

EXHIBIT NO. 1

8  
5-18-02

Docket Item # 8  
BAR CASE #2002-0016  
City Council  
May 18, 2002

**ISSUE:** Appeal of a decision of the Board of Architectural Review, Parker-Gray District, approving the after-the-fact application for fence and window installation with conditions

**APPLICANT AND APPELLANT:** Karen Corbett-Sanders

**LOCATION:** 307 North Fayette Street

**ZONE:** CL/Commercial

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**Board of Architectural Action and Appeal:**

On February 27, 2002, the Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review approved the application for after-the-fact alterations at 307 North Fayette Street with following conditions:

1. The existing fence be removed or replaced with an appropriate wood picket or simple iron fence;
2. The front windows be replaced with two-over-two or four-over-four true divided light wood windows;
3. The vinyl be removed from the front window frames and the wood frames be repaired and painted as necessary; and,
4. The vinyl shutters be removed.

The Board routinely approves cases with conditions when the basic action that is requested, such as window replacement, is appropriate, but the specific material, configuration or design used is not appropriate and needs revision.

The Board's approval of the application with conditions was appealed to Council by the applicant. The appeal was filed in a timely manner.

**Background**

Description

The two story frame house at 307 North Fayette Street appears to have been constructed between 1891 and 1896, according to historic map research. A two story rear ell was added by 1902. The house is typical of the modest frame residences constructed in large numbers in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in the Parker-Gray area to house workers at nearby factories, businesses and railyards. More recently, according to building permit records, a one story utility room addition was added at the rear in 1956 (permit #12777). In 1979, a number of alterations were undertaken to repair fire damage, including the installation of aluminum siding on the front (permit #35520A).

The house at 307 North Fayette Street is located in a block characterized by a diverse collection of small scale, 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century houses near the center of the Parker-Gray District. When the district was established in 1984, many of its buildings had historically inappropriate alterations, such as synthetic siding or vinyl windows. Regrettably, some inappropriate alterations have been made in the years since the establishment of the district. However, over time, the historic character of the area has gradually been reinforced by historically appropriate alterations and compatible new construction. It is through many small individual improvement projects, routinely heard by the Parker-Gray Board each year, that the district's historic appearance and real estate values are strengthened

According to city real estate assessment records, the property has been owned by the appellant, Karen L. Corbett-Sanders, since November 1993. Prior to that date, from December 1989 to

November 1993, the property was owned by Bernard R. Corbett and Karen L. Corbett. The property has been used as a residential rental property under Ms. Corbett-Sanders' ownership.

#### History of the Case

In late 2001, Staff received a complaint that alterations had been undertaken at 307 North Fayette Street. As part of its enforcement program, staff visited the site and confirmed the presence of new vinyl windows, vinyl wrapped window frames and new fencing attached to existing posts. On December 18, 2001, Staff wrote the applicant to notify her of the need to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the window and fence alterations and to provide her with the pertinent historic district *Design Guidelines*. In investigating the property for the Staff report, Staff became aware of additional exterior alterations at the property for which there had been no review by the Board of Architectural Review. Staff identified the following alterations:

#### Window sash

The window sash is one-over-one vinyl sash installed in late Fall 2001. The appellant maintains that the windows were replaced in-kind. Staff recalls wooden six-over-six windows prior to the replacement and a photograph of the property in BAR files dating from 1999 shows six-over-six windows.

#### Window frames

The window frames are wrapped in vinyl, installed in late Fall 2001. Prior to this work, the window frames were wood.

#### Fence

The new wood fence, which is constructed of pre-manufactured railing sections attached to existing wood posts, was installed in late Fall 2001. Given that the posts which were reused were wood, the previous fence is believed to have been wood. The appearance of the previous fence is unknown.

#### Front door

The front door is a six panel wood door. The appellant maintains that the previous door was metal and was replaced in 1997.

#### Shutters

The shutters are non-operable, vinyl shutters. The appellant maintains that the shutters were installed prior to her ownership.

#### **B.A.R Jurisdiction:**

Section 10-203 of the Zoning Ordinance requires that all exterior alterations visible from a public right-of-way be reviewed by the board of architectural review:

No building or structure shall be erected, reconstructed, altered or restored within the Parker-Gray District unless and until an application of or a certificate of appropriateness shall have been approved by the Parker-Gray District board of architectural review or the city council on appeal as to exterior architectural features, including signs, which are subject to public view from a public street, way or place.

In Section 10-205(A)(2b), the Zoning Ordinance establishes the following standards for determining the appropriateness of alterations to existing buildings:

- (1) The degree to which the distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site including historic materials are retained;
- (2) The historic appropriateness of any new features; and
- (3) The compatibility of proposed alterations with other buildings on the block face or block face across the street, giving consideration to building size, shape, roofline, color, materials, texture, nature of openings, and architectural details.

**B.A.R. and Staff Position:**

Staff recommended approval of the application for after-the-fact alterations with five conditions. The Board concurred with all but the last of the Staff conditions. The Staff analysis and Board action are described below for each of the five Staff recommendations:

1. *The existing fence be removed or replaced with an appropriate wood picket or simple iron fence.*

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommended removal of the fence because the turned wood railing installed by the appellant is not fencing, but rather porch railing, and is not appropriate in this application. According to the Board's *Design Guidelines*, "fences ... should be appropriate in materials, design and scale to the period and character of the structure they surround." The *Guidelines* go on to state that "[w]ood fences generally have vertical pickets" (*Design Guidelines*, Fences - Page 2). Staff recommended replacement with one of two fence types historically appropriate for the historic district, leaving the final selection to the appellant.

Board Action

The Board concurred, believing the existing fence was inappropriate and should be replaced. The applicant has agreed to remove the fence.

2. *The front windows be replaced with two-over-two or four-over-four true divided light wood windows.*

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommended replacement of the vinyl windows one-over-one windows installed by the appellant. Windows are a principal character-defining feature of a building and changes to windows can have a dramatic impact on the historic appearance of a structure. Vinyl windows are inappropriate for historic buildings and are listed in the *Design Guidelines* along with metal and plastic as “discouraged window types” (*Design Guidelines*, Windows - Page 2). Vinyl windows are a product of the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century and do not have the same distinctive appearance and feel that wood windows have. Staff recommended that the one-over-one windows be replaced by windows in a four-over-four or two-over-two sash configuration. The *Design Guidelines* state that “[n]ew and replacement windows should be appropriate to the historic period of the architectural style of the building” (*Design Guidelines*, Windows - Page 2). Based on Staff’s knowledge of buildings of this type and period in Alexandria, 307 North Fayette Street most likely had four-over-four or two-over-two windows when constructed. Thus, Staff recommended that the vinyl one-over-one windows at the front be replaced with two-over-two or four-over-four wood windows, leaving the final selection of configuration to the appellant.

In the interest of reducing the burden to the appellant, Staff did not recommend removal of the vinyl windows at the rear of the house even though these are visible from a public alley.

Board Action

The Board reaffirmed its consistent position that vinyl windows and wrap are inappropriate for historic buildings within the district. The Board noted that it had recently approved a renovation project at 417 North Fayette Street with the condition that the proposed vinyl replacement windows be changed to wood (BAR Case#2001-145, June 27, 2001). In the interest of sparing the appellant additional costs, the Board concurred with the compromise posed in the Staff report that allowed the vinyl windows to remain on the rear facade of 307 North Fayette Street.

