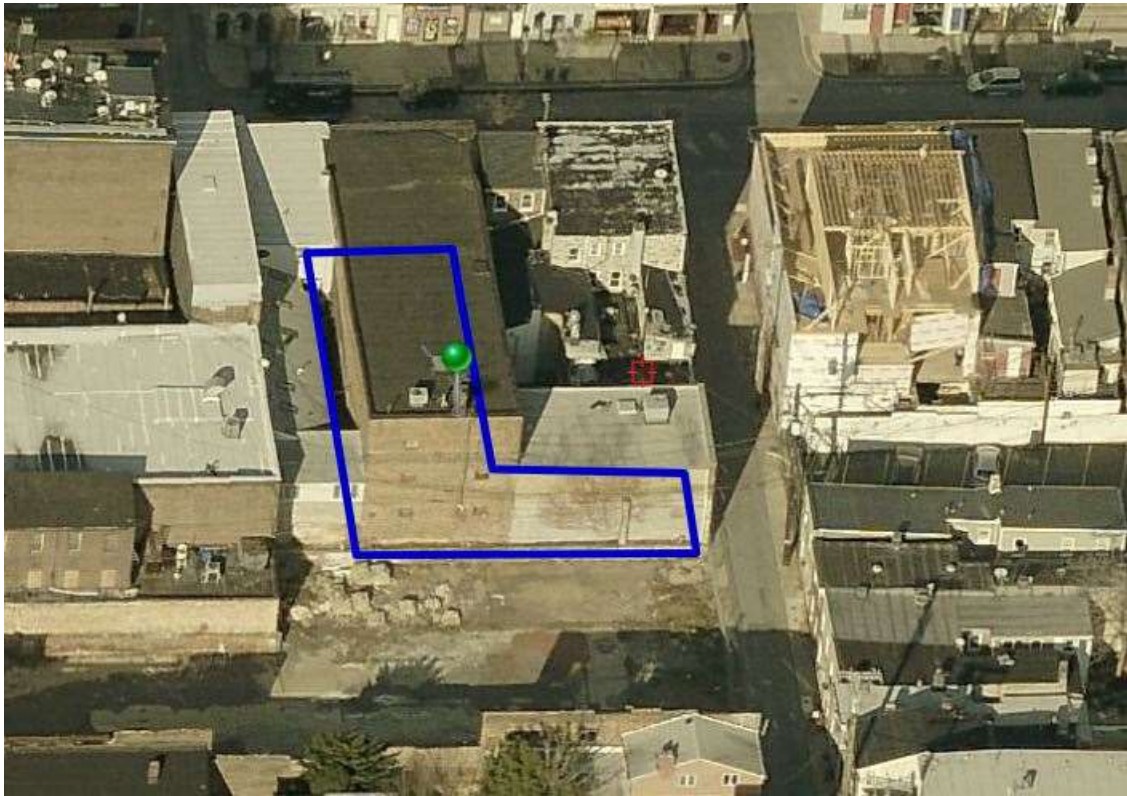




View from the North



View from the South





View from the East



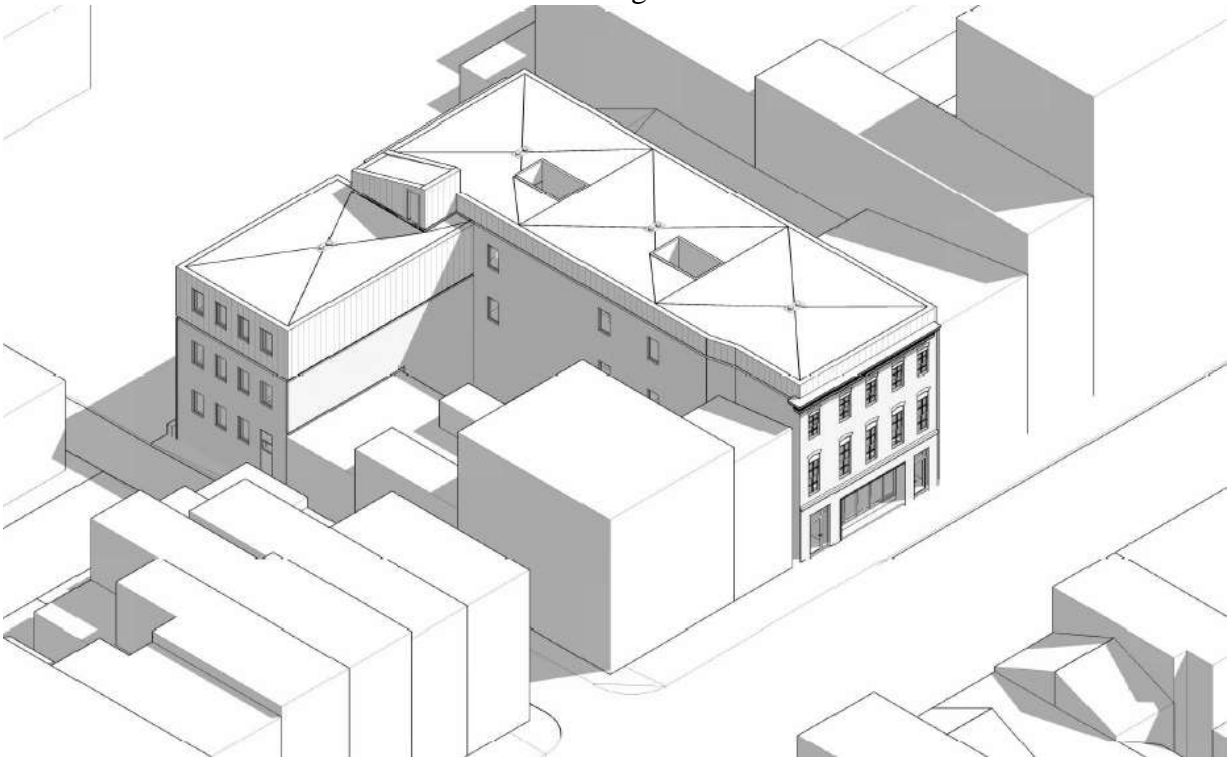
View from the West



Current View



3D Massing Model





Current View



3D massing Model

