

Docket Item #8
BAR CASE #2003-0271

BAR Meeting
December 17, 2003

ISSUE: Addition to existing dwelling

APPLICANT: Mr. and Mrs. Brian Smith

LOCATION: 305 Charles Alexander Court

ZONE: R-12 Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. The following statements must appear in the General Notes of all plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement:

Contact Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks prior to any ground disturbing activity (such as coring, vegetation removal, trenching for utilities or other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of the Zoning Ordinance) on this property. City archaeologists will provide on-site inspections to record any finds.

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. Planning and Zoning Staff approve the minor amendment to the approved site plan.

NOTE: Docket item #7 must be approved before this application can be considered.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant s Description of the Undertaking:

Construct brick addition, extending 8'-1" from the front (East) wall of existing kitchen wing. Brick coursing paint, details to match existing. New windows will be true divided light with sill to match existing. Roofing is to be Buckingham slate, to match existing.

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a one story, 8' 1" deep by 16' 6 6/8" wide extension to the existing one story, gable-roofed kitchen wing. The addition will be clad in brick and painted to match the house. It will have a shed roof which will be clad in slate and will abut the existing kitchen wing just beneath its corbeled cornice. The front (East) facade of the addition will have two six-over-six windows. A third opening, filled with recessed brick will be located between the two windows. The south side elevation of the addition will have a single six-over-six window. In detailing and materials, the addition will match that of the existing kitchen wing.

The new one-story kitchen addition will be visible from Russell Road and Charles Alexander Court. A large tree presently obscures much of the view toward the area where the addition will be located.

As explained in docket item #7, the original house, now buried within the main block, dates to c. 1803. The Colonial Revival appearance and sprawling configuration of the present house are the result of a series of 20th century alterations and additions.

As stated in docket item #7, the Board approved repairs and alterations to the front porch and steps (BAR Case #99-0061, May 19, 1999). Prior to that, on February 15, 1995, the Board approved partial demolition and capsulation of a rear addition for the installation of French doors (BAR Case #95-26).

305 Charles Alexander Court is part of the Colonial Park development approved by site plan. The BAR approval must be contingent upon the applicant obtaining approval for the minor amendment from the approved site plan. The proposed addition meets the zoning ordinance requirements.

In the opinion of Staff, the proposed addition is acceptable. The addition will not physically impact the historic core of the house. It is modest in scale, compatible in materials and detailing and straight forward in design. For these reasons, it is not likely to have much visual impact on the overall appearance of the house, despite its location on the front facade. While Staff finds the front (East) elevation of the proposed addition somewhat problematic, with its broken roof line and windows set high in the wall, this very awkwardness may be appropriate to the house which derives much of its character from its many odd additions. The windows, placed high in the wall to accommodate interior kitchen functions, might appear better placed if the addition had a watertable. However, none of the existing construction has a watertable and the simpler the design, the less visible the addition is likely to be. In addition, the break in the roof line does ensure that the addition clearly reads as an addition.

Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archeology and has included them as conditions.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 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 be taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-2 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-3 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 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-6 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

- F-1 No Comment.

Alexandria Archeology:

- F-1 This early nineteenth-century residence is historically significant to the North Ridge community and Alexandria. The lot therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources which could provide insight into nineteenth-century domestic life.
- R-1 Contact Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks prior to any ground disturbing activity (such as coring, vegetation removal, trenching for utilities or other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of the Zoning Ordinance) on this property. City archaeologists will provide on-site inspections to record any finds.
- R-2 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-3 Both of the above statements (R-1 and R-2) must appear in the General Notes of all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.