

Docket Item #14
BAR CASE# 2005-0082

BAR Meeting
May 18, 2005

ISSUE: New garage/workshop

APPLICANT: Frank Conner

LOCATION: 607 N Columbus Street

ZONE: RB/Residential

BOARD ACTION, MAY 4, 2005: The Board combined the discussion of docket item #'s 10 & 11. On a motion by Mr. Keleher, seconded by Dr. Fitzgerald the Board deferred the applications for restudy. The vote on the motion was 6-0.

REASON: The Board believed that the proposed outbuilding was too tall and suggested that the pitch of the roof be made more shallow; that the building was too large and should be reduced in scale and that additional time was needed to address the comments of the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services.

SPEAKERS: Kelly Conner, homeowner, spoke in support
Rob Schindler, project designer, spoke in support

Update: In response to the Board's comments at the May 4, 2005 public hearing, the applicant has revised the design of the garage/workshop to reduce the height of the roof. In addition the overall size of the building has been reduced and now includes a small connector between the garage and workshop to break up the massing.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. 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.
2. The above statement must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

Note: Docket item #13 must be approved before this item may be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a detached one story garage and workshop at 607 North Columbus Street. The proposed garage measuring approximately 649 square feet (including the covered porch) will be located at the rear of the property facing a public alley. The garage extends across the rear of 605 and 607 North Columbus Street, approximately 38' and extends 20' into the rear yard. The one story structure is approximately 13' at its highest point. 605 North Columbus Street is currently a vacant lot used by the property owners as open space and garden.

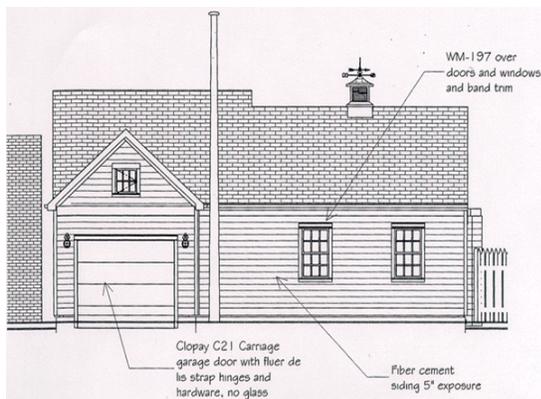


Figure 1 Previous alley elevation

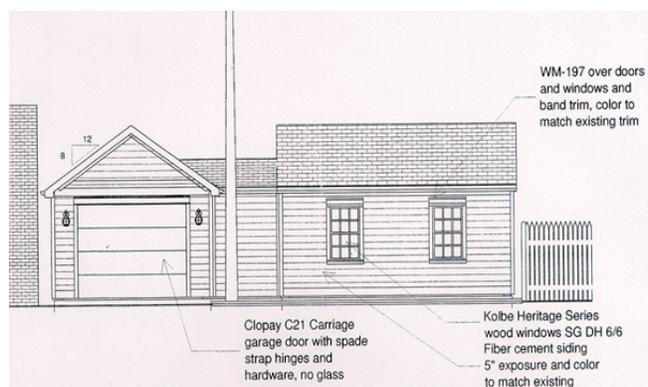


Figure 2 Proposed alley elevation

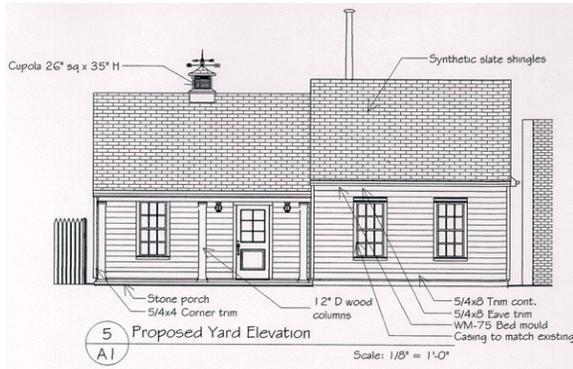


Figure 3 Previous west elevation

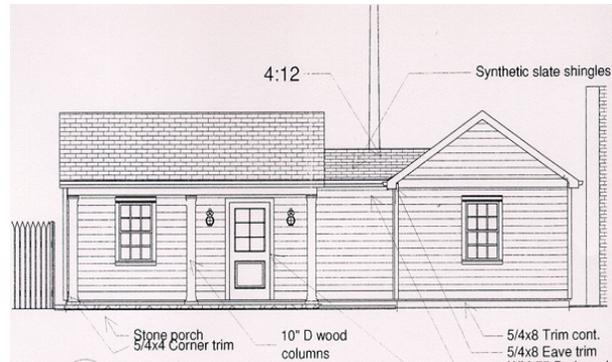


Figure 4 Proposed west elevation

The garage will be clad in fiber cement siding with a 5" exposure and will have a synthetic slate shingle roof. The alley elevation includes a carriage style garage door constructed of steel with a composite overlay. According to the manufacturer information, the door will have a wood grain texture. The door will have spade strap hinges and hardware. The door is flanked by two 9" by 6.5" wall mounted light fixtures. Two wood Kolbe & Kolbe double hung windows will be located on the workshop portion of the alley elevation. The windows will be true divided light in a six-over-six configuration with 7/8" muntins.

