

Docket Item #13
BAR Case #2003-0239

BAR Meeting
October 15, 2003

ISSUE: Addition and alterations
APPLICANT: Michael Margiotta
LOCATION: 217 North Saint Asaph Street
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application for addition and alterations with the following conditions:

1. That the windows in the new construction be one-over-one double-hung or single-light casements, rather than multi-light;
2. That the alterations to the ell in the area of the side entry be eliminated;
3. That the roof of the historic main block and rear ell be standing seam metal or wood shingles;
4. That the skylight on the roof of the ell be eliminated;
5. That the front windows be single glazed true divided light wood windows with both the first and second story windows having a six-over-six configuration; and
6. That the following statement must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement:

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.

NOTE: Docket item #12 must be approved before this docket item can be considered.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant s Description of the Undertaking:

Proposal to remove rear portion of house. Construct new 2-story addition/porch. Remove existing exterior faux-stone coating. Replace with restored/new wood siding. Replace vinyl windows with wood windows.

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new rear addition and alterations to the existing house as described below:

Addition

The proposed two story rear addition will take the place of the existing rear one-and-a-half story addition. The existing addition has a footprint of 180 square feet. The proposed new addition will have a 487 square foot footprint. The new addition will have a gable roof similar in pitch to the existing main block and, like it, oriented with the ridgeline parallel to the street. The gable of the new addition will be 4 ½' lower than the gable of the existing main block at its highest point. A gable roofed, two story sunroom section will extend from the rear of the addition and a one story rear porch will extend from the sunroom addition. The addition will rest on a brick foundation, be clad in painted wood siding and will have a black asphalt shingle roof. All the windows will be wood, simulated divided light windows.

The south side elevation of the addition will have a pair of nine-light casement windows centered in the first story and three evenly spaced six-over-six double hung windows in the second story.

There will be a small four-light window in the attic story. At the east end of the addition will be the two story sunroom section, projecting six feet beyond the end of the addition. The sunroom will be composed of windows with painted wood panels below. According to the plans, the wood panels will be trimmed, but this level of detail is not depicted. The south side of the sunroom will have a pair of eight-light casement windows on each story. The sunroom section will cover the southernmost two thirds of the rear (east) elevation of the addition. The northern bay will have a small four-light casement in the first story and a narrow four-over-four double hung window in the second story. The sunroom section will have multi-light doors on either end with a pair of nine-light casement windows between them and wood panel below. The second story of the sunroom section will have four casement windows ganged together. The outer two will be six-light will the center two will be nine-light. The north elevation of the addition will be clad in wood siding and will be blind. The sunroom section will have a pair of eight-light windows in the first story and a pair of six-light windows in the second story. These are not shown as casement and are presumed to be fixed. A shed roof porch, slightly wider than the sunroom section will project from the rear wall of the addition and extend beyond the sunroom by approximately 2'4". It will be supported on wood columns and will rest on a 1 1/2' high wood deck which will extend well beyond the porch into the back yard.

Alterations to Existing House

The faux-stone stucco finish will be removed from all but the north side of the house. Existing wood siding will be salvaged and reinstalled on the front facade of the house. Elsewhere, new painted wood siding will be installed to match the original. The stucco will be removed from the original brick foundation and it will be repointed and painted. The existing c. 1938 front stoop will be replaced with a new, slightly deeper, brick stoop with a simple metal handrail with lambs tongue return. The brick stoop is to be painted to match the foundation. The chimneys will also have the stucco removed and will be repointed and painted. The chimney at the east end of the rear ell will be extended as necessary to meet code. It is assumed that the addition to the chimney will match the brickwork of the existing. The existing asphalt roof is to be removed and replaced with new black asphalt shingles. New half round gutters will be installed as needed. A skylight is proposed for the south sloping roof of the rear ell. All existing windows in the house are proposed to be replaced with wood simulated divided light double hung windows. Nearly all the windows will be six-over-six, but those on the first story at the front are proposed to be nine-over-nine. The existing windows are fairly recent vinyl windows with sandwich muntins. The window trim, which is currently wrapped in vinyl, will be replaced with new wood trim and sills.

The existing side entrance in the inset portion of the rear ell on the first story will be removed and the wall will be brought forward to line up with the rest of the south wall of the ell. There will be a multi-light wood door at the east side of the new wall section and a small four-light window at the west side. A new wood porch with a masonry deck and wood column will be located in front of the new wall section, where the ell joins the main block. An existing side door at the west end of the ell will be replaced with a six-over-six window to match the other windows on the ell.