3. *The vinyl be removed from the window frames and the wood frames be repaired and painted as necessary.*

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommended removal of the vinyl wrapping because wrapping the wood trim with vinyl covers an the historic feature with an inappropriate modern material, causes detail to be lost, alters the proportions of the window frame and may conceal deterioration in the wood frame beneath. The wrapping at 307 North Fayette Street gives the front windows a blocky, non-historic appearance and is particularly crude in the rear.

In the interest of reducing the burden to the appellant, Staff did not recommend removal of the vinyl wrap from the window frames on the rear of the house even though these are visible from a public alley.

Board Action

The Board concurred that the vinyl wrapping was inappropriate, but that the vinyl could remain on the rear facade to spare the appellant the additional costs.

*4. The vinyl shutters be removed.*

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommended that the vinyl shutters be removed because the vinyl shutters give the house an inauthentic appearance. The *Design Guidelines*, explain that “inappropriate shutters can detract from the design integrity of a building and create a false impression of the architectural character of a structure”(Design Guidelines, Shutters - Page 1). The shutters are of a non-historic material and are fixed rather than operable. In addition, shutters were not typically used on houses built in Alexandria in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The appellant maintains that the shutters had been installed by a previous owner. While recognizing that the appellant was not responsible for the shutters, Staff recommended removal, believing that to do so in conjunction with the other work recommended would not require much additional effort or cost and would improve the historic appearance of the house.

Board Action

The Board agreed that while the appellant may not have installed the vinyl shutters, their removal would entail little or no cost and would improve the appearance of the building.

*5. The front door be replaced with a four panel wood door.*

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommended a four panel wood door because the six panel wood front door, which was installed in 1997, is not appropriate to the period of the house. Six panel doors were common in the Colonial and Federal periods, but were replaced in popularity by four panel doors by the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and by a variety of decorative door types in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The six panel door is inappropriately early for this mid 1890s building. A simple four panel wood door was recommended because it would be appropriate for a modest house of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and is a door type that is readily obtainable.

Board Action

The Board did not concur with Staff. The Board felt that the six panel door was acceptable and did

not require that it be replaced.

(See Attachment #1, Staff Report and Attachment #2, BAR minutes.)

**Basis of Appeal**

Incomplete Information

The appellant raises several points as the basis of her appeal, but Staff does not believe any are sufficiently compelling to warrant overturning the BAR decision. Most prominent is the appellant's claim that incomplete information was provided by Code Enforcement Staff and that the appellant was unaware of the requirement for review by the Board of Architectural Review. Staff finds it difficult to understand how the appellant, as a long-term property owner within the Parker-Gray District, would be unaware of the requirements for review. On a nearly yearly basis, the Department of Planning and Zoning has distributed "Dear Property Owner" letters within the city's two historic districts advising owners of the requirements for review of exterior alterations. Numerous nearby properties have come before the Board for alteration and new construction. In each case, the properties were posted with placards and adjoining property owners were notified of the BAR hearing.

In addition, Code Enforcement takes internal steps to assure that customers receive the best information possible. In this case, while it is true that since 1997, per the 1996 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, a building permit is not required for window replacement, review by the Board of Architectural Review or BAR Staff is required. Typically calls to Code Enforcement window replacement are answered by engineering aides who are well trained to provide knowledgeable and helpful information about most City agency functions. These aides have been instructed to follow-up their response with a suggestion that the caller check with other city agencies when construction permits are not required. On occasion, temporary employees or light-duty Fire Department personnel may staff the phones during very busy times or when regular staff is short, but these "helpers" are instructed to ask questions of the engineering aides rather than give callers incorrect information. While it seems unlikely that both the homeowner and the contractor could call at separate times and receive the same incomplete information, neither obtained the name/s of the staff member/s they spoke with. Therefore, there is not enough information to either refute or confirm their statements. The fact that the appellant received incomplete, not incorrect information, does not negate her responsibility to abide by local regulations. Nor does it negate her contractor's responsibility to abide by state and local regulations in addition to the articles of Virginia's Standards of Practice and Conduct for all licensed contractors in the State of Virginia.

(See Attachment #3, Code Enforcement Memorandum, for complete explanation.)

Compatibility of the Alterations with the Neighborhood

The appellant argues that the windows installed are appropriate because they were replaced in-kind and are similar to others nearby. Staff believes the windows which were replaced were different in configuration and material from the vinyl one-over-one windows installed by the appellant.

However, despite what may have been in place prior to the present windows, the present windows are inappropriate for the period and style of the house at 307 North Fayette Street. The fact that there are other vinyl one-over-one windows nearby does not make these windows appropriate for this house. If the project had been brought to the attention of Staff and Board prior to installation, they might have been able to work with the appellant to identify a replacement window type that would have been satisfactory for all parties. Similarly, had Ms. Corbett-Sanders applied for a certificate of appropriateness prior to completing the work, Staff could have advised her that the turned railing she wished to use for a fence was porch railing (and is used as such on the porch of the house at 321 North Fayette Street) and would be inappropriate for fencing.

#### Replacement In-Kind

The appellant claims that the cost of complying with the BAR decision is “excessive,” and makes reference to article 10-209 of the Alexandria Zoning Ordinance-Parker Gray District in support of that claim. Section 10-209 of the ordinance allows for administrative approval of appropriate in-kind replacement by BAR Staff. In other words, when a feature is replaced with something of the same material and design and that feature is historically appropriate or when the replacement actually restores the feature to a more historically authentic condition, BAR Staff may review the project and approve it administratively, rather than taking the project forward for public hearing before the Board of Architectural Review. This clause allows for clearly appropriate replacement projects to go forward more quickly and easily. However, administrative approval is allowed only in limited cases of historically appropriate replacement and is never used with requests for after-the-fact approvals. The present case involves both inappropriate materials and an after-the-fact request for a certificate of appropriateness. The decision to install vinyl windows rather than more historically appropriate wood windows was made by the appellant without affording the Board or Staff an opportunity to comment on the appropriateness of the alteration, to consider possible cost differentials or to suggest alternatives.

(See Attachment #4, Section 10-209 of the Zoning Ordinance)

**City Council Action Alternatives:** Council may uphold or overturn the decision of the BAR.

#### **Conclusion**

The issues here—windows, doors, fences and shutters—arise in many Parker-Gray District cases with the same results as the BAR decision in this case. While these elements may seem minor, they are the building blocks of the simple buildings of the district and cumulatively give the district its distinct historic character. Inappropriate alterations to these seemingly minor elements will erode the character of the district over time. For these reasons, Staff recommends the Council uphold the BAR decision.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: B.A.R. Staff Report, 02/27/02

Attachment 2: BAR minutes, 02/27/02

Attachment 3: Code Enforcement Memorandum

Attachment 4: §10-209(A)(2)

Attachment 5: Photographs of 307 North Fayette Street

STAFF:

Eileen Fogarty, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning; Elizabeth Hannold, Staff, Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review; Janine Hazel, Deputy Director, Code Enforcement.

ATTACHMENT #1

Docket Item #4  
BAR CASE #2002-0016

BAR Meeting  
February 27, 2002

**ISSUE:** After-the-fact alterations  
**APPLICANT:** Karen Corbett-Sanders  
**LOCATION:** 307 North Fayette Street  
**ZONE:** CL/Commercial

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**BOARD ACTION FEBRUARY 27, 2002:**

Vice Chairman Cromley recused himself from participating in this docket item. Mr. Zuckerkandel assumed the chair. On a motion by Mr. Savage, seconded by Ms. Heffernan, the Board approved the application with conditions. The vote on the motion was 4-0. The conditions of the approval were:

- a. The existing fence be removed or replaced with an appropriate wood picket or simple iron fence;
- b. The front windows be replaced with two-over-two or four-over-four true divided light wood windows;
- c. The vinyl be removed from the front window frames and the wood frames be repaired and painted as necessary; and,
- d. The vinyl shutters be removed.

