

Docket Item # 2
BAR CASE # 2011-0354

BAR Meeting
January 4, 2012

ISSUE: Re-approval of Previously Approved Plans:
Rooftop installation of cellular antennae, equipment cabinet and cabling

APPLICANT: New Cingular Wireless/AT&T (Greg Rapisarda, Agent)

LOCATION: 105 North Union Street

ZONE: CD / Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends re-approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition that when this cellular technology becomes obsolete and is no longer utilized, all equipment will be removed.

SEPTEMBER 1, 2010 BOARD ACTION: Approved, as amended, 6-0, on September 1, 2010, with the following condition:

That when this cellular technology becomes obsolete and is no longer utilized, all equipment will be removed.

****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.



UPDATE:

At the September 1, 2010 hearing, the Board unanimously voted to approve with condition the installation of nine cellular antennas housed in three, stealth canister covers (9' overall height), an equipment cabinet set upon a steel platform with 8' high screen wall (11' overall height) and cabling on the roof of the Torpedo Factory Arts Center (BAR2010-0220). After the approval in 2010, AT&T Mobility/New Cingular Wireless (AT&T) received building permits and installed the BAR approved rooftop equipment.

In May 2011, Mrs. Chen-Chi Yeh, a condo owner at 132 N. Union Street contacted BAR staff and expressed concerns about the newly installed AT&T equipment and its impact on her condo's water view. She indicated that the eight foot (8') screen wall which surrounds the equipment cabinet partially obstructed her view of the Potomac River.

After review of the September 1, 2010 BAR hearing noticing, AT&T was informed of the Torpedo Factory Condominium noticing error and encouraged to work with Mrs. Chen-Chi Yeh to address concerns. Additionally, BAR staff requested that AT&T contact the Torpedo Factory Condominium Association and set-up a community meeting.

On June 23, 2011, AT&T's agents met with Ms. Chen-Chi Yeh and Mr. John Ross to discuss the outstanding issues and concerns and took photographs of the site from the owner's condo.

September 16, 2011, AT&T received notification from the Condo Board that AT&T's noticing issue had been raised at their September 15, 2011 meeting and that they needed some additional information before making a decision on whether they needed AT&T to attend a formal community meeting.

October 21, 2011, AT&T e-mailed Condo Board representative to inquire about the information provided in September and the status of the community meeting. AT&T did not receive a response.

October 28, 2011, BAR staff e-mailed the Condo Board representative to inquire about the project and to offer assistance in resolving any potential issues/concerns. BAR staff did not receive a response.

November 17, 2011, BAR staff sent an e-mail to Condo Board representative to follow up on October 28, 2011 e-mail. Staff requested that if they had any formal concerns with AT&T's project to contact BAR staff before December 2, 2011.

November 17, 2011, Condo Board representative contacted AT&T and expressed that they were satisfied with information provided and noted that the Condo Board has decided a community meeting was not needed on this issue.

December 2, 2011, BAR staff e-mailed AT&T and copied the Condo Board representative noting that Staff had not received any correspondence from Mrs. Chen-Chi Yeh or the Condo Board since May 2011. It was advised in this email that AT&T submit a new BAR application requesting re-approval of the rooftop cellular antennae and equipment installation.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting re-approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the after-the-fact installation of nine cellular antennas housed in three, stealth canister covers (9' overall height) on the roof of the Torpedo Factory Arts Center, at 105 North Union Street. This proposal is requesting that the BAR re-approve the exact application which was originally reviewed and approved on September 1, 2010 (BAR2010-0220).

The new equipment cabinet which is set upon a steel platform with 8' high screen wall (11' overall height) and the rooftop cabling are not visible from a public right of way and do not require BAR review and approval.

