

Samuel J. Simmons NCBA Estates

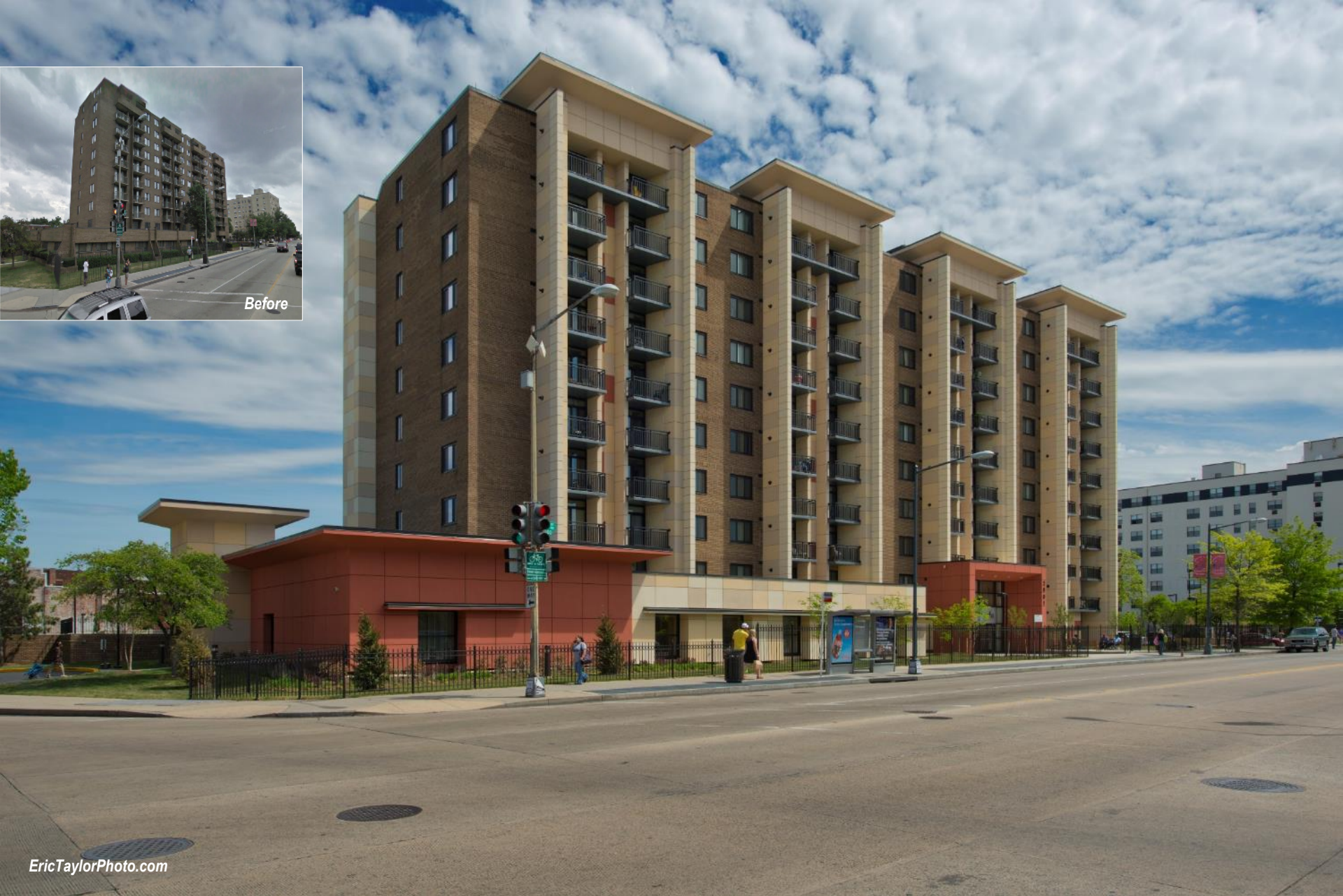
Washington, DC

Residential Multi-Family – Renovation

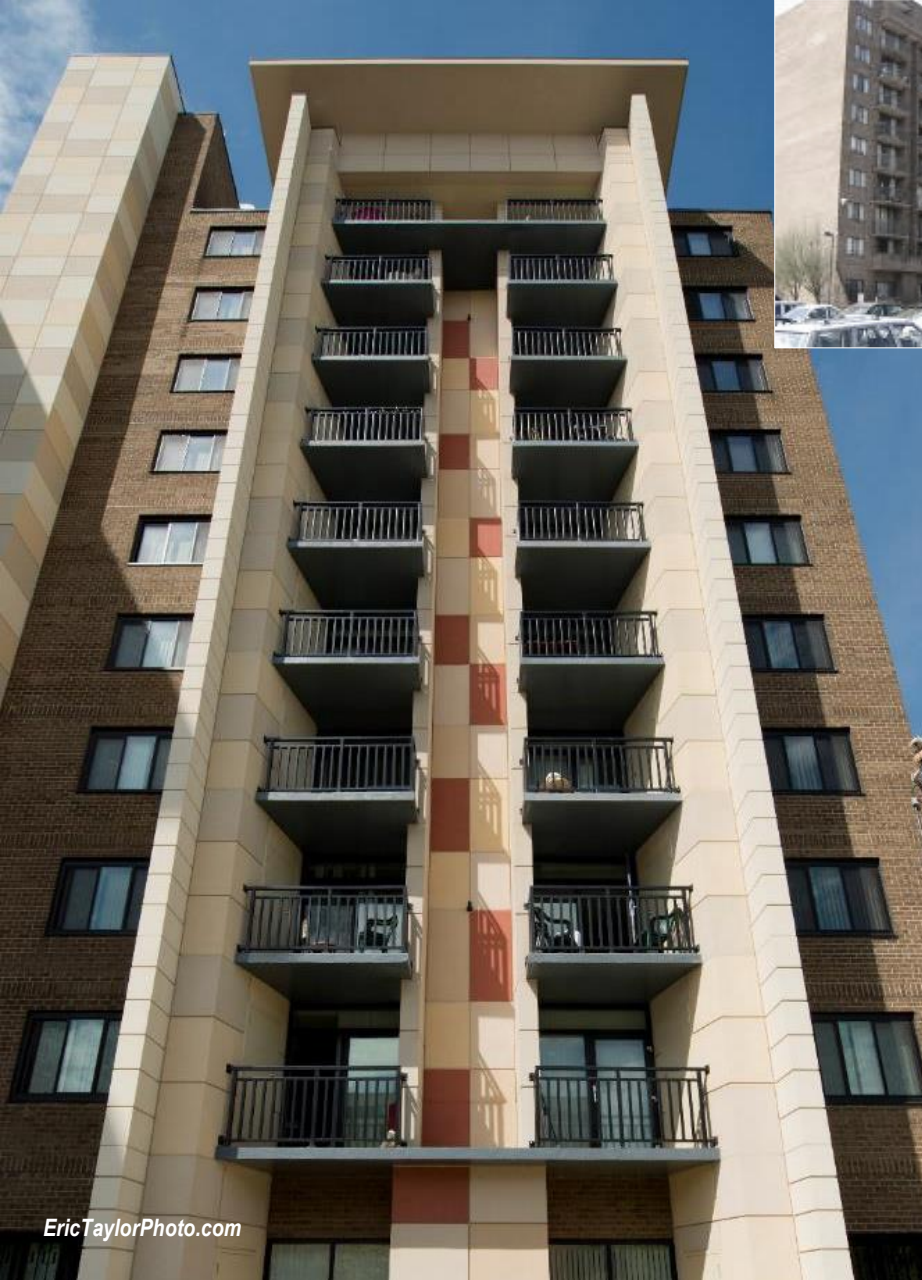
As the upper 14th Street corridor evolved, this legacy project - situated at a prominent corner - became a reminder of blight long past. The call was to fully renovate this occupied affordable senior highrise apartment building with residents in place, including extensive replacement of vital building systems.

The dark brown brick building was an oppressive mass on the streetscape, but that same brick is now a background for dynamic towers which were added not only improve the building's appearance, but as an integral part of the strategy to change building systems with minimal impact on the occupants. Existing central HVAC systems were left in place while new exterior closets were built to accommodate air handling units and condensate risers to the roof for independent heat pumps, allowing the transition to resident-paid utilities to incentivize energy-saving behavior. This quartet of new towers groups pairs of balconies via extended parapets that screen the condensate line routing and define a rhythmic pacing along the street.

A secondary series of gestures was added at ground level to create a base for the formerly scaleless block. Beginning at the main entry facing busy 14th Street, a double-height portico was created to replace the low, cramped entrance. Wrapping the corner, the façade of the existing 1-story wing was reclad in two segments, redefining the nature of the busy street corner. The fourth element at the northern entrance, a vehicular dropoff, was highlighted by a low tower element that repeats the flared overhangs of the towering quartet; the position of this low tower terminates an urban axis of the eastbound view along Harvard Street, which has an offset intersection with 14th Street. Inside this 1-story element, in keeping with the social intent of the project to improve the lives of the residents, the ground floor was transformed to create a series of welcoming community spaces and administrative offices, ranging from theaters to craft rooms to social gathering spaces.