The above work must be completed within one year from the date of this hearing and the Staff must approve the fence and windows prior to installation.

**REASON:** The Board believed the vinyl windows and fence were inappropriate and should be replaced. The Board concurred with the Staff report that the vinyl windows and vinyl wrap at the rear of the house could remain to spare the owner further expense. The Board felt that although the six panel front door was not entirely appropriate, it could stay as it had been in place for some time. To return the house to a more authentic historic appearance, the Board recommended that the vinyl shutters be removed. The Board acknowledged that the owner had not installed the shutters, but felt there would be little or no expense and little effort involved in their removal.

**SPEAKERS:**

Karen Corbett-Sanders, applicant, spoke in support. Ms. Corbett-Sanders explained that they had every intention of following the proper procedures and only wished to improve the property. Ms. Corbett-Sanders said they had asked

Code Enforcement if a permit was required and were not advised of the need for BAR approval. Ms. Corbett-Sanders stated that the city needed to improve its information services.

Todd James, Northern Virginia Roofing, said he too had asked Code Enforcement if a permit was required and was not advised of the need for BAR approval. Mr. James confirmed that the windows had been in very poor condition.

Kim Peale, prior tenant 307 North Fayette Street, spoke in support. She explained that she had replaced the front door and confirmed that the windows had been in very poor condition.

Jannine Hazel, Code Enforcement, explained that a building permit was not required for window replacement, but that her staff typically advised people to check with Planning and Zoning even when permits were not required. Ms. Hazel offered an apology if correct information was not given.

**\*\*EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.

**\*\*BUILDING PERMIT NOTE:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by the Code Enforcement Bureau (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Enforcement, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. The existing fence be removed or replaced with an appropriate wood picket or simple iron fence;
2. The front windows be replaced with two-over-two or four-over-four true divided light wood windows;
3. The vinyl be removed from the window frames and the wood frames be repaired and painted as necessary;
4. The vinyl shutters be removed; and,
5. The front door be replaced with a four panel wood door.

Staff further recommends that the above work be completed within one year from the date of this hearing and that Staff approve the fence and windows prior to installation.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant's Description of the Undertaking:

"Replace/reattach fence in front of house using existing fence posts with new pickets. Replace existing vinyl windows with new properly hung vinyl windows."

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the after-the-fact installation of a wood front fence, vinyl windows and a six-panel wood door. In the Fall 2001, the existing wood fence posts were reused, new wood finials were attached and pre-manufactured railing sections composed of turned pickets were placed between the posts to form the fence. The fence is approximately 3'5" in height. The posts are painted red while the sections of railing and finials are unpainted pressure treated wood. Also in the Fall 2001, all windows, both front and back, were replaced by one-over-one vinyl double hung sash. The window frames were also wrapped with vinyl. According to the owner, the previous windows had been vinyl. The current wood, six-panel, front door was installed in 1997 by a tenant. According to the owner, the previous door had been a metal door.

The current owner has owned the property since 1993 and maintains that the current aluminum siding and vinyl shutters were installed by previous owners.

History and Analysis:

The two story frame house at 307 North Fayette Street appears to have been constructed between 1891 and 1896. A two story rear ell was added by 1902. In 1956, a one story utility room addition was added at the rear (permit #12777). In 1979, a number of alterations were undertaken to repair fire damage, including the installation of aluminum siding on the front (permit #35520A).

There is no record of any Board of Architectural Review actions for this property.

The fence, windows and door comply with the Zoning Ordinance requirements.

In Staff's opinion, the after-the-fact alterations are inappropriate for the historic district and for the architectural character of the building.

### **Fence**

The front fence is composed of mass-produced wood railing elements and looks like a stair railing or porch railing rather than a fence. Typically wood fences in the historic district have flat vertical pickets with pointed tops.

Staff recommends that the fence be removed or replaced with an appropriate wood picket or simple iron fence. At the very least, if the Board approves the existing fence, it should be painted one color.

### **Windows**

The existing one-over-one vinyl windows with wrapped frames and inoperable vinyl shutters present a distinctly inappropriate appearance. Windows are a principal character defining feature of a building and changes to windows can have a dramatic impact on the historic appearance of a structure. A modest vernacular building of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, 307 North Fayette Street probably had four-over-four or two-over-two windows, but could possibly have had one-over-one, when constructed. The six-over-six windows which the current windows replaced would not have been original. Staff was unable to locate historic photographs of the property. Thus, based on our knowledge of similar buildings in the Parker-Gray and Old and Historic Districts, four-over-four, two-over-two and possibly one-over-one wood windows would be most historically appropriate for this building.

The historic district *Design Guidelines* strongly discourage the use of vinyl windows and inoperable and synthetic shutters. Similarly, wrapping the trim with vinyl is to be avoided as it causes all detail to be lost and alters the proportions of the window frame. The original wood trim should be retained or repaired. The wrapping at 307 North Fayette Street gives the front windows a blocky, non-historic appearance and is particularly crude in the rear, which is visible from a public alley. The vinyl shutters, while not installed by the present owner, also give the house an inauthentic appearance.

To remedy these after-the-fact alterations, Staff recommends that the front windows be replaced with two-over-two or four-over-four true divided light wood windows and that the vinyl be removed from the window frames with the wood frames repaired and painted as necessary. Although the vinyl shutters were not installed by the current owner, Staff recommends that they be removed also as their removal in conjunction with the other work recommended would not require much additional effort or cost and would improve the appearance of the house. On the other hand, although the rear windows are visible from a public alley and therefore fall under the Board's purview, Staff would be willing to allow the vinyl windows and wrap remain to spare the owner further expense

**Door**

The six-panel wood front door, while an improvement on the metal door it replaced, is not appropriate to the period of the house. Six panel doors were common in the Colonial and Federal periods, but were replaced in popularity by four panel doors by the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and by a variety of decorative door types in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The six panel door is inappropriately early for this circa 1894 building. A simple four panel wood door would be appropriate for a modest house of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Therefore, Staff recommends that the front door be replaced with a four panel wood door.

To conclude, Staff recommends that the application be approved with the following conditions:

1. The existing fence be removed or replaced with an appropriate wood picket or simple iron fence;
2. The front windows be replaced with two-over-two or four-over-four true divided light wood windows;
3. The vinyl be removed from the window frames and the wood frames be repaired and painted as necessary;
4. The vinyl shutters be removed; and,
5. The front door be replaced with a four panel wood door.

Staff further recommends that the above work be completed within one year from the date of this hearing and that Staff approve the fence and windows prior to installation.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F - finding

Code Enforcement:

“No Comments.”

Office of Historic Alexandria:

“These are highly visible, character defining. Not sure the fence is appropriate either.”

ATTACHMENT #2

MINUTES OF BAR PUBLIC HEARING, FEBRUARY 27, 2002

4. CASE BAR2002-016

Request for approval of after-the-fact alterations at **307 North Fayette Street**, zoned CL Commercial.