The three antennae canisters are mounted to the roof in the locations identified below:

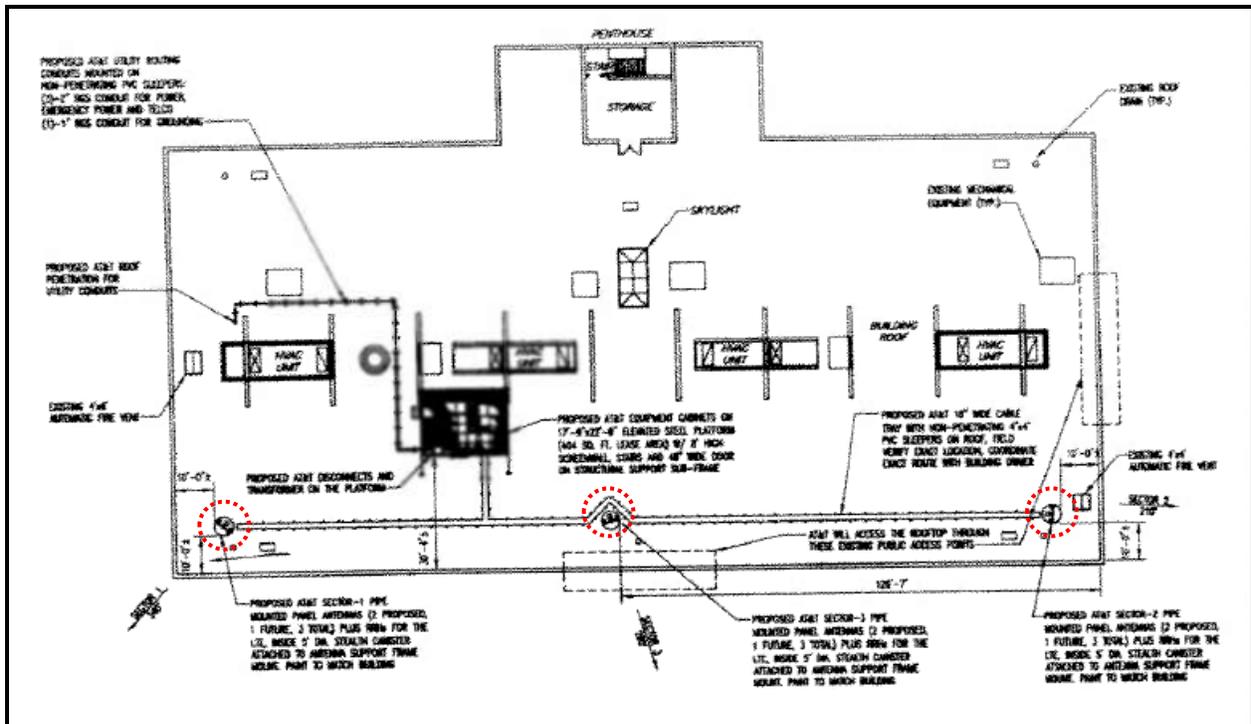


Illustration of 2011 Existing Conditions

As identified in the previously approved application, the antennae canisters are the only items mounted on the rooftop visible from a public right-of-way. The equipment cabinet location on the west side of the rooftop is not visible from any public right-of-way and preserves the water facing portion of the roof for a future use (see photos pages 8-12).

The antennas are housed in three, 5' diameter, 9' high, chimney-like canisters fabricated from PVC Stealthcore – a paintable, PVC composite product. This composite product is textured in a semi-rough stucco finish and painted to match the color of the existing historic smoke stack. The

three, separate canisters are located on the building's flat roof near the Union Street façade. The first is located in the building's northwestern corner, and offset 10' from the front and north building walls. The second is slightly offset from the center of the building's Union Street elevation and recessed 10' from the front building wall. The final unit is located in the southwestern corner of the building and offset 10' from the front and south building walls. These units are powered through non-penetrating, PVC sleepers which run into the equipment cabinet located in front of an existing rooftop, HVAC unit.

II. HISTORY:

105 N Union was originally built in **1918** in the Art Deco style by the U.S. Navy as a torpedo factory. It was renovated in 1983 into the City of Alexandria's Arts Center.

