

Docket Item # 1
BAR CASE #2011-0362

BAR Meeting
March 7, 2012

ISSUE: Certificate of Appropriateness
APPLICANT: Allen & Rebecca Weh by Christine Kelly, AIA
LOCATION: 400 N Union Street
ZONE: RM / Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness, as revised, to include the new dormer designs and painting the masonry with a historically appropriate color, per the Design Guidelines.

BOARD ACTION, January 18, 2012: Portions deferred and portions approved, as amended, 6-0.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

~~Denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the dormer on the front (east) façade.
Restudy of the dormer on the front (east) façade.~~

Approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the dormer on the rear (west) façade, the roof deck, and the shutters on the east and south façades with the following conditions:

1. That the railing detail for the roof deck be more historically appropriate by using wide plinths spaced between simple balusters, with the final design to be approved by Staff;
2. That the center window on the rear (west) dormer be offset in plan from the adjacent windows by at least 8”;
3. That the size of HardiePlank siding on the rear (west) dormer is reduced from a 7” exposure to a 5” exposure;
4. That the HardiePlank siding be smooth (no wood grain);
5. That the HardiePlank siding on the rear (west) dormer be painted to match the composition roof, so that the dormer will visually appear as two individual dormers;
6. That the new asphalt shingle roof on the front and rear be architectural grade composition roofing in either a weathered wood or slate color, per the BAR *Roof Materials Policy*; and
7. That all new windows comply with the recently adopted Window Policy.

SPEAKERS

Ms. Christine Kelly, architect for the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

Mr. John Hynan, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation, supported the recommendation to change the railing, supported denial of the Palladian window on the front and disapproved of shed dormers in general.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Smeallie supported the staff recommendation and noted that single dormers were preferred on the front elevation.

Mr. Neale commented that he was not opposed to all Palladian dormers but that they need to be designed to fit in with the community and that this particular design was not supportable.

Dr. Fitzgerald made a motion to defer the proposed front (east) dormer and approve the remainder of the application, with staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mr. von Senden. The motion passed, 6-0.

REASON

The Board felt that the proposed dormer on the front (east) elevation was not an appropriate scale or design for the front elevation in this location, preferring the three existing dormers, but had no objection to the other proposed alterations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION January 18, 2012:

Staff recommends denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the dormer on the front (east) façade.

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the dormer on the rear (west) façade, the roof deck, and the shutters on the east and south façades with the following conditions:

1. That the railing detail for the roof deck be more historically appropriate by using wide plinths spaced between simple balusters, with the final design to be approved by Staff;
2. That the center window on the rear (west) dormer be offset from the adjacent windows by at least 8”;
3. That the size of HardiePlank siding on the rear (west) dormer is reduced from a 7” exposure to a 5” exposure;
4. That the HardiePlank siding be smooth (no wood grain);
5. That the HardiePlank siding on the rear (west) dormer be painted to match the composition roof, so that the dormer will visually appear as individual dormers;
6. That the new asphalt shingle roof on the front and rear be architectural grade composition roofing in either a weathered wood or slate color, per the *BAR Roof Materials Policy*; and
7. That all new windows comply with the recently adopted Window Policy.

****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.



CASE BAR2011-00362



Update: At the January 18, 2012 hearing the BAR deferred the front (east) dormer for restudy. The architect has since worked with Staff to address the BAR's comments and has proposed a new front (east) dormer design. The architect also adjusted the design details on the rear (west) dormer to reflect the new front dormer design. The applicant is also requesting to paint the exterior brick. *New information and analysis is shown below in italics.*

I. ISSUE

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness at 400 N Union Street for the following:

1. Composite shutters installed on east and south facades (using existing hardware).
2. New roof deck with a 3'-0" high composite guardrail.
3. New shed dormer addition on rear (west façade).
4. Dormer reconfiguration on the front (east façade).

