

Docket Item # 1  
BAR CASE # 2011-0124

BAR Meeting  
October 5, 2011

**ISSUE:** Alterations

**APPLICANT:** Nancy Petersen for MP Realty LLC and Victor Glasberg, by Joel deLeon

**LOCATION:** 803 Prince Street & 121 South Columbus Street

**ZONE:** RM/Residential & CD/Commercial

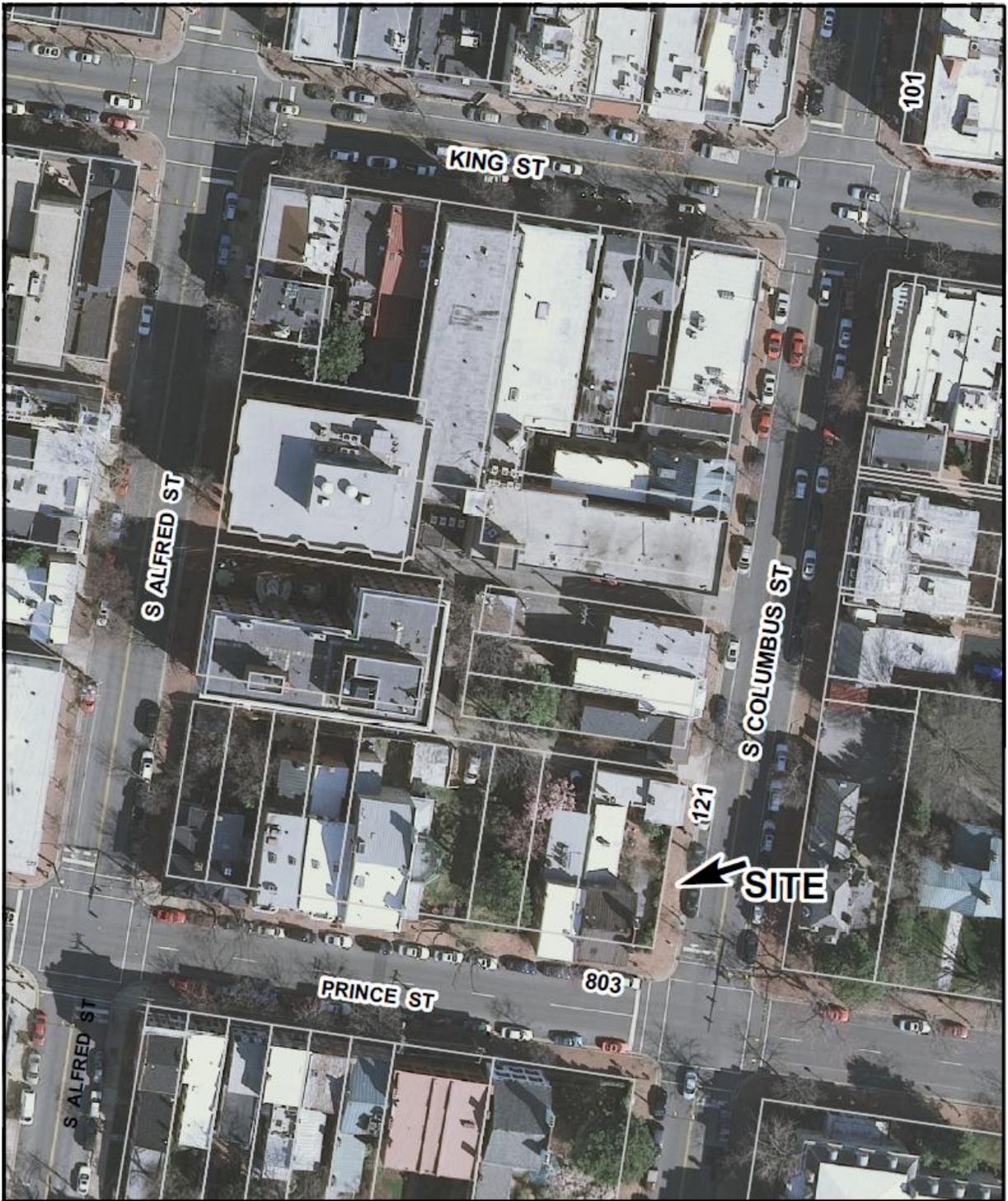
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the application with the following condition:

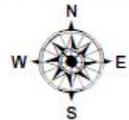
1. The statements in archaeology conditions below shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
  - a. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
  - b. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

**\*\*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 final approval 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 Building and Fire Code Administration (including siding or roofing over 100 square feet, windows and signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-746-4200 for further information.



