

*******DRAFT MINUTES*******

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
Parker-Gray District

Wednesday, May 25, 2011

7:30 P.M., City Council Chambers, City Hall
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: William Conkey, Chairman
Robert Duffy
Christina Kelley
Philip Moffat
Theresa del Ninno
Deborah Rankin

Members Absent: Doug Meick

Staff Present: Planning and Zoning:
Courtney Lankford, Historic Preservation Planner
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager

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

I. MINUTES

Consideration of the minutes of the public hearing of April 27, 2011.

BOARD ACTION: Approved as submitted, 5-0.

On a motion by Mr. Duffy, seconded by Ms. Kelley, the minutes were approved 5-0.

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 BAR2011-0097

Request for flue pipe extension at **624 N Patrick St**, zoned RB Residential

APPLICANT: Justin & Susan Nelson by Steve Kulinski

BOARD ACTION: Approved as amended, 5-0.

CONDITION OF APPROVAL

1. That the flue pipe be painted to match the adjacent wall surface.

On a motion by Ms. Kelley, seconded by Mr. Duffy, the Consent Calendar was approved as amended.

II. DISCUSSION ITEMS

2. CASE BAR2011-0094

Request for alterations and fence removal at **1603 Princess St**, zoned RB Residential

APPLICANT: Larry Arthur

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended, 6-0.**

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. That the metal hardware is carefully removed from the cast concrete lintel and all damage from the removal of the metal awnings be repaired.
2. That a textured, sand-like finish be applied to the paint of the replacement planter box to simulate a concrete-like finish.
3. That the new planter box is mounted through the mortar joints or remains of cast concrete and not the brick.
4. That the chain-link fence in front of the property be repaired and retained.
5. That the chain-link gate and gate crest be replaced, with Staff having final approval of replacement.
6. That the applicant may replace the front door with Staff approval.
7. That the applicant remove the flashing, hardware, and related caulking from the removal of the awnings.

SPEAKERS

Larry Arthur, applicant, said he removed the metal awning and flower box because they were deteriorated and in poor condition . He said that he was not aware that BAR approval was required to demolish these elements. He stated that he would like to replace the flower box with one replicated to look like the original. He also stated that he does not support the staff recommendation for the retention of the chain-link fence.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Ms. Kelley asked the applicant if he had found a flower box to replace the original and the applicant said that he had located one online that will match the original. Ms. Kelley stated that she had mixed feelings about the chain-link fence, but that she understood why it was important in this case because it was a character-defining feature and a part of a cohesive block face. Ms.

Kelley also asked Mr. Arthur if he would be doing other work to the house, such as replacing the crooked exterior light and exterior door. The applicant said that he plans to make those changes.

Mr. Duffy thanked the applicant for his application and asked if the original cast-concrete door architrave would be retained. Mr. Arthur said that it would remain and that displaying it was his reason for removing the metal awning. Mr. Duffy also inquired about the damaged gutter and Mr. Arthur noted that the gutter would also be replaced.

Ms. Rankin liked the concept of the replacement flower box, but was confused about the color of it saying it looked green in the image. Mr. Arthur confirmed that it would be tan. Ms. Rankin asked about the white strip between the architrave and the door on the exterior façade saying it looked obtrusive. She was also hesitant to recommend retention of the chain-link fence, but understood the concept of the continuity of the streetscape and therefore was inclined to support the Staff recommendation in this case.

Ms. del Ninno inquired about the necessity to paint the fiberglass flower box. Mr. Arthur said he wanted to paint it because he could not find a replacement that came in the right color that would replicate the look of the original.

Chairman Conkey mentioned the Staff presentation at the previous month's meeting regarding the mid-twentieth century vernacular row houses within the district and their character-defining features. Chairman Conkey questioned the construction of flower box and the method used to attach it to the façade. Mr. Arthur described his ideas and the Chairman agreed with his method. Chairman Conkey asked the applicant to work with Staff over the final details of the replacement flower box. In regards to the chain-link fence, Chairman Conkey felt that this particular block had a cohesive block face of chain-link fencing and that he would hate to set a precedent for removal of the chain-link fence since it is such an important feature of these rowhouses. Chairman Conkey inquired about replacing the gate with gate crest and the applicant informed the Board that he still had the gate that he removed and Staff said that they would like to see him reinstall the gate. Chairman Conkey inquired about other flower boxes in the district and asked about a precedent for those. Staff said very few original flower boxes existed and that allowing the replacement of the flower box would not be setting a precedent whereas their decision regarding the chain-link fence would set a precedent.

Ms. Rankin asked if the applicant had mentioned replacing the front door and if they should condition the approval for Staff to approve any new door. Staff said that a six panel or six light/paneled wood door in the Colonial Revival style would be appropriate for this structure.

Mr. Moffat clearly stated that he was not supportive of the retention of the chain-link fence, even if it was a character-defining feature. He did not support the Staff recommendation for the retention of the chain-link fence.

Ms. Rankin made a motion to approve the Staff recommendation with the addition of condition number six: that the applicant may replace the front door with Staff approval.

Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, but asked the maker of the motion to consider the addition of condition number seven: that the applicant remove the flashing, hardware, and related caulking left from the demolition of the awnings. Ms. Rankin amended her motion to include condition number seven. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

REASON

While the Board had mixed feelings regarding the chain-link fence, they supported the retention of the chain-link and the reinstallation of the gate with gate crest because they found it to be a character-defining feature of the rowhouse and because it is part of a cohesive streetscape where a majority of the houses have original or early chain-link fences still intact.

