

\*\*\*\*\***DRAFT MINUTES**\*\*\*\*\*

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review  
Old & Historic Alexandria District

**Wednesday, April 6, 2011**

7:30pm, City Council Chambers, City Hall  
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: Tom Hulfish, Chairman  
Chip Carlin  
Oscar Fitzgerald  
Arthur Keleher  
Wayne Neale  
John von Senden  
Peter Smeallie

Staff Present: Planning & Zoning  
Michele Oaks, Historic Preservation Planner  
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Chairman Hulfish.

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**I. MINUTES**

Consideration of the minutes of the public hearing of March 16, 2011.

**BOARD ACTION: Approved as submitted, 7-0**

On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Mr. Keleher, the minutes were unanimously approved, as submitted, 7-0.

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**II. CONSENT CALENDAR**

Items on the Consent Calendar are those where the applicant has agreed to all conditions of approval shown in the staff reports. Without objection, the staff recommendation for these cases will be approved as a group by unanimous consent of the Board at the beginning of the meeting. When announced by the Chairman, any member of the Board or of the public may ask that one of these cases be removed for full discussion.

1. **CASE BAR2011-0051**

Request for fence enclosure for trash area at **277 S Washington St**, zoned CD Commercial.

**APPLICANT:** Carr Properties

**BOARD ACTION:** Approve, as amended, 6-0-1 (Mr. Neale abstained)

**CONDITION**

That the applicant receives approval of a Minor Amendment to the Approved Site Plan (SIT75-0018) from the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services prior to issuance of a building permit.

2. **CASE BAR2011-0051**  
Request for new egress window and stair relocation at **917 S Saint Asaph St**, zoned RM Residential.  
APPLICANT: Sarah Bobbin  
BOARD ACTION: Deferred, 7-0

**This item was moved to Discussion Items.**

3. **CASE BAR2011-0054**  
Request for alterations to existing garden wall at **227 S Fairfax St**, zoned RM Residential.  
APPLICANT: Errol de Montille  
BOARD ACTION: Approved, as submitted, 6-1.

**This item was moved to Discussion Items.**

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### **III. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

2. **CASE BAR2011-0051**  
Request for new egress window and stair relocation at **917 S Saint Asaph St**, zoned RM Residential.  
APPLICANT: Sarah Bobbin  
BOARD ACTION: Deferred, 7-0

**This item was removed from the Consent Calendar.**

#### **SPEAKERS**

Sarah Bobbin, the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

#### **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mr. Smeallie removed this item from the Consent Calendar as he was concerned about the proposed configuration of the new stair, the inadequate drawings the railing design and the lack of clarity about the material proposed for the curb surrounding the egress window.

Dr. Fitzgerald concurred and additionally expressed that the drawings submitted did not provide adequate information about the proposed design.

Mr. Smeallie made a motion to approve the egress window with the clarification that the window curb was constructed of brick and to defer the stair and railing design for restudy.

Mr. von Senden seconded the motion. Mr. Von Senden also encouraged a rectilinear design for the steps.

Dr. Fitzgerald asked if the applicant would study repositioning the egress window by offsetting it on the façade so that the existing stair could remain. The applicant said that

an existing gas meter in the basement would be as in the way if the window were shifted to the side but agreed to study all of the application.

Dr. Fitzgerald made a substitute motion to defer the complete application in order for the applicant to restudy the orientation of the stair and to provide more detailed drawings.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Smeallie and approved unanimously, 7-0.

### **REASON**

The Board felt the application was not complete as currently submitted and needed additional information in order to make a decision on the case.

### 3. **CASE BAR2011-0054**

Request for alterations to existing garden wall at **227 S Fairfax St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Errol de Montille

BOARD ACTION: Approved, as submitted, 6-1.

**This item was removed from the Consent Calendar.**

### **SPEAKERS**

John Hynan, representing the HAF, spoke in opposition to the project.

Gail Rothrock, neighbor, spoke in opposition to project.

Murney Keleher, neighbor, spoke in opposition to project.

Errol de Montille, the applicant, spoke in support.

Bill Cromley, agent for the applicant, spoke in support.

### **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mr. von Senden noted that he sees no material reason not to raise the wall an additional ten inches and a motion to support the staff recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carlin.

Mr. Keleher stated that he believed that a six foot high wall was sufficient. However, felt that a 6'10" high wall was excessive.