**BAR CASE #2011-0124**



## **I. ISSUE**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a number of alterations at 803 Prince Street and 121 South Columbus Street. The alterations are intended to facilitate access to the side (south) entrance of 121 South Columbus Street, which is used as the main entrance to the business. The front door at 121 South Columbus Street is not operable and the side entrance is accessible only through a gate in the brick wall into the open space at 803 Prince Street.

The applicants recently received approval from the Planning Commission for a re-subdivision of 803 Prince Street and 121 South Columbus Street (the properties were originally subdivided in 1975). After the re-subdivision is recorded, the proposed alterations will be located entirely on the 121 South Columbus Street property.

The following alterations are proposed:

- A six foot wide section of 803 Prince's brick garden wall immediately adjacent to 121 South Columbus Street will be demolished. A new brick wall, the same height and brick pattern as the existing wall, will be constructed along the new property line created by the re-subdivision, allowing access to the side entrance to 121 Columbus Street as well as to an enclosed trash storage area. There will be one 3 foot 6 inch tall wood gate on South Columbus Street and another one enclosing the trash area. The gates will be constructed of flush wood panels, installed on the diagonal. The gates will be painted.
- A new brick wall will also enclose an existing second access point from the 121 South Columbus Street property to the 803 Prince Street open space. This one-story wall will enclose the area below the second story deck. The door and window within the cavity will be infilled with brick.
- The existing wood picket deck railing on the second floor of the South Columbus Street property will also be replaced with a more decorative wood railing; this will be minimally visible from the public right-of-way.
- The existing, east-facing second-story door at 121 South Columbus Street which provides access to the deck will be replaced with a six-over-six, simulated divided light, double-hung wood window. Siding matching the adjacent wood lap siding will be installed below the window.

## **II. HISTORY**

According to Ethelyn Cox, in her book *Historic Alexandria Virginia Street by Street*, 803 Prince Street was built by John McCobb c. 1814. The 1877 Hopkins Atlas shows a property fronting Prince Street, as well as a smaller building, possibly an outbuilding on South Columbus Street. The first Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map – dating from 1885 – shows 803 Prince Street with a one-story hyphen and a two-story portion of the house facing South Columbus Street. Both are located on one lot and appear to be a single property, albeit with two separate addresses.

In 1975, the property was subdivided into two lots. Currently, 803 Prince Street is zoned RM (although existing commercial uses are permitted as non-complying) and 121 South Columbus Street is zoned for commercial uses. On September 8, 2011 (SUB #2011-0005), the Planning Commission approved the re-subdivision of the two parcels to allow pedestrian access and trash storage on the 121 Columbus Street property.

There have been no recent BAR approvals for either property; however, in 1975 the Board approved alterations and the construction of a garden wall at 803 Prince Street. Also in 1975, the Board approved the installation of a window, as well as other alterations (1965), at 121 South Columbus Street.

### **III. ANALYSIS**

The proposed alterations comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

The *Design Guidelines* state that “Fences, garden walls and gates should be appropriate in materials, design and scale to the period and character of the structure they surround.” Staff believes that the portion of the brick wall which will be removed dates from the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and that this may be the same wall approved by the Board in 1975. A site inspection reveals that this portion of the 803 Prince Street garden wall clearly has a later construction date than the remainder of the garden wall. The new brick wall proposed by the applicant will closely match the existing historic wall and the new gates will be constructed of historically appropriate wood. Staff believes that this design is appropriate and compatible with the surrounding streetscape, as well as the historic properties at 803 Prince Street and 121 South Columbus Street. While Staff would prefer to see the front door of the Columbus Street property used as the main entrance, the proposed alterations do not preclude that from happening in the future should the interior layout of the building change.

The other alterations to the South Columbus Street property – enclosing the first floor opening, adding a new deck railing and replacing the second story door with a window – are also appropriate and will be minimally, if at all, visible. Although there is no record of previous alterations to the rear of the property, there have clearly been modifications over the years and little historic fabric appears to remain. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the proposed alterations.