II. HISTORY

The dwelling at 400 North Union Street is a one of a group of 86 three-story brick townhouses bounded by North Union, North Lee, Queen and Oronoco Streets which was approved by City Council in 1968 (Special Use Permit #1084) and constructed in **1971**. At the time the area was developed it was not within the boundaries of the Old and Historic Alexandria District, but it was added to the district in June of 1984. 400 N Union is a 3½ story, two-bay, end unit constructed in a simple Colonial Revival style. It has a brick façade laid in a running bond pattern, cast concrete sills, and a front facing garage. The N. Union address and the ghost marks around the window to the left of the garage door indicate that the front entry of the townhouse was originally located where the first floor window is on the N. Union façade.

This same applicant had a case before the BAR in September of 2011 (BAR2011-0245), in which the Board approved a window replacement, a rear patio door replacement, new exterior electric lights, and window resizing on the two first floor window openings. Since then, the applicant decided to only resize the window on the east façade, putting in an arched feature window (figure 8).

It is noted that the architect that worked with the applicant on BAR Case #2011-0245 had discussed the possibility of including the reconfiguration of the dormers on the front façade in the initial application. However, the applicant did not pursue dormer alteration at that time.

III. ANALYSIS

The proposed project complies with Zoning Ordinance regulations.

Shutters

The applicant is proposing to install dark grey paneled, solid composite shutters on the front (east) and side (south) facades. The *Design Guidelines* state that "window shutters should be hinged and operable" and "should be the appropriate size and shape for the opening." The townhouse is of the Colonial Revival style, on which shutters are common, and has single width window openings. This structure previously had shutters as evident by the remaining hardware, which the applicant intends to reuse. The shutters will overlap on the front (east) façade in order to meet the required size needed to properly close over the window openings. While high quality

wood shutters are encouraged, the new Minor Architectural Elements Policy states that composite/synthetic shutters may be acceptable for buildings constructed after 1970, if they are constructed of a solid, millable material with a smooth or subtle wood grain surface and are field painted. Staff believes adding shutters to the house will create much more visual interest on an otherwise unadorned façade.

At this point, the applicant has chosen not to install shutters on the first floor arched feature window on the front (east) façade; however, Staff supports the installation of arched shutters if the applicant wishes to install shutters on this window in the future.

Roof Deck

The applicant is proposing a simple 3'-0" high composite railing that runs along the perimeter of the roof. There will also be a matching railing around the opening for the hatch which will provide egress. Although most of the roofs of the townhouse complex appear to be gable designs from the street, they are actually flat for a large portion of the central area. Many homeowners have adapted the large attic areas below for living space and desire to use the flat roof areas for observation of the Potomac River. Similar roof decks have been approved at 111 Queen Street (BAR Case #95-0033, 4/5/95) 105 Quay Street (BAR Case #2001-0121, 7/18/01), 402 N Union Street (BAR Case #2000-0240, 11/15/2000), and 424 N Union Street (BAR Case#2003-0105, 6/4/2003).

The *Design Guidelines* state that "roof decks should be constructed so that they do not interfere with the historic roofline of a building" and that they should be built using "materials which are sympathetic to the building materials generally found in the historic district." They also suggest that they should be painted the color of the trim work, which the applicant intends to do.

While Staff is not opposed to the concept of a roof deck, Staff feels that the proposed design reflects a typical suburban deck railing instead of reflecting historical detailing which would be more appropriate for the Colonial Revival style. Staff suggests that instead of thin posts, the applicant use wide plinths. On the front façade, the plinths should align above each masonry pier. On the side, Staff recommends a plinth on each end with two equally spaced in between. The plinths on the rear should match the spacing used on the front. In between the plinths should be simple straight balusters. Staff supports the use of a solid and paintable composite wood material for the guardrail, given the late 20th century age of the house.



Figure 1: Example of appropriate detailing for railing.