APPLICANT: Karen Corbett-Sanders

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended, 4-0.**

Vice Chairman Cromley recused himself from participating in this docket item. Mr. Zuckerkandel assumed the chair. On a motion by Mr. Savage, seconded by Ms. Heffernan, the Board approved the application with conditions. The vote on the motion was 4-0. The conditions of the approval were:

- a. The existing fence be removed or replaced with an appropriate wood picket or simple iron fence;
- b. The front windows be replaced with two-over-two or four-over-four true divided light wood windows;
- c. The vinyl be removed from the front window frames and the wood frames be repaired and painted as necessary; and,
- d. The vinyl shutters be removed.

The above work must be completed within one year from the date of this hearing and the Staff must approve the fence and windows prior to installation.

**REASON:** The Board believed the vinyl windows and fence were inappropriate and should be replaced. The Board concurred with the Staff report that the vinyl windows and vinyl wrap at the rear of the house could remain to spare the owner further expense. The Board felt that although the six panel front door was not entirely appropriate, it could stay as it had been in place for some time. To return the house to a more authentic historic appearance, the Board recommended that the vinyl shutters be removed. The Board acknowledged that the owner had not installed the shutters, but felt there would be little or no expense and little effort involved in their removal.

**SPEAKERS:**

Karen Corbett-Sanders, applicant, spoke in support. Ms. Corbett-Sanders explained that they had every intention of following the proper procedures and only wished to improve the property. Ms. Corbett-Sanders said they had asked Code Enforcement if a permit was required and were not advised of the need for BAR approval. Ms. Corbett-Sanders stated that the city needed to improve its information services.

Todd James, Northern Virginia Roofing, said he too had asked Code Enforcement if a permit was required and was not advised of the need for BAR approval. Mr. James confirmed that the windows had been in very poor condition.

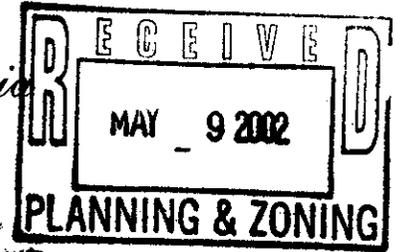
Kim Peale, prior tenant 307 North Fayette Street, spoke in support. She explained that she had replaced the front door and confirmed that the windows had been in very poor condition.

Jannine Hazel, Code Enforcement, explained that a building permit was not required for window replacement, but that her staff typically advised people to check with Planning and Zoning even when permits were not required. Ms. Hazel offered an apology if correct information was not given.

ATTACHMENT #3

*City of Alexandria, Virginia*

MEMORANDUM



**DATE: MAY 8, 2002**

**TO: ELIZABETH HANNOLD, BAR STAFF, PLANNING & ZONING**

**FROM: JANNINE C. HAZEL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CODE ENFORCEMENT**

**SUBJECT: 307 NORTH FAYETTE STREET - BAR APPEAL, CASE #2002-016**

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With the adoption of the 1996 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC) on April 15, 1997, the permit requirement for replacement windows was eliminated when the size of the window opening is not changed. From a building code perspective, the window material is not a concern provided that the installation is secure, weather-tight and the window performs the purpose for which it was intended.

At the Parker-Gray B.A.R. meeting on February 27, 2002, an after-the-fact window alteration case was heard for 307 North Fayette Street. The long-term owner replaced the windows prior to receiving B.A.R. approval and the required certificate of appropriateness. In her defense, the owner, Ms. Karen Corbett-Sanders, stated that both she and her contractor contacted the Code Enforcement Bureau on separate occasions and both were advised that no permits were needed for window replacement. According to Ms. Corbett-Sanders, neither she nor the contractor identified the street address for the window replacement project.

While the information provided by Code Staff was accurate, the engineering aides have been reminded to follow-up their response with a suggestion that the caller check with Planning and Zoning and/or T&ES for any conditions or concerns that these agencies may have when construction permits are not required. For example, B.A.R. approval may be required for addresses in the Old and Historic or Parker-Gray Districts; set back regulations for fences or sheds may need to be addressed by Zoning; and T&ES may have concerns about erosion or utility matters.

There are six engineering aides employed by the Code Enforcement Bureau. They are the front line for answering incoming phone calls from citizens and for assisting customers at our permit counter. All six engineering aides are well trained to provide knowledgeable and helpful information about most City agency functions. The most junior engineering aide has three years of experience. On occasion, temporary employees or light-duty Fire Department personnel may staff the phones during very busy times or when regular staff is short due to training or unexpected absences. These "helpers" are instructed to ask questions of the engineering aides rather than give callers incorrect information. While it seems unlikely that both the homeowner and the contractor could call at separate times and receive the same incomplete information, neither obtained the name/s of the staff member/s they spoke with. Therefore, there is not enough information to either refute or confirm their statements.

The fact that Ms. Corbett-Sanders received incomplete, not incorrect information, does not negate her responsibility to abide by local regulations. Nor does it negate her contractor's responsibility to abide by state and local regulations in addition to the articles of Virginia's Standards of Practice and Conduct for all licensed contractors in the Commonwealth. For residential contracting, one of these articles is that the licensed contractor must provide a statement of assurance to the customer that all local requirements for building permits, inspections, and zoning will be complied with. If Ms. Corbett-Sanders' contractor failed to do this, she may wish to file a complaint with the State Board for Contractors in Richmond, Virginia, 804 367-8504.

As was mentioned at the February 27, BAR meeting, information about permit requirements and B.A.R. approval is available to the public on the City's website, by telephone on the 24hour ACCESS system, and in numerous hand-outs that are provided to requesters at no charge. A preferred hand-out by homeowners and contractors alike is the booklet entitled *When is a Permit Required?* This booklet is updated with every code change session and is reproduced in its entirety on the City website.

If you have any questions or if additional information is needed, please contact me on 4644 x109.

cc: Art Dahlberg, Director, Code Enforcement

ATTACHMENT #4

city manager, on or before 15 days after the offer for sale has begun, a petition in writing signed by at least 25 persons owning real estate located within the Parker-Gray District. Upon the receipt of such petition, the city manager shall, at city expense, forthwith appoint three disinterested real estate appraisers, familiar with property values in the Parker-Gray District, who shall forthwith make an appraisal of the building or structure in question and forthwith file a written report with the city manager whether or not in their opinion the offer to sell the building or structure is at a price reasonably related to its fair market value. The opinion of any two of the three appraisers shall be binding and final. In the event the opinion is to the effect that the offer to sell the building or structure is at a price reasonably related to its fair market value, the owner may continue pursuant to section 10-208(A) as if no question has been raised. In the event the opinion is to the effect that the offer to sell the building or structure is not at a price reasonably related to its fair market value, the offer to sell shall be void and of no force and effect, and the owner, if he wishes to take advantage of the additional or concurrent right provided for in section 10-208(A), must file the notice provided for in section 10-208(B) and proceed in accord with section 10-208(A). Notwithstanding an adverse opinion by the appraisers, if an owner has entered into a binding bona fide contract as provided for in section 10-208(A) prior to the date the appraisers have filed their report with the city manager, the price shall be deemed reasonably related to fair market value.

10-209

*Permitted maintenance of exterior architectural features.*

- (A) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Article X, exterior architectural features may be the subject of ordinary maintenance, including repair and replacement with the same design, color and material without the necessity of a certificate of appropriateness if, upon review by the director or his designee, it is found that such maintenance:
- (1) Does not result in the substantial removal of an exterior feature that is considered to have historic and/or architectural significance; and
  - (2) Does not perpetuate a condition or treatment that is considered to be, by board of architectural review policy, inappropriate or incompatible with the historic surroundings of the

Parker-Gray District, but this provision shall not be construed to prevent the replacement of material in kind in cases when the cost of the work would be materially increased by the use of another material.