Previous Approvals:

The Board has approved a number of projects at the Arts Center which include the following:

BAR Case # 2010-0220, 9/1/10 – Installation of cellular antennas with canister covers, equipment cabinets and cabling.

BAR Case #1998-0011, 2/18/98 - Signage for North Elevation

BAR Case #1995-0022, 3/1/95 - Rear Signage

BAR Case #2002-0089, 5/15/02 – Signage

BAR Case#2007-0280, 2/6/08 – Signage, Lighting and Awnings

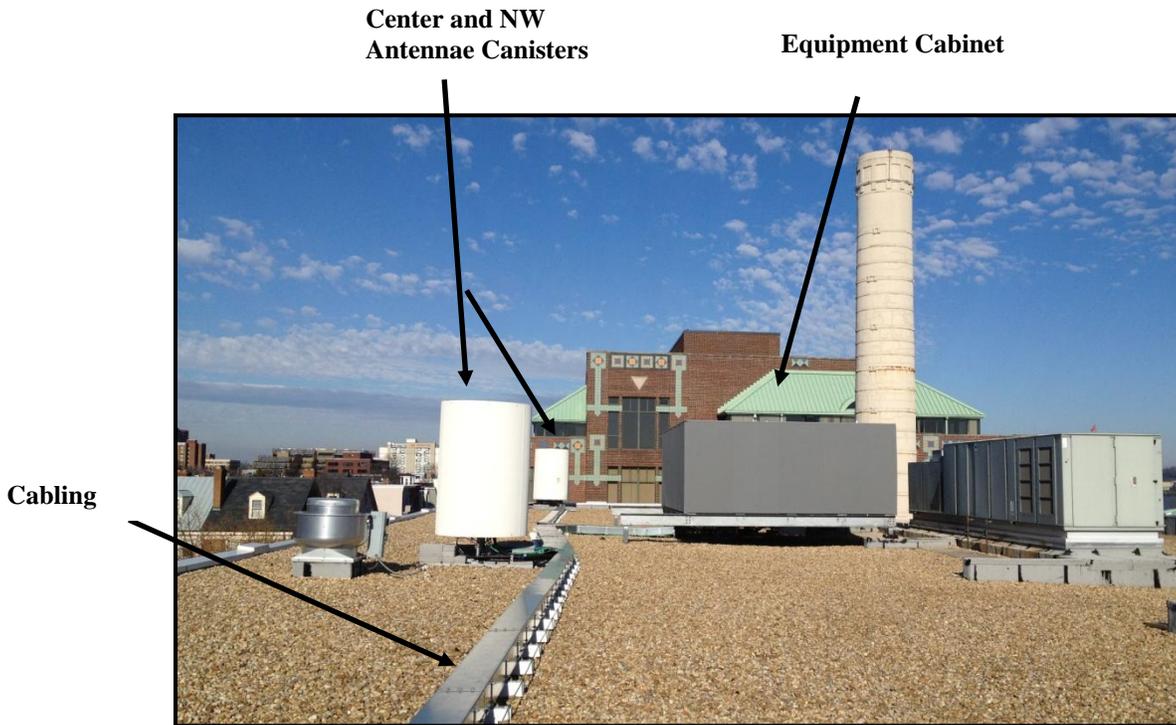
III. ANALYSIS:

The proposal complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

The *Design Guidelines* clearly state that “Respectful additions make use of the design vocabulary of the existing historic structure;” and “An addition to a historic building should be clearly distinguishable from the original structure;” and finally, “In general, the existing form of a historic building should be retained in the expression of the addition.”

Due to an administrative error, the Torpedo Factory Condominium Association was not notified by the applicant when this project was reviewed and approved by the BAR on September 1, 2010. In order for this project to be in compliance with the Board's notification regulations, AT&T is re-submitting the previously-approved proposal without modifications for the BAR's re-approval. The new submittal included re-notifying all the adjoining property owners, as well as the previously neglected, Torpedo Factory Condominium Association.