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Samuel J. Simmons NCBA Estates: Photos

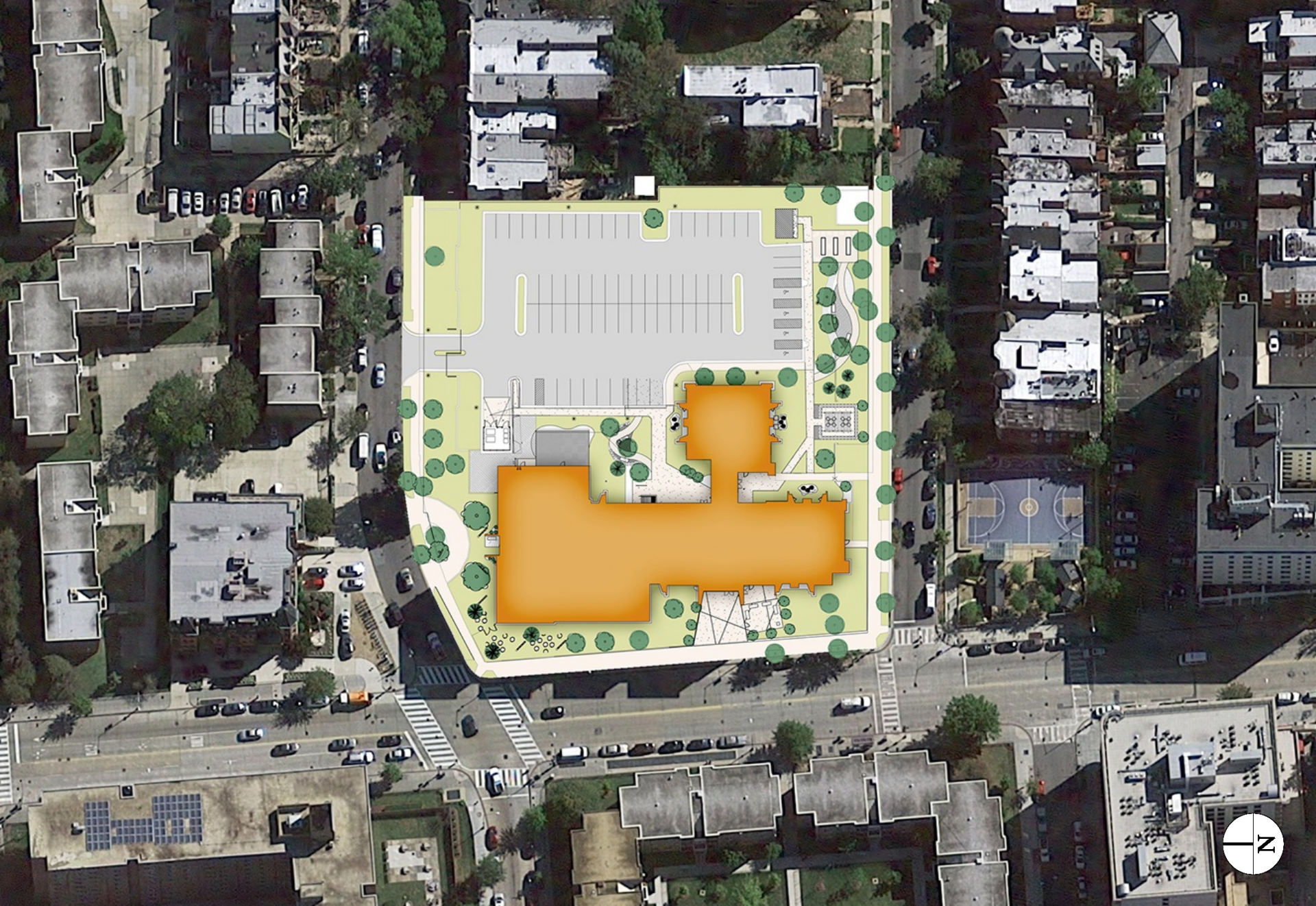
Despite the scale of the building, the main entry was low and constricted. By integrating second story space into a new double-height framework, the scale is appropriate to the street.



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