(B) The following guidelines shall be used in the determination of historic and architectural significance pursuant to section 10-209(A):

- (1) The feature is composed of materials or utilizes construction techniques which appear to be original to the building or structure.
- (2) The feature is not original to the building or structure, but is of such old and unusual design that it cannot be easily duplicated or replaced, and the feature contributes to the overall historic character of the building or structure.
- (3) The feature is of such high artistic value or is composed of materials of such quality or detail that the feature cannot be easily duplicated or replaced.
- (4) The painting of a masonry building which was unpainted prior to such painting shall be considered to be the removal of an exterior feature having historic and/or architectural significance requiring a certificate of appropriateness.

10-210 *Required maintenance.*

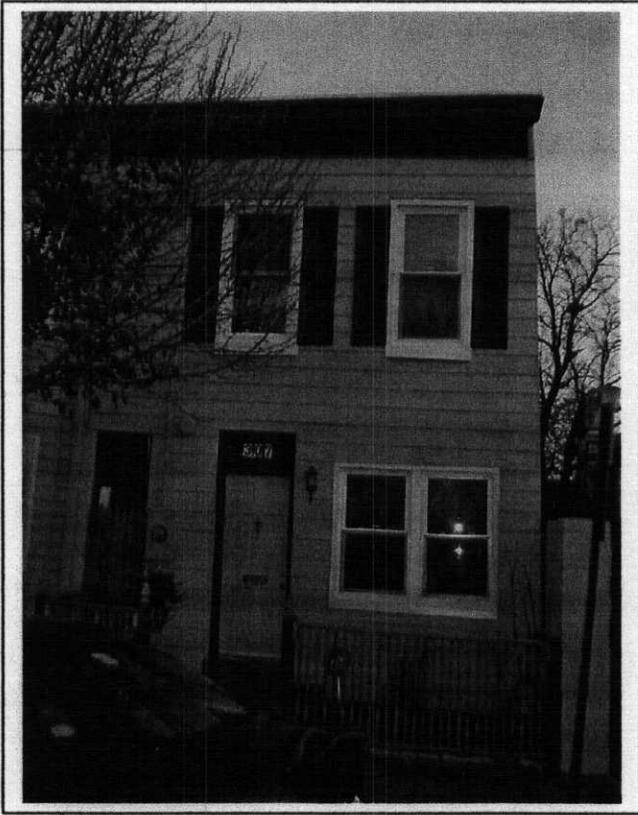
- (A) *General provisions.* All buildings and structures within the Parker-Gray District shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound, and reasonably protected against decay and deterioration in compliance with Volume II – Building Maintenance Code, of the Uniform Statewide Building Code, as adopted by section 8-1-2 of the city code. The code or building official shall enforce the requirements of this section 10-210, in conjunction with the director.
- (B) *Specific application to vacant buildings and structures.* The boarding of a vacant building or structure shall constitute the alteration of the exterior architectural features of such building or structure. In the event such boarding is accomplished pursuant to an order from the code official to secure a hazardous building or structure against entry the owner shall, after complying with such order, forthwith make application for the necessary certificate of appropriateness. In considering any application under this section 10-210(B) the board may impose such conditions as may be

ATTACHMENT #5

**WINDOWS**

1 to 1 replacement of existing vinyl windows

307 North Fayette Street



**FENCE**

Maximum height at any point 3'5" from ground  
Pickets attached to existing posts

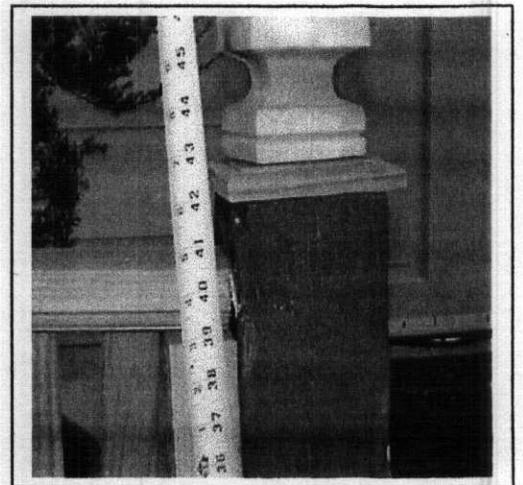
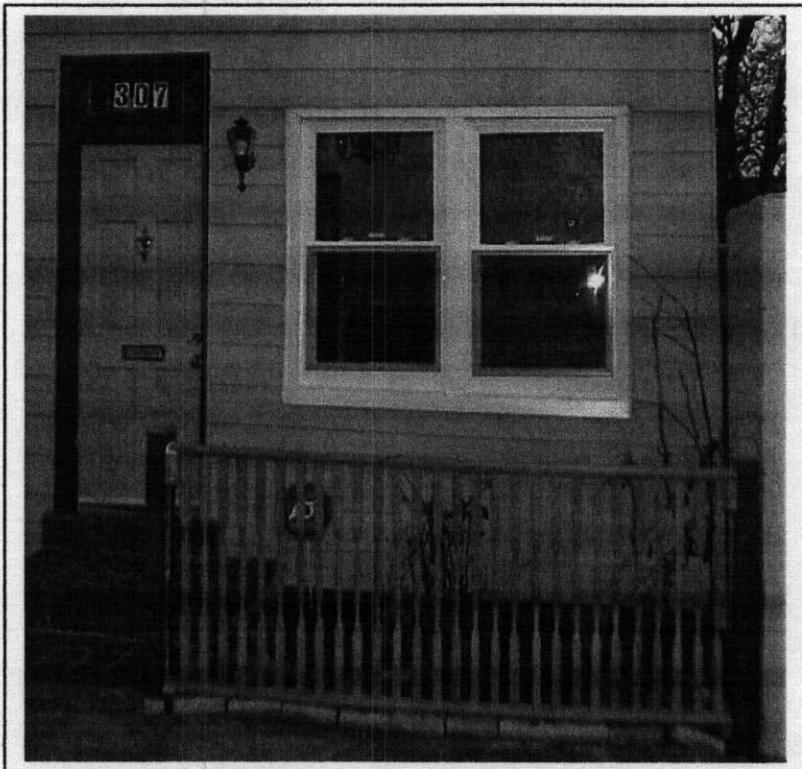
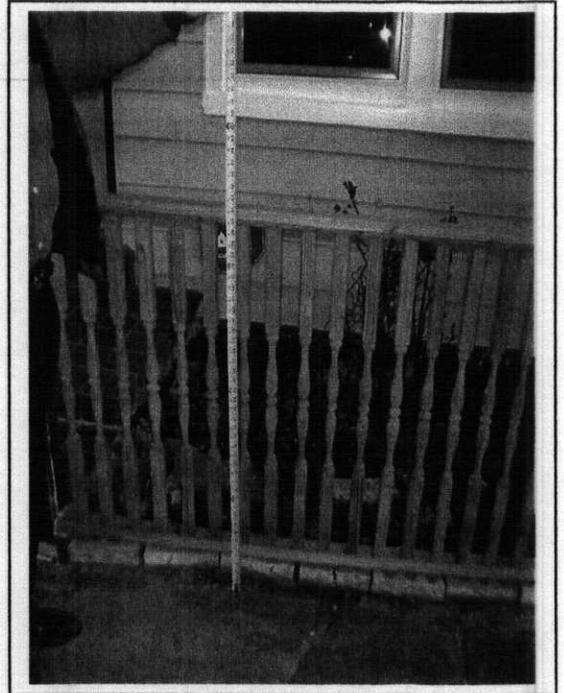
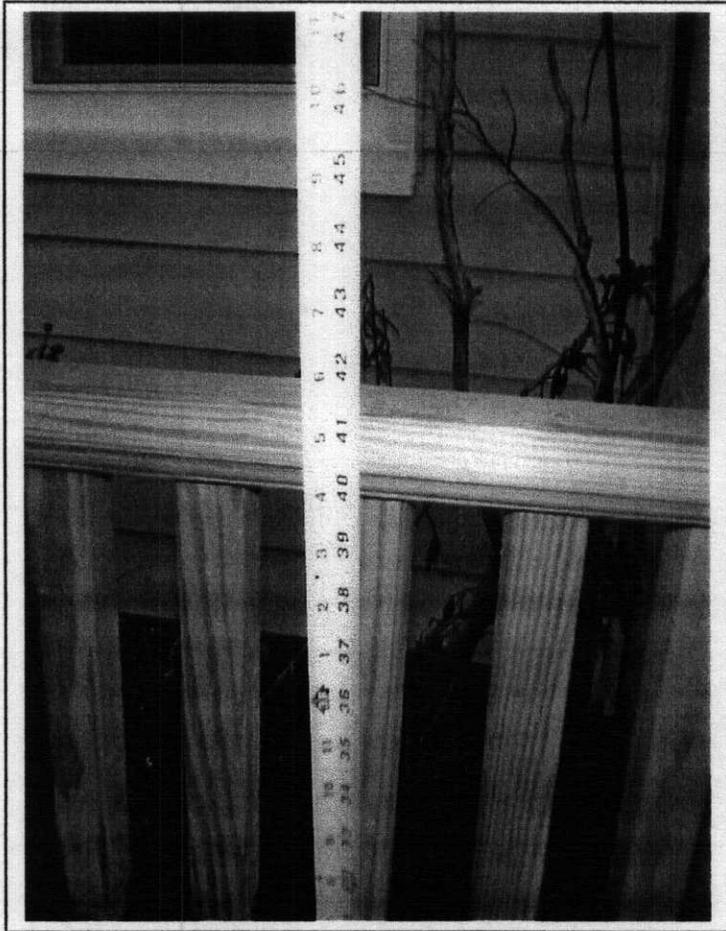