The current proposal, as submitted has not been altered since the BAR's original approval. BAR Staff conducted a site visit on 12/19/2011 and verified that the heights and locations of the three antennae canisters, the equipment cabinet and the associated cabling are consistent with the BAR's original approval (see photos below).



Rooftop Views of 2011 Existing Conditions

A comparison of 2010 BAR application photo mock-ups and photographs of current site conditions indicate that the 2010 photo mock-ups were very accurate in conveying to the Board the visual impact of the roof mounted antennae canisters (see pages 8-12).

Staff recommends that the BAR re-approve the application, as submitted with the previously approved condition, "That when this cellular technology becomes obsolete and is no longer utilized, all equipment will be removed."

STAFF:

Michele Oaks, 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:

No Comments Received.

Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES):

No Comments Received.

V. IMAGES



Figure 1: 2010 Photo Simulation – Cameron and Union, Looking East



Figure 2: 2011 Existing Conditions – Cameron and Union, Looking East



Figure 3: 2010 Photo Simulation –105 North Union Entrance, Looking East



Figure 4: 2011 Existing Conditions –105 North Union Entrance, Looking East



Figure 5: 2010 Photo Simulation – Fayette Alley and Union, Looking East



Figure 6: 2011 Existing Conditions – Fayette Alley and Union, Looking East



Figure 7: 2010 Photo Simulation – King and Union, Looking Northeast