Front Dormer (east façade)

The original use for the fourth floor of the townhouses in this development was for attic storage. As homeowners have tried to take advantage of the views of the river and the extra space, many

have requested new dormers on the front and rear in order to increase the useable floor area. 400 N. Union was originally built with three individual dormers of the appropriate scale and massing for this size townhouse. In order for the applicant to make the fourth floor a master suite, they are proposing to turn the three individual dormers on the front into one large Palladian style dormer with 2'-2" x 4'-0" clad casement windows. The *Design Guidelines* state that "dormers should align with the existing windows or be centered between the windows." Historically, "dormers are generally tall and narrow with minimal trim at the sides of the windows." Staff initially recommended the denial of the Palladian dormer on the front façade, finding the existing dormers of an appropriate design, scale, and placement. While other Palladian dormers have been incorporated onto the front of these townhouses, Staff feels that continued use of them will have an adverse effect on the development and the view from Founders Park because of the cumulative alteration of the scale of these buildings.

While Staff and the Board did not support the initial Palladian style dormer, Staff commends the architect on the new front (east) dormer design. The new design is still functionally a shed dormer however the roof lines and the projecting center window allow the dormer to visually appear smaller and in better scale with the structure below. The center window is pulled out 8" from the windows on either side, which is the opposite of the rear dormer that recesses the center window in by 8". This difference in projection creates a sense of hierarchy in the dormer and features the central window with a high level of architectural detail. It is also important to note that the three windows on the front dormer now align with the rest of the windows on the front façade, which creates balance. The architect also added paneled detailing in both the gable and vertical side bands of the focal point windows, recalling the rooftop guardrail plinths and the shutter panels below. These details create a more high style dormer than the original submission and it is more architecturally integrated with this large Colonial Revival townhouse. Staff recommends the approval of the revised front former design.

Rear Dormer (west façade)

The applicant is proposing to add a shed dormer to the rear façade. While Staff does not support the proposed front dormer, Staff can support the one on the rear as it is located on the least visually prominent portion of the roof. However, Staff recommends that the design of the rear dormer be altered to make it appear to be two individual dormers when viewed from the side street. To do this, the center window needs to be recessed by at least 8". In addition, Staff recommends painting the HardiePlank siding on the ends of the dormer and on the recessed panel the same color as the roof so that it will further create the allusion of individual dormers. Staff also conditions that the HardiePlank be reduced from a 7" exposure to a 5" exposure, as 7" would be overwhelming on such a small area. The HardiePlank should be smooth (no wood grain) in order to conform with the Board's *Fiber Cement Policy*. The windows on the rear dormer will be 2'-6" x 4'-6" aluminum clad simulated divided light windows in a 6/6 light configuration, matching the other two windows on the rear.

The architect made small design changes to the details on the previously approved rear dormer to reflect the design of the revised proposal for the front dormer. Staff supports these changes because it creates an integrated architectural design.



Figure 2: Ariel view of the 400 block of N Union showing existing roof decks and dormers.

Painting Unpainted Masonry

During the dormer redesign study, the applicants decided that they would like to paint all three elevations of the brick townhome and that request has since been added to this application.

While the BAR typically does not review paint color, the Zoning Ordinance states that “painting a previously unpainted masonry surface, no matter what color, requires review and approval of a certificate of appropriateness by the Boards.” Due to the abundance of previously painted masonry structures in Old Town, and the fact that most red brick masonry buildings were not originally painted, the Boards do not normally support such requests. However, given the age of this property and the color of brick incorporated on its façade, Staff supports painting the townhouse at 400 North Union Street. Had the brick been a more traditional Colonial Revival color such as salmon or deep red, then Staff would not support the application of paint. It is also important to note that Staff does not support painting a large number of the brick townhomes in this development, as painted brick was not an original design concept of this development.

The Design Guidelines recommend historically accurate paint colors for a variety of buildings. For masonry buildings of the Colonial Revival style (1920-present), the Guidelines recommend the following: Body- white, beige, pale green, medium gray, medium blue; Trim – green, white, yellow; Door- brown, black. The applicants are currently considering a pale green, gray, or yellow color for the body of the house and will bring their paint choices to the hearing that evening for information. By practice, the BAR does not review paint color, as long as the colors comply with the Design Guidelines.