EXHIBIT NO. 2

sent to CC, CM, Michele, CA,  
Eileen, Peter Smith

8  
5-18-02



RECORD OF APPEAL

FROM A DECISION OF THE BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Date Appeal Filed With City Clerk: 3/12/02

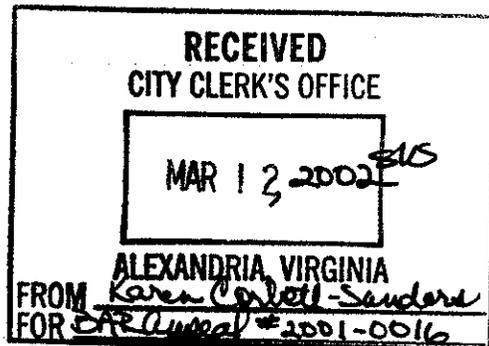
B.A.R. Case # 2001-0016

Address of Project: 307 N. FAYETTE ST

Appellant is: (Check One)

B.A.R. Applicant

Other Party. State Relationship \_\_\_\_\_



Address of Appellant: 6405 10<sup>th</sup> ST.

ALEXANDRIA, VA 22307

Telephone Number: 703 765 3026



State Basis of Appeal: \_\_\_\_\_

— SEE ATTACHED —

Attach additional sheets, if necessary.

A Board of Architectural Review decision may be appealed to City Council either by the B.A.R. applicant or by 25 or more owners of real estate within the effected district who oppose the decision of the Board of Architectural Review. Sample petition on rear.

All appeals must be filed with the City Clerk on or before 14 days after the decision of the B.A.R.

All appeals require a \$50 filing fee.

If an appeal is filed, the decision of the Board of Architectural Review is stayed pending the City Council decision on the matter. The decision of City Council is final subject to the provisions of Sections 10-107, 10-207 or 10-309 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Karen Corbett-Sanders  
Signature of the Appellant

**Daniel Sanders**

---

Modified:

Tue 3/12/02 6:21 AM

**Basis of Council Appeal**

1. Prior to replacing windows, separate calls were made to Code Enforcement by owner and the contractor. Staff of Code Enforcement stated that if the opening was not modified, no permits were required. There was no mention or referral to either BAR or Zoning and Planning. During BAR hearing, staff acknowledged that the phones have been answered by temporary employees who have previously given out incomplete information and may have done so in this instance.
2. Windows were replaced with like material, e.g. vinyl for vinyl and are of the same design as the facing duplex and same material as those found on half of the duplex across the street.
3. Fence was repaired using materials similar to that found elsewhere on the street. Will remove as instructed by BAR.
4. BAR staff expanded the scope of the initial complaint to include replacing the front door (BAR considered the door acceptable) and the removal of shutters. The shutters have been on the building since its purchase.
5. Cost of complying with BAR decision is excessive and is not consistent with the ordinary maintenance conditions of article 10-209 of the Alexandria Zoning Ordinance - Parker Gray District.

Request for approval of a permit to demolish portions of a dwelling at **330 North Patrick Street**, zoned RB Residential.

APPLICANT: Kevin Abbott

BOARD ACTION: **Deferred for restudy, 5-0.**

3. CASE BAR2001-279

Request for approval of a porch enclosure and other alterations at **330 North Patrick Street**, zoned RB Residential.

APPLICANT: Kevin Abbott

BOARD ACTION: **Deferred for restudy, 5-0.**

4. CASE BAR2002-016

Request for approval of after-the-fact alterations at **307 North Fayette Street**, zoned CL Commercial.

APPLICANT: Karen Corbett-Sanders

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended, 4-0.**

5. CASE BAR2002-018

Request for approval of a permit to demolish portions of a dwelling at **321 Buchanan Street**, zoned RB Residential.

APPLICANT: Robert Larson

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended, 5-0.**

6. CASE BAR2002-017

Request for approval of alterations at **321 Buchanan Street**, zoned RB Residential.

APPLICANT: Robert Larson

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended, 5-0.**

**END DISCUSSION ITEMS**

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7. OTHER BUSINESS:

8. ADJOURNMENT:

*Sent to Planning  
C.M. P. Smith*

#8 5/18/02

**Transmission by Telefax to 703-838-6433**

Dear Mayor Donley,

EXHIBIT NO. 3

Thank you for the time that you and the rest of the members of the Council spent on our appeal today. We understand how difficult it is to address Solomon's choice in these type of situations, where the future objectives don't necessarily mesh with today's realities. Although, we are not necessarily pleased with the outcome, we are now looking at how to make the best of the situation and will comply within the timeframe. I believe that the Council demonstrated that you are willing to take the time to improve the citizen government of the City of Alexandria.

During the discussion today, although not raised at the BAR hearing, it was stated that the City of Alexandria was assisting in the refurbishment of lower income housing, thus the approval of vinyl windows on the back of a Buchanon Street house. Additionally, Vice Mayor Cleveland mentioned the concerns of the working neighborhoods. This struck a chord with us.

My husband and I have decided to donate the 4 new windows currently installed on Fayette Street, to a good cause. Could you please give us advice on how we can donate the windows to the City of Alexandria so that they can be used to improve the living conditions and energy efficiency of a structure in need and outside of the historic districts? We feel strongly that someone should benefit from our difficult situation and would hate to throw out the very good quality windows purchased in December.