Figure 8: 2011 Existing Conditions – King and Union, Looking Northeast

Existing
HVAC



Figure 9: 2010 Photo Simulation – Entrance to Chart House

Existing
HVAC



Figure 10: 2011 Existing Conditions – Entrance to Chart House

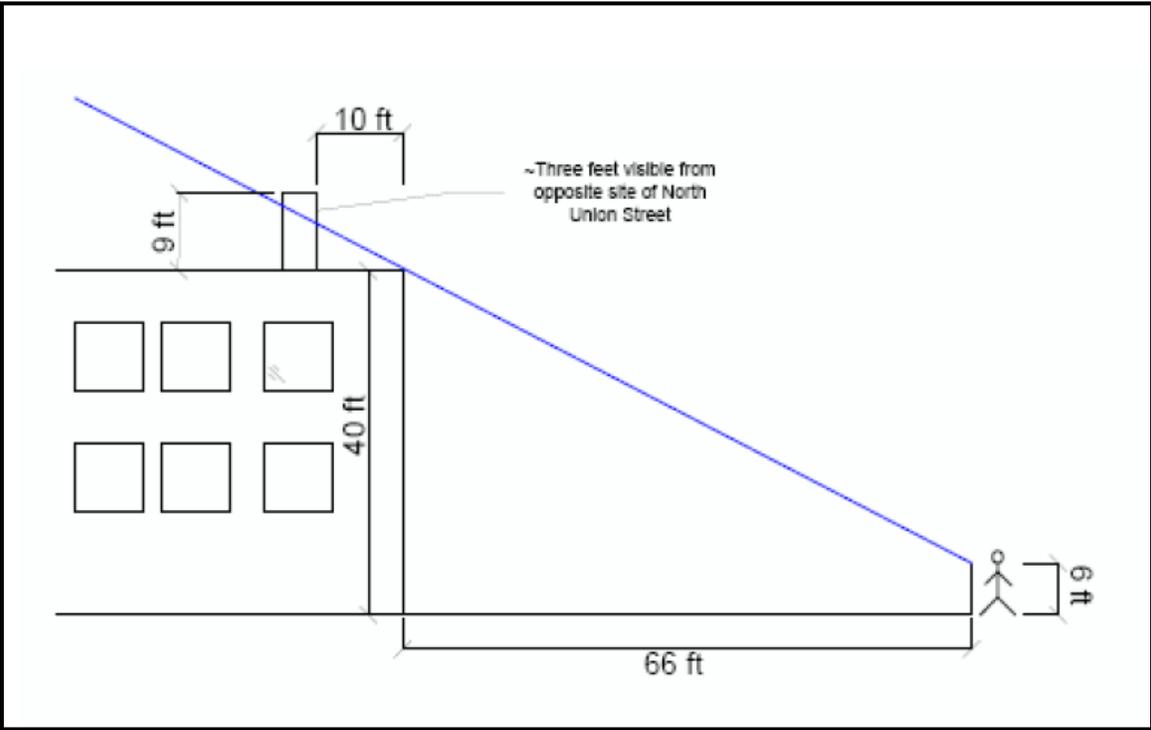


Figure 11: 2010 Sight line Study

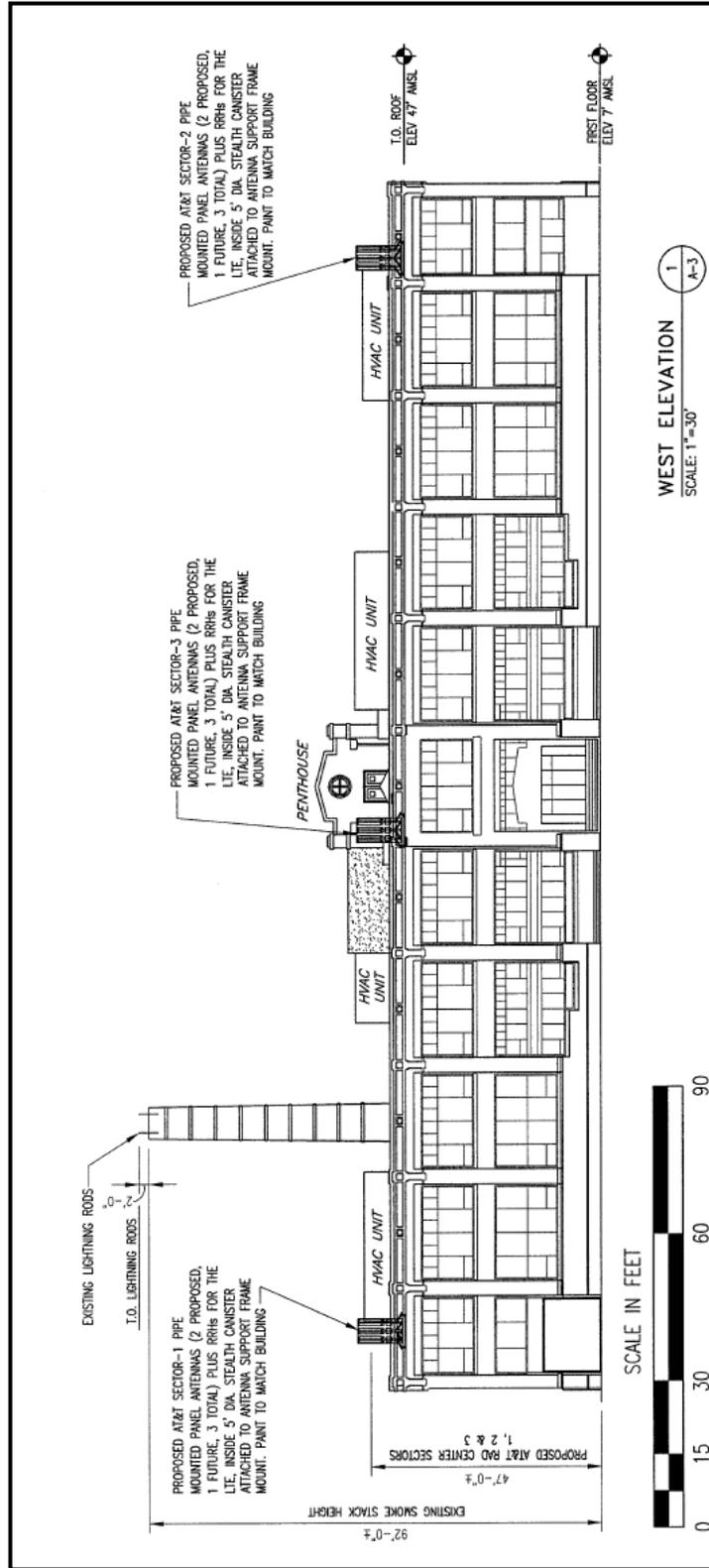


Figure 12: Union Street Elevation

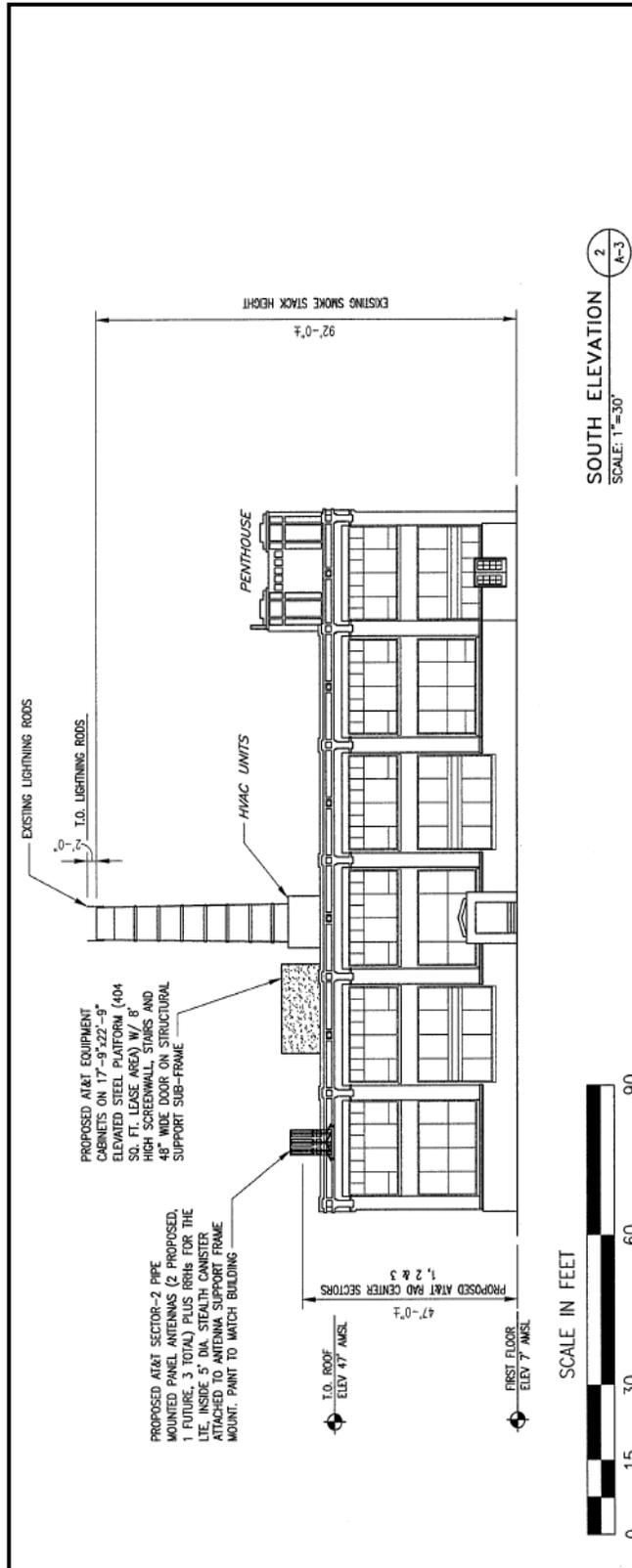


Figure 13: North Elevation

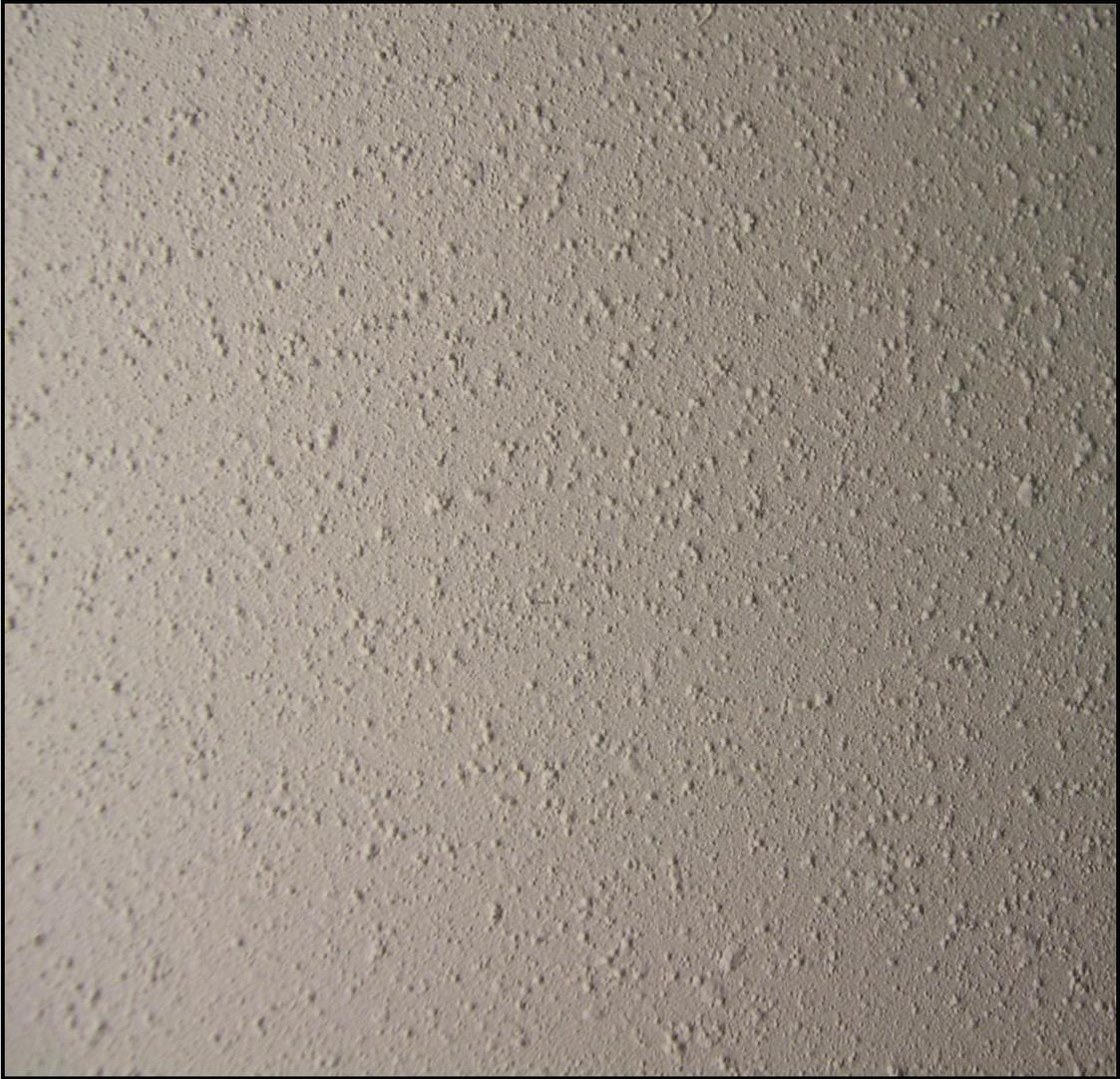


Figure 14: Cylinder's Color/Texture