3. CASE BAR2011-0073

Request for demolition/encapsulation at **808 Pendleton St**, zoned RB Residential

APPLICANT: Pendleton Street Homes, LLC by Stephen W. Kulinski

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended, 6-0.**

This item was combined with item #4 for discussion purposes.

4. CASE BAR2011-0074

Request for addition at **808 Pendleton St**, zoned RB Residential

APPLICANT: Pendleton Street Homes, LLC by Stephen W. Kulinski

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended, 6-0.**

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. The new wood windows must meet the *Alexandria Replacement Window Performance Specifications*, and must match the sizes of the original window openings;
2. The fiber cement siding must be smooth, as outlined in the recently adopted BAR *Minor Architectural Elements policy*;
3. The EPDM roofing material should be light in color, as recommended in the Board's recently approved *Roof Materials policy*;
4. That the west elevation of the historic main block of the house be clad with wood clapboard siding, not HardiePlank siding;
5. That the front light fixture have a simple Victorian style, to be approved by BAR Staff;
6. That windows may be added on the west elevation of the new addition, if allowed by zoning and code enforcement, with final approval by Staff; and,
7. That new windows may be added on the west elevation of the new addition, if allowed by zoning and code administration, with final approval by BAR Staff.

SPEAKERS

Stephen W. Kulinski, architect for the project, spoke on behalf of the applicant and agreed with the Staff recommendation with one exception - the condition that they not be allowed to use HardiePlank siding on the west elevation. Mr. Kulinski asked that the Board consider allowing the use of a modern material on this elevation.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Ms. del Ninno commended the application and said the changes would significantly improve the structure; however, she said she supported the Staff recommendation for using a wood clapboard siding on the west elevation instead of the requested HardiePlank as the wood clapboard would help differentiate between the original portion of the house and the addition. Ms. del Ninno said the addition was nicely proportioned and would be a benefit to the neighborhood.

Ms. Rankin agreed that the wood clapboard siding should be used on the west elevation due to the date of the property.

Mr. Moffat also agreed with the use of wood clapboard siding on the west elevation. Mr. Moffat supported the application with Staff's recommendation with the condition that the power meter be moved to the side (west) elevation instead of the front façade since it detracted from the architectural character of the structure. While Mr. Moffat noted there were many creative alternatives to disguise these visual scars on the buildings, he found this an opportune time to make this change.

Mr. Duffy commended the restoration work proposed for the property and stated that it would make a tremendous difference on the block and in the district. Mr. Duffy stated he was in support of the Staff recommendation and inquired about the feasibility of moving the meter box to the west elevation.

Ms. Kelley agreed with the Staff recommendation and stated that she could not support the use of HardiePlank on the historic portion of the house. Ms. Kelley inquired about why there were no windows on the west (alley) elevation. The applicant did not believe that code requirements would allow them to install windows due to the location of the property on the property line. Staff stated that it may be possible to include windows on this elevation. The Board stated that windows would be a good addition and trusted Staff to work with the applicant on an administrative level to select windows that would be appropriate. Ms. Kelley inquired about the scale of the street numbers in the transom and the mailbox next to the front door. The applicant ensured that the numbers and mailbox would be proportionate.

Staff discussed the feasibility, requirements, and costs of moving the meter box. Mr. Moffat was sensitive to the costs involved, but felt that the applicant should explore the idea of relocating the meter box.

Chairman Conkey stated that the applicant should look into the relocation of the meter box, but understood if it would not be feasible.

Ms. Rankin inquired if there would be any exception within the code that would allow the relocation of the meter box to be a part of the repair. Staff confirmed that they would look into that question with TE&S.

Chairman Conkey stated that placing windows on the west elevation in the new addition would be a good addition to the project; however, he was apprehensive to the addition of windows on the west elevation of the historic portion of the structure. Chairman Conkey commented about the changes that can occur to the window openings in this type of restoration project and asked that the size of the window openings be the same size of the original openings, which can be determined by the original framing of the structure.

Mr. Duffy made a motion to approve the Staff recommendation with conditions, with the amendment to condition number 1, that the sizes of the window openings match the sizes of the original window openings. Mr. Duffy added condition number six to say that the applicant should explore the relocation of the meter box to the west elevation and relocate it if feasible. Mr. Duffy also added condition number seven, stating that windows may be added on the west elevation of the new addition, if allowed by zoning and code enforcement, with final approval by Staff.

Mr. Moffat seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by a roll call vote, 6-0.

REASON

The Board was pleased to see the proposed restoration of the property and was generally supportive of the applicant's request. However, the Board did not find the use of HardiePlank siding on the west elevation of the original structure to be appropriate due to the age of the building.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

1. The Board welcomed Theresa del Ninno as the new Parker-Gray Board Member.
2. The Board discussed a potential policy for chain-link fences in the Parker-Gray District and asked Staff to continue surveying the neighborhood and create "best practices" and/or guidelines for chain-link fences.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

The following items are shown for information only. Based on the Board's adopted policies, these have been approved by Staff since the previous Board meeting.

CASE BAR2011-0111

Request for siding replacement at **722 N Patrick St**, zoned RB Residential

APPLICANT: Isabelle Zorro

CASE BAR2011-0115

Request for alterations to front facade at **710 N Columbus St**, zoned RB Residential
APPLICANT: Deborah Rankin

CASE BAR2011-0116

Request for vent installation at **335 N Patrick St**, zoned RB Residential
APPLICANT: Heather & Benjamin Norcross

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Conkey adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:55 pm.

Minutes submitted by:

Al Cox, FAIA
Historic Preservation Manager