On a more personal note, I continue to be concerned with the misrepresentations in the report to the Council and the inconsistencies with the BAR hearing on 27 February and Staff Report provided to the BAR. Can you tell me how I can get these corrections to the public record?

I believe that as a result of our situation some improvements have been made, as is indicated by the commitment of the Code Enforcement to send letters to home owners. I am optimistic that with the guidance of the Council further improvements will be made to take away some of the "fear" expressed by the BAR members in their own discussions. I do believe additional efforts should be placed on accurate representation by the staff on the facts pertaining to a case, the content of the BAR hearings in their minutes and representations of such to others in the form of written communique which become part of the record.

Once again, thank you and I look forward to your guidance,

*Karen Corbett Sanders*  
Karen Corbett Sanders

*Copies to:*

- |                              |                     |                             |                     |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Vice Mayor Cleveland</i>  | <i>703-504-0547</i> | <i>Councilman Speck</i>     | <i>703-370-6475</i> |
| <i>Councilwoman Eberwein</i> | <i>703-820-9442</i> | <i>Councilwoman Woodson</i> | <i>703-684-6034</i> |
| <i>Councilman Euille</i>     | <i>703-751-8846</i> | <i>Councilwoman Pepper</i>  | <i>703-751-0770</i> |

6405 Tenth Street  
Alexandria, VA 22307

T: 703-765-3026  
F: 703-765-9323

8  
5-18-02

<b>FAX TRANSMISSION</b>		
<b>To:</b>	<b>Mayor Donley</b>	<b>703-838-6433</b>
<b>Cc:</b>	Sandy Murphy	703-838-6433
<b>From:</b>	Karen Corbett Sanders 6405 Tenth Street Alexandria, VA 22307 Tel: 703-765-3026	
<b>Date</b>	5/15/02	
<b>Pages</b>	2 incl.	

Dear Mayor Donley,

On Saturday you will be presented with an appeal of Parker Gray case BAR 2002-016. I wanted to make you aware of some of the unique aspects of the case regarding 307 N. Fayette Street. Although the house was originally constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, it retains little of its historic character. In particular, much of the house was damaged by fire in the late 1970s.

The city approved aluminum siding at that time as part of the repairs. The six-over-six vinyl windows were also not part of the original design of the building. I believe that they were probably installed at the time of the 1979 repairs of the building. Additionally the previous owners installed vinyl shutters on the top windows of the house. The BAR staff have acknowledged that "possibly one-over-one wood windows would be most historically appropriate for this building" in its report to the BAR. When I purchased the house, Parker Gray was not considered an historic district. A Washington Post Article in 2000 actually referenced the house as a former "notable crack house" in its discussion on how the Parker Gray neighborhood is going through a renewal.

A lifelong resident of the Alexandria area, I returned home with my family in 1999 after 10 years working in Europe. Tenants occupied the house for the last three years. The tenants moved in November of 2000 to another Alexandria address. At that time my husband and I decided to do some much needed repairs on the building. In particular, we decided to replace the existing vinyl windows with a better quality window that would be more energy efficient, and protect against decay and deterioration. The pre-existing windows were not installed properly and there was evidence of leakage and water-damage. The one-over-one windows reflected more appropriately the design found in the neighborhood. The house directly across the street is the same design, same period and has one-over-one vinyl windows. In addition, to the window replacement, we decided to repair the fence, which was a mismatch of iron fence and wood, with a wooden picket fence. Both my husband and our contractor called Code Enforcement, told them the location of the house, and were each told that no permit was needed to replace the same size windows. We

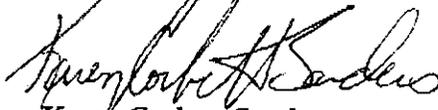
did not ask about the fence. Unfortunately, neither my husband nor our contractor were referred to the BAR (I did not know of its existence in the Parker Gray area) or told about the need to have a Certificate of Appropriateness. The work was completed in early December and we were notified before Christmas that there was a need to obtain an approval after the fact from the BAR. We were also told that we would have to obtain approval for the fence repairs. There was no mention of the shutters.

We are appealing the BAR decision to the Council to obtain approval for the one-over-one vinyl replacement windows. The Alexandria Zoning Ordinance section 10-209 allows for this type of replacement of "material in kind in cases when the cost of the work would be materially increased by the use of another material." The cost of removing the newly installed windows and replacing them with wooden frame windows is significant especially in light of our attempt to do the right thing. The \$6800 quoted by the contractor represents a significant material increase in cost. When combined with the original cost of replacing the windows in December 2001, the total expense is \$12,150. The tax-assessed value of the house in 2001 was \$173,800.

The BAR has approved both after the act, and before the fact, installation of vinyl windows in the Parker Gray District. The evening of our hearing, they approved vinyl windows on a structure on Buchanon Street taking into account the economic difficulties it would cause the applicant.

After hearing our request for approval of after the fact alterations, I understand that the BAR discussed concerns over a lack of awareness (and even expressed fears by some) of the board's role in the Parker Gray Community. The staff and individual BAR members agreed with the concerns expressed and committed to sending an information letter to residents and home owners. Apparently this had not been done in the past. Additionally, during the hearing the code enforcement representative acknowledged that they had temps answering phones and committed to reminding them of the need to reference the BAR role. We welcome these action, because it will minimize the potential of others in the Parker Gray community suffering from similar experiences as ours. Most people if they are aware of the requirements for obtaining a certificate of appropriateness will follow the guidelines. For example, when the fence dividing the backyards of 307 and 309 N. Fayette collapsed, we explained to our neighbor the importance of obtaining the certificate and jointly obtained administrative approval from staff before beginning repairs.

Thank you for your time and attention. I look forward to discussing our appeal on Saturday.

  
Karen Corbett Sanders



*City of Alexandria, Virginia*

*301 King Street, Suite 2300  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314*

8  
5-18-02



Kerry J. Donley  
Mayor

William C. Cleveland  
Vice Mayor

Beverly I. Jett, CMC  
City Clerk and  
Clerk of Council  
beverly.jett@ci.alexandria.va.us

Members of Council  
Claire M. Eberwein  
William D. Euille  
Redella S. Pepper  
David G. Speck  
Joyce Woodson

**April 22, 2002**

(703) 838-4550  
Fax: (703) 838-6433

**Ms. Karen Corbett-Sanders  
6405 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Alexandria, VA 22307**

**RE: BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW APPEAL, CASE BAR2002-016**

**Dear Ms. Corbett-Sanders:**

The above appeal will be scheduled for public hearing before City Council at its Public Hearing Meeting to be held on Saturday, May 18, 2002, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 2400, Council Chamber, City Hall, 301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia.

You may call my office on Monday, May 13, to see where it is placed on the docket.

If you have any questions or if I can be of any further assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

**Beverly I. Jett, CMC  
City Clerk and Clerk of Council**

**cc: Eileen Fogarty, Director of Planning and Zoning  
Peter Smith, Board of Architectural Review Staff**

8  
5-18-02

-CITY SEAL-

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON AN APPEAL OF A DECISION OF THE BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, PARKER-GRAY DISTRICT, APPROVING, AS AMENDED, AFTER-THE-FACT ALTERATIONS AT 307 NORTH FAYETTE STREET, ZONED CL COMMERCIAL. [BAR CASE 2002-016]

A Public Hearing will be held by the City Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, in the Council Chamber of the City of Alexandria, 301 King Street, Alexandria, VA, on Saturday, May 18, 2002, at 9:30 a.m. or an adjournment thereof, at which time an appeal of a decision of the Board of Architectural Review, Parker-Gray District, on February 27, 2002, approving, as amended, after-the-fact alterations at 307 North Fayette Street, zoned CL Commercial. APPLICANT & APPELLANT: Karen Corbett-Sanders.