STAFF

Courtney Lankford, 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

- F-1 The review by Code Administration is a preliminary review only. Once the applicant has filed for a building permit, code requirements will be based upon the building permit plans. If there are any questions, the applicant may contact Ken Granata, Acting Plan Review Supervisor at ken.granata@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-4193. (Code)
- C-1 Building and trades permits are required for this project. Five sets of *construction documents* sealed by a *Registered Design Professional* that fully detail the construction as well as layout and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems shall accompany the permit application(s).
- C-2 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 The architect shall provide a building code analysis with the following building code data on the plan: a) use group; b) number of stories; c) type of construction; d) floor area; e) fire protection; f) ceiling height; g) brace wall locations and type.
- C-5 All exterior walls shall comply with Table R302.1 of the 2009 USBC (2009 IRC as amended). See section R302.2 for *Townhouse* exception.
- C-6 Rooftop anchorage/installation details shall be submitted for new condensing unit installation.
- C-7 Electrical wiring methods and other electrical requirements shall comply with IRC and NFPA #70, 2008.
- C-8 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

V. IMAGES



Figure 3: N Union Street façade.



Figure 4: Princess Street façade.



Figure 5: Rear façade.

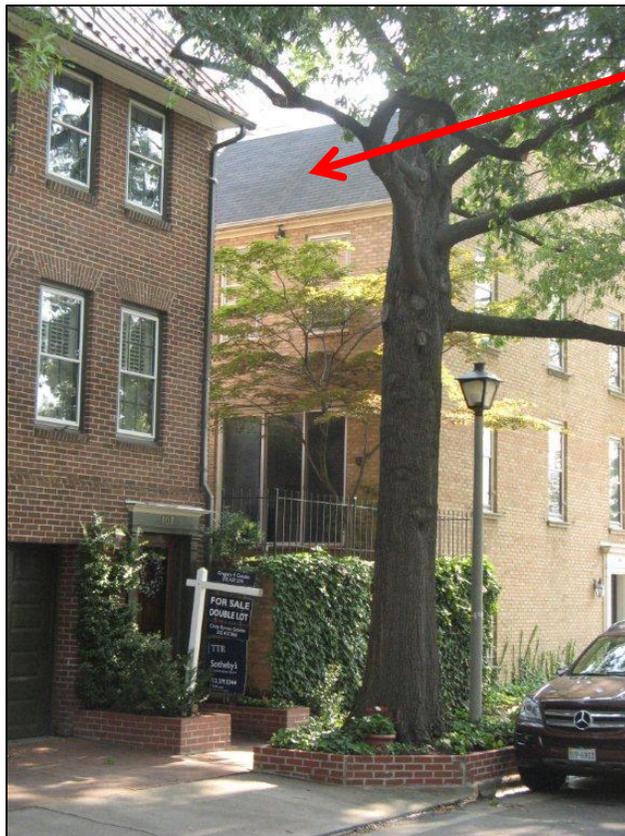


Figure 6: View of rear façade from Princess Street. Arrow indicates placement of proposed dormer.



Figure 7: Existing Conditions/Proposed Demolition.



Figure 8: First submittal for proposed front and rear dormers (1/18/2012).