The west elevation of the garage includes two six-over-six windows and a wood door with six lights. A porch 5' in width and 19' in length will be located on the northern end of this elevation. The porch is supported by three 10" in diameter wood columns. The north elevation of the structure does not include any variation.

The garage will be visible from North Columbus Street, Pendleton Street, North Washington Street and from the public alley located at the rear of the property.



Figure 5 View from Pendleton Street



Figure 6 View from public alley

II. HISTORY:

As mentioned in docket item #13 the house at 607 North Columbus Street is a late 19th century two story Italianate-style row house.

III. ANALYSIS:

On April 14, 2005, the BZA granted side yard variances to build the proposed garage at the rear property line (BZA Case#2005-0011). The proposed demolition of the existing shed and construction of a new garage comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

The *Design Guidelines* state that “accessory structures should complement, not compete with, the architecture of the main building” (Accessory Structures - Page 2). In addition, accessory structures are often constructed of simpler materials. In the opinion of Staff, the revised design of the garage/workshop is appropriate.

In response to the Board’s comments about the overall massing of the structure, the applicant has made a number of revisions to the plans. The applicant has reduced the overall height of the roof by 6’; the depth of the garage section has been reduced by two feet; the width of the workshop has been reduced by 1’; and the width of the garage facing the yard has been reduced by 5’. Although the garage/workshop still maintains a large footprint, Staff believes that the reduction in height of the roof considerably reduces the overall mass of the building.

In addition, the garage faces an alley and is proposed to be located adjacent to a commercial building of approximately the same width. Staff also notes that the only visible connection between the house and the proposed structure will be through the yard views from North Columbus Street.

Staff has no objections to the use of fiber cement siding which meets the following adopted policy of the Board.

1. That fiber cement siding not be installed on an historic structure;
2. That historic materials should not be removed to install fiber cement siding;
3. That fiber cement siding replace other artificial or composite siding;
4. That the nails not show in the installation of the siding;
5. That smooth, beaded siding be installed; and,
6. That BAR Staff may administratively approve the installation of fiber cement siding on *non-historic* buildings (those constructed in 1975 or later).

Staff believes that the revised design of the garage and workshop meet the recommendations of the *Design Guidelines* for accessory structures.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the comments of Alexandria Archaeology be included as a condition.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The applicant shall ascertain whether the alley is public or private. For fire separation distances concerning interior lot lines when located next to alleys, the lot line shall be measured from the edge of the alley lot line for private alleys and from the centerline of the alley for public alleys. See C-1 below for fire separation requirements.
- C-1 All exterior walls within 5 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides, with no openings permitted within the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance.
- C-2 Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Enforcement that will outline the steps that will taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-3 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-4 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-5 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully detail the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-7 Permission from adjacent property owners is required if access to the adjacent properties is required to complete the proposed construction. Otherwise, a plan shall be submitted to demonstrate the construction techniques utilized to keep construction solely on the referenced property.
- C- A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Transportation & Environmental Services:

- F-1 The means of ingress/egress to the proposed garage is somewhat problematic given that proposed location of the garage entrance is directly adjacent to a 10 ft. wide alley.
- F-2 Change in point of attachment or removal of existing overhead utility services will require undergrounding or a variance. (Sec. 5-3-3)

- R-1 In lieu of providing adequate access for ingress/egress to the proposed garage, the applicant shall notify perspective purchasers that larger vehicles may not easily access the garage because of insufficient maneuvering room off the 10 foot alley
- R-2 If the existing overhead utility lines are relocated, they will be required to be undergrounded unless a variance to Sec. 5-3-3 is obtained .

Office of Historic Alexandria:

“New building has a very ‘suburban’ look, needs to be more appropriate to this area. (weathervane, etc.).”

Archaeology:

- F-1 During the Civil War, this block was the location of the Washington Street Corral, a Union army facility. While there were no known structures on this lot, the property has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into military activities in Alexandria during the war.
- R-1 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.
- R-2 The above statement must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.