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted and notes the condition of Alexandria Archaeology.

### **STAFF**

Stephanie Sample, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning  
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

#### **IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

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

##### Code Administration

- C-1 A building permit is required to be issued prior to the start of any work.
- C-2 Five sets of sealed drawings are required to be submitted for review with the building permit application
- C-3 Plans submitted with the BAR request are not approved for construction

##### Transportation & Environmental Services

##### RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 5-6-224 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. [Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (T&ES)
- R2. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R3. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R4. No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (T&ES)
- R5. An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R6. Compliance with the provisions of Article XIII of the City's zoning ordinance for stormwater quality control is required for any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R7. The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition. (T&ES)

##### FINDINGS

- F1. The proposed changes to add an entrance within the existing brick wall to shall be fully within the property lines. No portion of the wall or gate shall encroach into the public right-of-way. (T&ES)

- F2. An approved grading plan may be required at the time of building permit application. Insufficient information has been provided to make that determination at this time. In summary, City Code Section 5-6-224 requires that a grading plan be submitted to and approved by T&ES prior to the issuance of building permits for improvements involving:
- the construction of a new home;
  - construction of an addition to an existing home where either
  - the addition exceeds the area of the existing building footprint by 100% or more;
  - or, the construction of the addition results in less than 50% of the existing first floor exterior walls, in their entirety, remaining;
  - changes to existing grade elevation of 1-foot or greater;
  - changes to existing drainage patterns;
  - land disturbance of 2,500 square feet or greater.
- Questions regarding the processing of grading plans should be directed to the T&ES Site Plan Coordinator at (703) 746-4064. Memorandum to Industry No. 02-08 was issued on April 28, 2008 and can be viewed online via the following link.  
<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/info/gradingPlanRequirements.pdf>

#### CODE REQUIREMENTS

- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). (T&ES)
- C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line. (T&ES)
- C-3 Roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation & Environmental Services. (Sec.5-6-224) (T&ES)
- C-4 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3) (T&ES)
- C-5 Pay sanitary sewer tap fee prior to release of Grading Plan. (Sec. 5-6-25) (T&ES)
- C-6 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-2) (T&ES)

#### Alexandria Archaeology Archaeology Findings

- F-1 According to Ethelyn Cox's, *Historic Alexandria, Virginia, Street by Street, A Survey of Existing Early Buildings*, the structure on this lot was built ca. 1814 by John McCobb. The property therefore has the potential for archaeological resources to be present that could provide insight into residential life in early Alexandria.

Archaeology Recommendations

- R-1 The statements in archaeology conditions below shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
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V. IMAGES