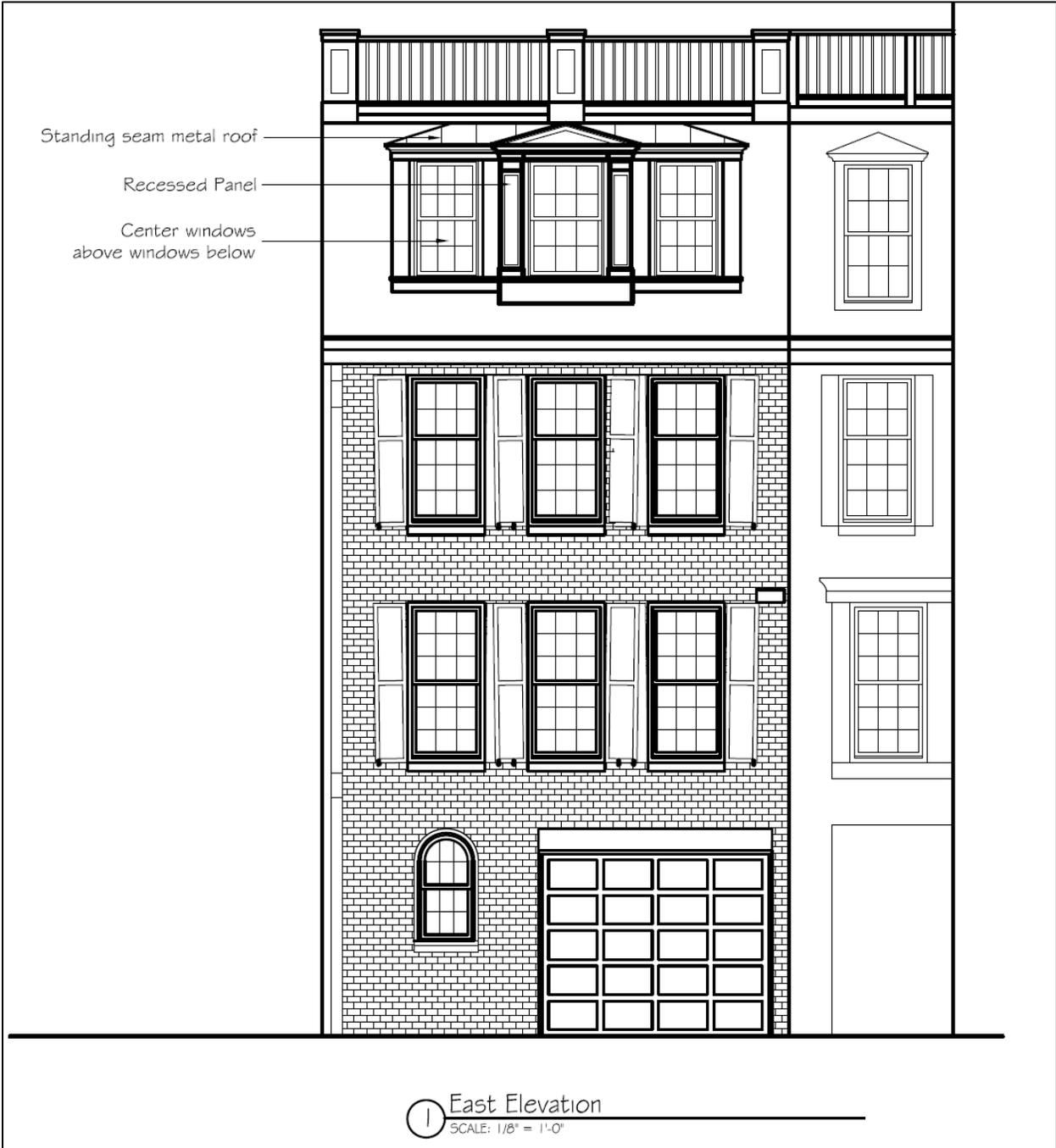


Figure 9: Second submittal for proposed front (east) dormer (3/7/2012).