Mr. Neale did not see an adverse effect on the neighborhood with the application as submitted. He said the elevated wall replicated the existing brick detailing and that the applicant had a good track record with restoration on the rest of the house.

Dr. Fitzgerald said that he supports walls which are low and enable the public to see into yards. However, he noted that most pedestrians cannot do that at the existing 5'-7" tall wall and acknowledge that the applicant has given back a portion of the yard which was previously surrounded by a six foot high wall on the south side of the house. He supported the application.

The Chairman called the question on the motion which was approved, 6-1 with Mr. Keleher opposed.

## **REASON**

The Board generally believed that the height added to the existing garden wall was minimal, was well designed, and would not adversely impact the streetscape or the integrity of the district.

### **4. CASE BAR2010-0293**

Request for signage at **500 S Washington St**, zoned CD Commercial.

APPLICANT: Capital One Bank

BOARD ACTION: Approved, as amended, 7-0.

## **CONDITIONS**

1. That only two “Customer Parking” signs be installed, one at each of the bank’s vehicular entrances (Washington Street and Wilkes Street);
2. That the “Customer Parking” signs be installed on bank property and not in the public right-of-way;
3. That the amount of illumination on the “ATM/teller open/closed signs” be reduced so that they are more subtle and less visible from Washington Street, as approved by Staff in the field. *The “ATM Only” sign may remain*; and,
4. That the existing and unapproved Capital One Bank signs are replaced with the approved bank signs within 60 days.

## **SPEAKERS**

Gary Brent, American Sign MFG, represented the applicant and spoke in support of the application with the request that the ATM Only sign be retained, to reduce confusion for the drive-thru customers.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mr. Fitzgerald questioned the need for the illuminated ATM signage.

Mr. Brent explained that these signs were needed to direct motorists through the appropriate drive through window at night.

Mr. Smeallie indicated that the ATM signage was acceptable and noted that he supported the consolidation of the parking lot signs. Mr. Smeallie made a motion to approve the staff recommendation with deletion of condition #3.

Staff commented that they would like maintain review of the illumination intensity, as noted in condition #3.

Mr. Smeallie concurred and revised his motion to clarify that the Staff would continue to review the intensity of the illumination but that the “ATM Only” sign may remain.

Mr. Keleher seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously, 7-0.

## **REASON**

The Board found that the applicant had responded to previous comments from the Board, Staff and the National Park Service about the quantity and illumination of the existing signs and that the proposed signs were appropriate for the site and maintained the Memorial Character of the Parkway.

### 5. **CASE BAR2011-0055**

Request for partial demolition of Immanuel Chapel at **3737 Seminary Road (campus)/3591 Aspinwall Lane (Immanuel Chapel)**, zoned R20 Residential.

APPLICANT: Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia

BOARD ACTION: Deferred, 7-0.

## **SPEAKERS**

Duncan Blair, attorney, presented the application. He noted that the building was only safe because it was secured by a fence. He said that memorial tablets needed to be removed from the walls but were structurally integral and required selective demolition. He asked that the south and west walls be removed as quickly as possible but agreed to work with Staff on the north and east walls. The Seminary is not interested in restoration of the existing chapel, as it does not meet their institutional needs.

John Hynan, representing the HAF, said that they had no choice but to urge restoration. However, they supported the staff recommendation, and especially retention of the tower and east wall.

Murney Keleher, 208 N. Royal St., supported retention of the ruins as a forecourt to a new chapel and believed this could be a very attractive design.

Gail Rothrock, 209 Duke St., concurred with the others and urged conservation.

Linda Huntington, 219 Wolfe St., supported the proposed prayer garden with low walls.

Linda Serabian, Alexandria resident, Immanuel Chapel congregant and architect agreed with both the preservationists and the Seminary but believed that the building remains should be incorporated into a new contemporary building on this site.

Ian Markham, Dean and President of the Seminary, said that there were nine stained glass windows that had been salvaged and more artifacts would be used in the new chapel. He asked for a decision so that the ruins behind the fence may be reopened to the school while the new church is being planned and built.

David Peabody, Alexandria resident, Immanuel Chapel congregant and architect, asked "If this building is not worth saving, what is?" He stated that as much damage had been done by weather since the fire as was done by the fire. He urged denial of the demolition and integration of the remains into a new chapel.