Site

New HVAC units will be located on the north side of the new sunroom section, where they will not be visible from the public right-of-way. As explained above, a low wooden deck will extend into the rear yard. A brick planter and wooden trellis will extend along the south wall of the

addition. It will have wooden columns and will be 10' high. The existing 6' high fence along the south property line adjoining the parking lot and the arched wooden gate at the front will remain.

The south side and rear (east) of the house at 217 North Saint Asaph Street is highly visible due to the open parking lot which extends from the south property line to Cameron Street. The rear of the house is also visible from Pitt Street through a short east-west alley at the end of the property.

History and Analysis:

The Greek Revival influenced, two story, gable roofed, frame house with flounder form rear ell is thought to date to the early to mid-19th century. It has had little change to its basic form through the years. However, it has been subject to a number of superficial alterations in the 20th century, including the application of stucco siding, replacement of the metal roof with asphalt and replacement of the wood windows with vinyl. There is no record of Board review of alterations to the property.

The proposed addition and alterations comply with the zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff believes the proposed addition conforms to the *Design Guidelines* and is generally acceptable. It is respectful of the historic building in its size, massing and materials. However, Staff does recommend the proposed multi-light windows be changed to one-over-one double hung and single-light casements on the addition and new sunroom sections to help to differentiate the new construction from the old and to give the addition a somewhat less busy appearance.

Staff commends the proposed renovation project, which will enhance the historic character of the existing house. However, there are a number of minor concerns. First, as discussed in docket item #12, Staff believes that the existing side entranceway is an original early to mid-19th century entrance and that it should be retained in place and the proposed alterations in this area omitted. Secondly, it is the policy of the Board to require the use of roofing materials that are historically appropriate for the period of the structure (*Guidelines, Roofing Materials - Page 1*). Asphalt shingles are a 20th century product. A 1959 photograph shows the house with a standing seam metal roof and a 1962 building permit references the replacement of this roof with asphalt. Standing seam metal would appear to be the most appropriate roofing material for the historic main block and ell, but wood shingles would also be acceptable. Asphalt roofing is acceptable for the new construction. The skylight in the roof of the ell should be omitted. The skylight will be readily visible on the south sloping flounder roof. According to the *Design Guidelines*, skylights are permissible only in the most inconspicuous locations and not on roof sections facing the street (Skylights - Page1).

The *Design Guidelines* state that single glazed true divided light wood windows with interior storm sash is the preferred window type while simulated divided light windows, as proposed in the application, are acceptable for the rear elevation of a structure which has minimal visibility from a public way (Windows - Page 2). Staff believes that the front windows at 217 North Saint Asaph Street should be single glazed true divided light wood windows while those on the sides and rear, which are not so readily accessible, may be simulated divided light wood

windows. At the previous meeting, on October 1, 2003, the Board reiterated its preference for true divided light windows for historic buildings in highly visible locations (511 Queen Street, BAR Case #2003-??). The proposed plans call for the first story front windows, which are longer than those in the second story, to be a nine-over-nine configuration, while those above will be six-over-six. Staff is concerned that the first story windows, having smaller panes, will look out of proportion in relation to the second story windows above. Instead, Staff suggests the use of six-over-six sash for both stories. The panes in the lower sash will be slightly longer than those above, but the appearance will be more satisfactory. This treatment of is consistent with Greek Revival period architecture and is what is seen in the 1959 photograph, which may well show the original windows.

Finally, while the Board typically discourages the painting of previously unpainted masonry, the brickwork in this case has been encased in stucco and is not expected to be completely clean after the stucco is removed. Painting is acceptable here as a way to enhance the appearance of the newly exposed brickwork.

Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archeology and recommends that they be included as a condition of the approval.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 All exterior walls within 3 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.
- 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 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-7 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-8 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-9 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Historic Alexandria:

Generally I am extremely pleased to see this project removal of faux stone, windows, general upgrade of appearance.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 According to Ethelyn Cox s *Historic Alexandria, Virginia, Street by Street, A Survey of Existing Early Buildings*, a structure was built on this lot during the 19th century. The property is also adjacent to the McVeigh Hospital lot, which was utilized by the Union

Army during the Civil War. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources which could provide insight into domestic and military activities in 19th-century Alexandria.

- R-1 Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or during development. Work must cease in the area of the comes to the site and records the finds.
- R-2 The above statement must appear in the General Notes of the s contractors are aware of the requirement.