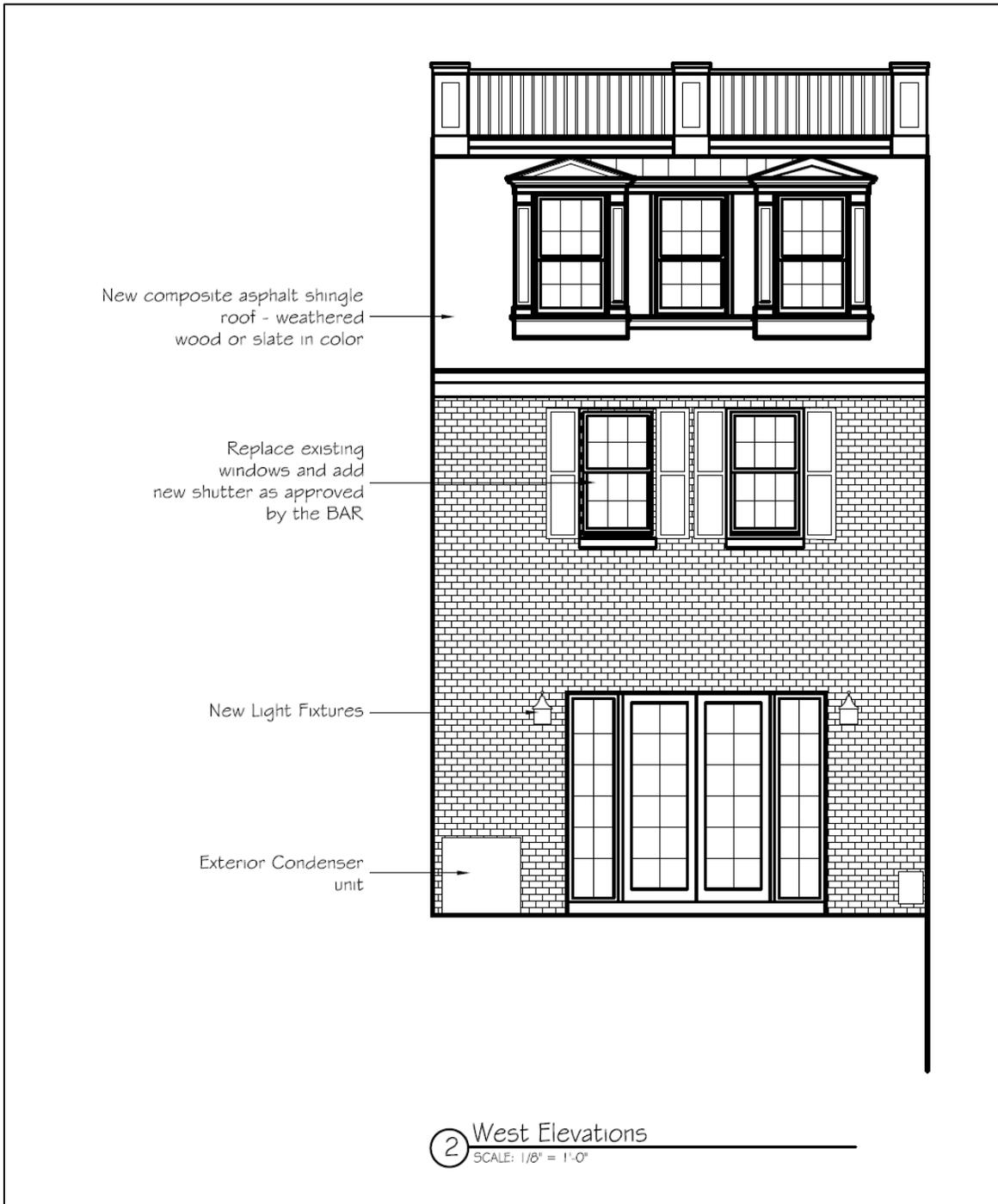


Figure 10: Second submittal for redesign of approved rear (west) dormer based on redesign of proposed front (east) dormer (3/7/2012).

BAR Case # 2011-0362

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 1400 North Union Street
TAX MAP AND PARCEL: 065.03-04-15 ZONING: Rm

APPLICATION FOR: (Please check all that apply)

- CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
- PERMIT TO MOVE, REMOVE, ENCAPSULATE OR DEMOLISH
(Required if more than 25 square feet of a structure is to be demolished/impacted)
- WAIVER OF VISION CLEARANCE REQUIREMENT and/or YARD REQUIREMENTS IN A VISION CLEARANCE AREA (Section 7-802, Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)
- WAIVER OF ROOFTOP HVAC SCREENING REQUIREMENT
(Section 6-403(B)(3), Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)

