

Proposal:

Create a link/arcade between the President and the Ambassador apartments across the courtyard between the buildings.

Discussion:

The President and the Ambassador are historic apartment buildings constructed in 1928 and 1929 by John Alexander for the Coryell family at the northwest corner of S. 14th and J Streets (now Lincoln Mall). The buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and were rehabilitated in the early 1990s by a coalition of Lincoln churches to provide housing downtown for low-income individuals.

Last February (2014) the Commission recommended approval of a redevelopment project to further improve the buildings, consisting primarily of interior and infrastructure improvements. Exterior work included a masonry and metal fence and gateway for the courtyard, and improvements to the trash enclosure on the southwest corner of the complex.



Rendering of courtyard features approved Feb. 2014

At the request of building tenants, and with favorable bids, the developers are now proposing an additional courtyard improvement, a masonry arcade between the building entrances near the center of the courtyard. This would replace a deteriorated, barrel-vaulted canvas awning linking the buildings.



The Capitol Environs Design Standards call for the most careful treatment of sites facing Capitol Square, as well as preservation of historic properties in the Environs, such as these brick and limestone buildings.



The proposed feature draws design inspiration from the south porches of the buildings, but applies a different bonding pattern to the brickwork, subtly indicating the work is not of the original construction. The proposal appears to be respectful both of the wishes of the tenants and the design of the buildings, thereby enhancing the Capitol Environs.

Recommended finding: *The proposed improvements to the President and the Ambassdor apartments further enhance a key location in the Capitol Environs and maintain important structures on Capitol Square.*

Recommended action: *Approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness .*

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