Bill Dickinson, 805 N Quaker Lane, supported the Seminary and Staff recommendation.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mr. von Senden noted that he is on the Vestry of the Immanuel Church which has a contractual relationship with the Seminary but that it is below the threshold described by the City Attorney's Office for abstention from this case. He noted that no effort had been made to maintain the fabric since the fire in October. He said he found no valid reason in the structural reports submitted to remove the walls and noted that the walls had survived the winter weather without any protection. He thanked the Dean for the dialogue with the City and for proposing to preserve some of the walls but disagreed with the limited amount now proposed for preservation. He was not altogether opposed to the concept of a prayer garden but was opposed to any demolition until a new architect is retained to study the maintenance of the existing historic fabric and perhaps its integration into and new chapels, which he understands the need for and fully supports.

Mr. Smeallie noted that this was new territory for the Board. He said the Board's charge was to preserve historic fabric but use was not was not their concern. He favored retention of the building form on the east elevation as a character defining feature. He supported staff recommendation of a deferral.

Mr. Keleher said that this case was not complicated at all for him. He did not believe that the needs of the Seminary were a preservation criteria within the Board's purview. This building ought to be restored totally and rebuilt because it can be. A new larger chapel can be built nearby.

Mr. Neale encouraged restoration of the building but would like an engineering report that indicated what portions of the building could or should be preserved. He encouraged preserving as much as possible and believed more could be preserved if the architect was challenged to do so. He recommended deferral for restudy.

Mr. Carlin concurred with Mr. Keleher and Mr. Neale. He said that this group of buildings and the entire hill on which these buildings sit was extremely important and encouraged restoration or retention to the maximum extent possible.

Mr. Fitzgerald encouraged retention of the building to preserve the memories and tradition of the church. He asked for a good faith effort to restudy. He asked for a report about the structural integrity and to keep an open mind. He made a motion to restudy the demolition. Mr. Keleher seconded the motion.

Chairman Hulfish noted his family ties to the Seminary and this church. He framed the question before the Board as one of demolition of a portion of the remaining walls. He noted that the walls had not been protected since the fire. He asked Mr. Blair what they needed from this hearing.

Mr. Blair said the immediate need was to get inside the chapel to remove the relics and to make the site safe so that the security fence can be removed. He asked for assistance from the City's technical staff to assess the damage. He said they cannot wait until the new chapel is designed to make a decision about the ruins of the existing chapel. He said all of the relics that can be removed without a crane have been removed.

Chairman Hulfish asked Staff for additional information about what is standing, what can stay and what has to go. He said the Board needed more input to make a decision about what is salvageable and what is not.

The motion to defer for restudy passed 7-0.

#### **REASON**

The Board needed more information to make a decision about what is salvageable and what is not.

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#### **IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Informational presentation by T&ES on King Street infrastructure improvements: Rashad Friday presented an overview of alterations to the handicap ramps on King Street and Bob Garbacz described the new parking meter system now under construction throughout the District. The Board noted the improvements and thanked Staff for the information.

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#### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Hulfish adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:40 pm.

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#### **V. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS**

##### **CASE BAR2011-0029**

Request for approval of cell antennas at **1202 South Washington Street**, zoned RC Residential.

APPLICANT: AT&T

##### **CASE BAR2011-0059**

Request for approval of rear vent at **415 Prince Street**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: George and Ashley Wilson

##### **CASE BAR2011-0060**

Request for approval of in-kind glass/screen panel replacement at **1250 South Washington Street (Unit 804)**, zoned RC Residential.

APPLICANT: Robert Feldkamp

##### **CASE BAR2011-0061**

Request for approval of window decals on front door at **113 South Patrick Street**, zoned CD Commercial.

APPLICANT: Seaport Properties

**CASE BAR2011-0064**

Request for approval of replacement in-kind of stone retaining wall and steps at **900 South St. Asaph Street**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Dennis Kennedy

**CASE BAR2011-0066**

Request for approval of roof replacement at **633 South Saint Asaph Street**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Joseph Dennison

**CASE BAR2011-0067**

Request for approval of replacement of roof and gutters at **1105 Prince Street**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Miguel Estrada

**CASE BAR2011-0069**

Request for approval of replacement of exterior light fixtures at **106 Wolfe Street**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Monica and Albert Rocchio

**CASE BAR2011-0075**

Request for approval of replacement of shingles at **309 Green Street**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Mrs. Berg

Minutes submitted by,

Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager  
Boards of Architectural Review