Applicant: Property Owner Business (Please provide business name & contact person)

Name: Allen and Rebecca Web
Address: 400 North Union Street
City: Alexandria State: VA Zip: 22314
Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Authorized Agent (if applicable): Attorney Architect _____

Name: Christine Kelly Phone: 703-768-7371
E-mail: christine@craftedarchitecture.com

Legal Property Owner:

Name: Allen and Rebecca Web
Address: 400 North Union Street
City: Alexandria, VA State: VA Zip: 22314
Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

- Yes No Is there an historic preservation easement on this property?
- Yes No If yes, has the easement holder agreed to the proposed alterations?
- Yes No Is there a homeowner's association for this property?
- Yes No If yes, has the homeowner's association approved the proposed alterations?

If you answered yes to any of the above, please attach a copy of the letter approving the project.

DEC 19 2011

NATURE OF PROPOSED WORK: *Please check all that apply*

- NEW CONSTRUCTION
- EXTERIOR ALTERATION: *Please check all that apply.*
 - awning
 - doors
 - lighting
 - other _____
 - fence, gate or garden wall
 - windows
 - pergola/trellis
 - HVAC equipment
 - siding
 - painting unpainted masonry
 - shutters
 - shed
- ADDITION
- DEMOLITION/ENCAPSULATION
- SIGNAGE

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORK: *Please describe the proposed work in detail (Additional pages may be attached).*

Construct new front and rear dormer addition (east and west elevations)

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

Items listed below comprise the **minimum supporting materials** for BAR applications. Staff may request additional information during application review. Please refer to the relevant section of the *Design Guidelines* for further information on appropriate treatments.

Applicants must use the checklist below to ensure the application is complete. Include all information and material that are necessary to thoroughly describe the project. Incomplete applications will delay the docketing of the application for review. Pre-application meetings are required for all proposed additions. All applicants are encouraged to meet with staff prior to submission of a completed application.

Electronic copies of submission materials should be submitted whenever possible.

Demolition/Encapsulation : *All applicants requesting 25 square feet or more of demolition/encapsulation must complete this section. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.*

- ^{N/A} Survey plat showing the extent of the proposed demolition/encapsulation.
- Existing elevation drawings clearly showing all elements proposed for demolition/encapsulation.
- Clear and labeled photographs of all elevations of the building if the entire structure is proposed to be demolished.
- Description of the reason for demolition/encapsulation. *See attached*
- Description of the alternatives to demolition/encapsulation and why such alternatives are not considered feasible. *See attached*

Crafted Architecture LLC

2109 Popkins Lane Alexandria VA 22307

tel 703 768 7371 fax 703 768 8444

Christine@CraftedArchitecture.com www.CraftedArchitecture.com

Transmittal

Date: 19 December 2011

To: Board of Architectural Review

Re: 400 N. Union Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Message/Enclosure:

We would like to remove the existing east facing dormers and add new dormers on both the east and west elevations. The new dormers will increase the usable space, natural light and headroom on the fourth floor. The east facing dormers will also open up the view from the fourth floor towards Founder's Park and the Potomac River.

The existing east facing dormers are too narrow to be used for furniture placement or circulation space. The design of the windows and dormers does not take advantage of the east view toward the Potomac River.

Additions & New Construction: Drawings must be to scale and should not exceed 11" x 17" unless approved by staff. All plans must be folded and collated into 12 complete 8 1/2" x 11" sets. Additional copies may be requested by staff for large-scale development projects or projects fronting Washington Street. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- N/A Scaled survey plat showing dimensions of lot and location of existing building and other structures on the lot, location of proposed structure or addition, dimensions of existing structure(s), proposed addition or new construction, and all exterior, ground and roof mounted equipment.
- FAR & Open Space calculation form.
- Clear and labeled photographs of the site, surrounding properties and existing structures, if applicable.
- Existing elevations must be scaled and include dimensions.
- Proposed elevations must be scaled and include dimensions. Include the relationship to adjacent structures in plan and elevations.
- Materials and colors to be used must be specified and delineated on the drawings. Actual samples may be provided or required.
- Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- For development site plan projects, a model showing mass relationships to adjacent properties and structures.

