

Docket Item #8
BAR CASE #2004-0032

BAR Meeting
March 17, 2004

ISSUE: Accessibility alterations

APPLICANT: Virginia Theological Seminary

LOCATION: 3737 Seminary Road

ZONE: R-20/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant's Description of the Undertaking:

“Construction of new handicap accessibility ramp to provide access from campus side of Bohlen-Aspinwall-Meade complex.”

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new ramp with a new metal railing for accessibility to Meade Hall on the campus of the Virginia Theological Seminary at 3737 Seminary Road. The ramp will provide accessibility from the campus side of the Bohlen-Aspinwall-Meade complex. It will be constructed of brick wall with metal hand railings and will run along the west side of the building. These exterior accessibility modifications are being carried out with interior accessibility alterations including an elevator.

History and Analysis:

Meade Hall is individually listed as a 100 Year Old Buildings under Ordinance 2180. They are part of the Virginia Theological Seminary, established 1823, on a site purchased in 1827.

Meade Hall is a two story brick structure built about 1861. According to the nomination form: “The building typifies the Romanesque Revival style and features these characteristics: round arched door and window opening, a gabled nave, a monochromatic brick wall and decorations, balustrated window and corbelled cornice featuring arch work.”

Last year, the Board approved an accessibility ramp for Meade Hall (BAR Case #2003-0068, 4/23/04). In 1991 the Board approved an elevator tower design and ramp for accessibility for the adjacent Aspinwall Hall and Bohlen Hall which are also individually designated 100 Year Old Buildings (BAR Case #91-225, 10/16/91). Subsequently in 1994, the Board approved alterations to these plans for balusters and handrails (BAR Case #94-073, 5/18/94).

Proposed handicapped ramp complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff has no objection to the design of this utilitarian accessibility ramp. While clearly not mimicking the exuberance of the architecture of the Bohlen-Aspinwall-Meade complex, the ramp will not detract from the design characteristics of these historic building. Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 The handicapped ramp must comply with the requirements of USBC.
- C-2 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully detail the construction.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.