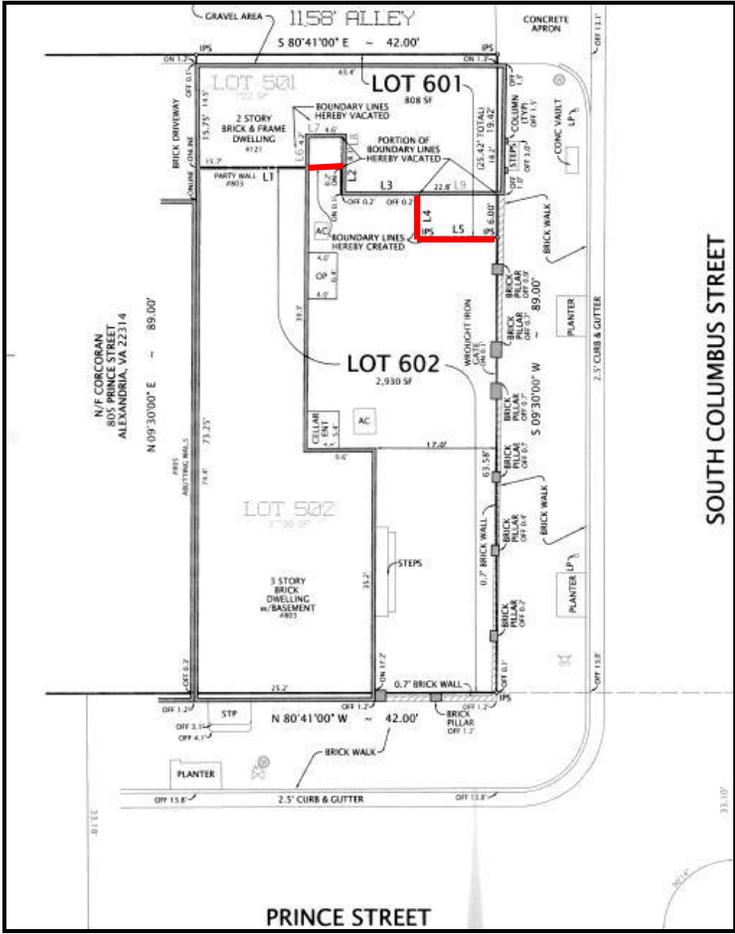


Figure 1. Re-subdivision plat approved by Planning Commission on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

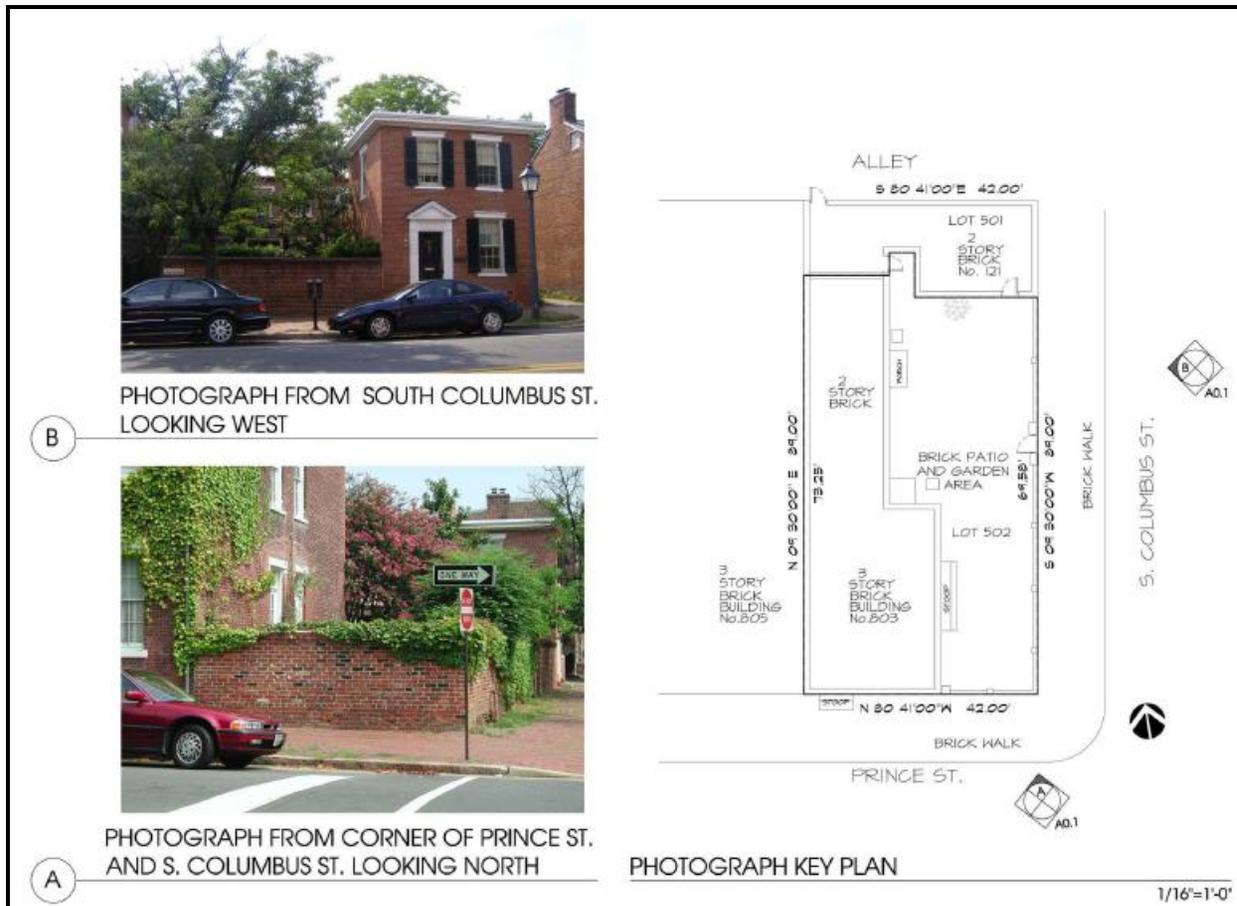


Figure 2. Existing site photo and existing plat/property line.