Signs & Awnings: One sign per building under one square foot does not require BAR approval unless illuminated. All other signs including window signs require BAR approval. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- N/A Linear feet of building: Front: _____ Secondary front (if corner lot): _____.
- Square feet of existing signs to remain: _____.
- Photograph of building showing existing conditions.
- Dimensioned drawings of proposed sign identifying materials, color, lettering style and text.
- Location of sign (show exact location on building including the height above sidewalk).
- Means of attachment (drawing or manufacturer's cut sheet of bracket if applicable).
- Description of lighting (if applicable). Include manufacturer's cut sheet for any new lighting fixtures and information detailing how it will be attached to the building's facade.

Alterations: Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- N/A Clear and labeled photographs of the site, especially the area being impacted by the alterations, all sides of the building and any pertinent details.
- Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- Drawings accurately representing the changes to the proposed structure, including materials and overall dimensions. Drawings must be to scale.
- An official survey plat showing the proposed locations of HVAC units, fences, and sheds.
- Historic elevations or photographs should accompany any request to return a structure to an earlier appearance.

ALL APPLICATIONS: *Please read and check that you have read and understand the following items:*

- I have submitted a filing fee with this application. (Checks should be made payable to the City of Alexandria. Please contact staff for assistance in determining the appropriate fee.)
- I understand the notice requirements and will return a copy of the three respective notice forms to BAR staff at least five days prior to the hearing. If I am unsure to whom I should send notice I will contact Planning and Zoning staff for assistance in identifying adjacent parcels.
- I, the applicant, or an authorized representative will be present at the public hearing.
- I understand that any revisions to this initial application submission (including applications deferred for restudy) must be accompanied by the BAR Supplemental form and 12 sets of revised materials.

The undersigned hereby attests that all of the information herein provided including the site plan, building elevations, prospective drawings of the project, and written descriptive information are true, correct and accurate. The undersigned further understands that, should such information be found incorrect, any action taken by the Board based on such information may be invalidated. The undersigned also hereby grants the City of Alexandria permission to post placard notice as required by Article XI, Division A, Section 11-301(B) of the 1992 Alexandria City Zoning Ordinance, on the property which is the subject of this application. The undersigned also hereby authorizes the City staff and members of the BAR to inspect this site as necessary in the course of research and evaluating the application. The applicant, if other than the property owner, also attests that he/she has obtained permission from the property owner to make this application.

APPLICANT OR AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Signature: *Christine Kelly, AIA*
Printed Name: Christine Kelly, AIA
Date: 12/19/2011

OWNERSHIP AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Use additional sheets if necessary

1. Applicant. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1. <i>Allen and Rebecca Weh</i>	<i>400 North Union Street</i>	<i>100%</i>
2.		
3.		

2. Property. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the property located at _____ (address), unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1. <i>N/A Allen Rebecca Weh</i>	<i>400 N Union St.</i>	<i>100%</i>
2.		
3.		

3. Business or Financial Relationships. Each person or entity listed above (1 and 2), with an ownership interest in the applicant or in the subject property is required to disclose **any** business or financial relationship, as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance, existing at the time of this application, or within the 12-month period prior to the submission of this application with any member of the Alexandria City Council, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals or either Boards of Architectural Review.

Name of person or entity	Relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance	Member of the Approving Body (i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, etc.)
<i>N/A</i>		
1.		
2.		
3.		

NOTE: Business or financial relationships of the type described in Sec. 11-350 that arise after the filing of this application and before each public hearing must be disclosed prior to the public hearings.

As the applicant or the applicant's authorized agent, I hereby attest to the best of my ability that the information provided above is true and correct.

12/19/2011 *Christine Kelly* *[Signature]*
 Date Printed Name Signature