This appeal is being heard pursuant to Section 10-207(A)(1) of the Zoning Ordinance for the Parker-Gray District of the City of Alexandria.

BEVERLY I. JETT, CMC,  
CITY CLERK

To be published in the:

The Northern Virginia Journal on Thursday, May 2, 2002; and  
Alexandria Gazette Packet on Thursday, May 2, 2002

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 31, 2002

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL NOTICE OF BAR REQUIREMENTS

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Over the last several months, staff has taken a number of steps to ensure that property owners know and understand the ramifications of living and/or owning property in the Old and Historic Alexandria District and the Parker Gray Historic District. Specifically, staff has:

1. Mailed a letter, as it typically does each spring, signed by the Directors of Planning and Zoning and Code Enforcement, to each landowner in the two historic districts. The letter outlines the types of changes to buildings that require Board of Architectural Review, and alerts consumers to the importance of using licensed contractors. Attached is a copy of the letter mailed in May 2002;
2. Conducted a series of meetings with large realty offices doing business in Old Town. Planning and Zoning staff, along with Thomas Hulfish, Chair, BAR-OHAD, spoke to realtors about some of the recent problems encountered when homeowners expressed surprise at the fact that there were regulations governing their ability to make changes to the exterior of their homes. Staff gave the realtors written material outlining both the benefits and responsibilities of living in Old Town to be disseminated to their customers, and generally encouraged the realtors to advise their clients about City regulations;
3. Arranged, as part of the real estate bill package that will be mailed to landowners in February 2003, for the City to include material advising owners that their property is within a historic district and that there are requirements for exterior changes to their property; and
4. Investigated the potential for a system, in conjunction with Real Estate Assessments data, whereby a notice from Planning and Zoning staff will be sent to a new purchaser each time a real estate transfer in the historic district occurs.

Staff expects that these efforts will assist property owners by giving them adequate notice of the location of their property within the historic districts. If you have any questions about this issue, feel free to contact Barbara Ross, Deputy Director, Planning and Zoning.

Attachment: Property owner letter, May 2002

cc: Michele Evans, Assistant City Manager



## DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

301 King Street, Room 2100

P. O. Box 178

Alexandria, Virginia 22313

Phone (703) 838-4666

Fax (703) 838-6393

ci.alexandria.va.us

May 2002

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS IN  
ALEXANDRIA'S HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

Dear Residents and Property Owners in the Old and Historic Alexandria District and the Parker-Gray District:

Alexandria is fortunate to have two nationally recognized, and locally designated and regulated, historic districts. The districts, the Old and Historic Alexandria District and the Parker-Gray District, were established to preserve the historic and architectural character of these sections of the City and are an important part of the heritage of the City. Your building is located within one of these historic districts!

***Need for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Exterior Work***

We are writing to you so you will be knowledgeable about the districts and the permits required to work on your property. In the historic districts, exterior work which is visible from a public right-of-way must be approved by the respective Board of Architectural Review (BAR) for the district. The Boards approve projects by issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations and new construction. The Boards must also approve all demolition, regardless of visibility, by issuing a Permit to Demolish. The Certificate or Permit must be obtained **BEFORE** work can commence and a permit can be issued by the Code Enforcement Bureau.

In approving certificates, the Boards examine the compatibility of the changes or new construction with the historic architecture of the Districts. The Boards have *Design Guidelines* that set forth the criteria used to determine compatibility. Copies of pertinent sections of the *Design Guidelines* may be obtained from the Planning and Zoning Department Staff.

Many residents are not aware of these requirements. During the past several months, the Boards and the Code Enforcement Bureau have expressed concerns about ordinary alterations to properties in the historic districts undertaken without a Certificate of Appropriateness and/or a building permit. Examples of such work that require a Certificate or building permit are:

- replacement of windows/doors
- construction of additions
- construction of decks and porches
- installation of permanent planter boxes
- paint removal using open flame
- replacement of roof/siding material
- construction of accessory structures
- installation of fences and gates
- installation of exterior security bars/doors

In some instances, the Staff to the Boards may administratively approve certain alterations. For example, the replacement of roofing materials, windows and doors, siding materials or mortar repointing which do not change the building and are historically appropriate for the age of the building may be approved by Staff without a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness may be obtained from the Department of Planning and Zoning in Room 2100, City Hall, 301 King Street.

Failure to obtain the required Certificate of Appropriateness or building permit prior to undertaking a project may subject both the owner and contractor to monetary fines and other penalties as specified in the Zoning Ordinance and the Uniform Statewide Building Code. In addition, the property owner will be required to correct the violation.

***Problems with Unlicensed Contractors***

Owners and residents of the historic districts should be aware of unlicensed contractors going from door-to-door in the historic districts soliciting home improvement work. The contractors are attempting to sell improvements that are quick one day jobs or interior items that are not readily detectable by City inspectors. Some of the "specialty" projects being offered by these contractors are vinyl replacement windows, siding, roof replacements, porch enclosures, decks, kitchen and bath remodeling, basement finishing or other interior projects.

The contractors often tell prospective customers that permits are not needed to complete these jobs. This letter is to alert City residents to the illegal practices of these contractors. The purpose of enforcing established building codes and historic district regulations is to ensure the health and safety of City residents and preserve the historic charm and ambience of the City.

Contractors licensing regulations determine who may perform construction work in the City of Alexandria. Having work performed by an unlicensed contractor greatly hinders your ability to recover any portion of your investment should the materials or services prove to be defective.

If you have any questions about whether a contractor is licensed to perform the work you are hiring them to do, or if a permit is required, please contact the Code Enforcement Bureau at 703-838-4360, before signing any contractual agreements.

**DON'T DEAL WITH UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS! BE AN INFORMED CONSUMER AND CHECK OUT CONTRACTOR LICENSING BEFORE BEGINNING WORK ON YOUR BUILDING!**

Report unlicensed contractors to the Office of Consumer Affairs or the Code Enforcement Bureau, Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. If unlicensed contractors are soliciting work in the evening or on weekends, please notify the Police Department on the non-emergency phone number. By working together we can keep the buildings in Alexandria's historic districts and your neighborhood safe and beautiful.

***Important City Contacts***

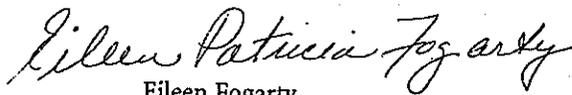
Department of Planning and Zoning, Boards of Architectural Review, Room 2100, City Hall, 703-838-4666

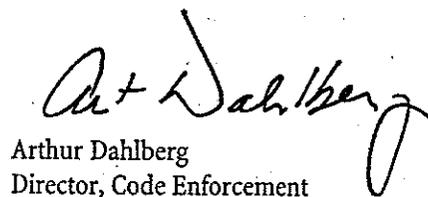
Bureau of Code Enforcement, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360

Office of Consumer Affairs, Room 1900, City Hall, 703-838-4350

Police Department, non-emergency, 703-838-4444

Sincerely,

  
Eileen Fogarty  
Director, Planning and Zoning

  
Arthur Dahlberg  
Director, Code Enforcement