Figure 3. Existing photos.

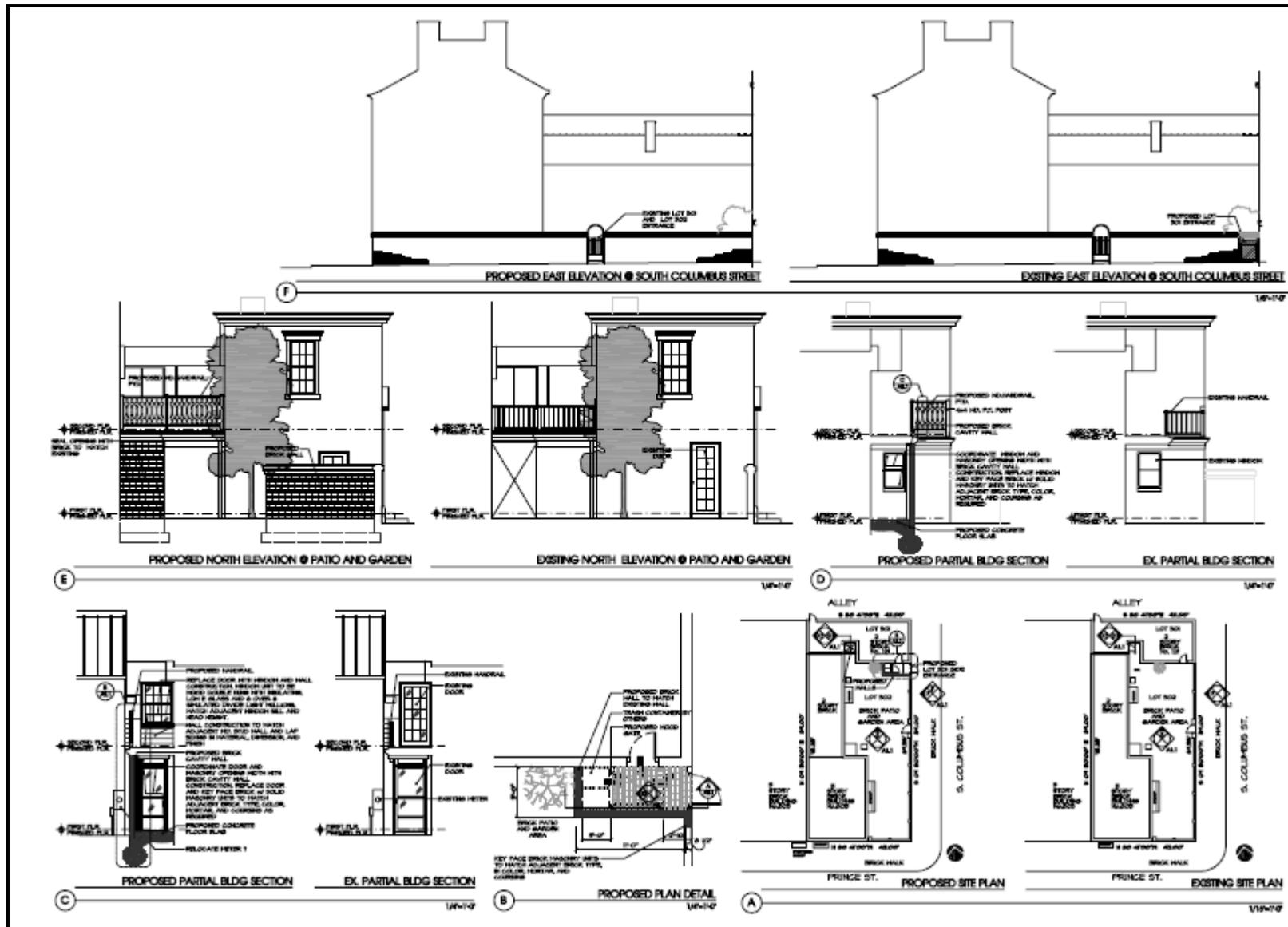


Figure 4. Existing and proposed elevations and site plan.

