

Docket Item #5
BAR CASE #2004-0056

BAR Meeting
April 7, 2004

ISSUE: HVAC units & alterations

APPLICANT: Richard Melmer

LOCATION: 130 Prince Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the screening fully covers the height of both HVAC units.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant's Description of the Undertaking:

“Install central air conditioning, with condensers to be placed on rear roof of (south) single story roof, to be screened.”

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for two new rooftop HVAC units at 130 Prince Street. The new HVAC units are Carrier 38 models TRA-024 and TRA-030. One unit measures 35" by 30" by 28" while the second unit is slightly larger, measuring 35" by 30" by 34". The new units will be located on an approximately 4" high platform on the eastern edge of the two story addition behind 126 Prince Street.

The new HVAC units will be screened on all four sides by 1x1 pickets with 4x4 corner posts. The screening will match the existing rooftop deck railing above the rear one story addition. The screening measures approximately 8' by 3' and will be approximately 32" high. The screening will be painted white.

The applicant is also proposing to install two new copper light fixtures adjacent to the front door on Prince Street. The proposed Charleston Lantern, handcrafted by John Gantt Lanterns, will measure approximately 26 1/2" by 10" by 14". The lanterns will each have three bulbs. The applicant has submitted a photograph showing two different sizes of lanterns. Staff notes that the lantern size proposed is similar to the lantern on the left side of the entrance in the photograph.

History and Analysis:

According to Ethelyn Cox in *Alexandria Street by Street*, 130 Prince Street is a two story frame residence built in the late 18th century (p.121).

Previously the Board approved a replacement gate on the North Lee Street side of the building (BAR Case #92-6, 1/2/92).

The proposed rooftop HVAC units and screening comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

According to the *Design Guidelines*, HVAC equipment should be located in a visually inconspicuous area of a building (HVAC equipment - Page 3). Staff believes that the new HVAC units will only be minimally visible from Prince Street.

Although the proposed design of the HVAC screening is more open than typically used for screening, Staff believes it is appropriate because of the limited visibility and because the screening will match the existing railing on the rooftop deck of the one story addition.

Staff notes that the proposed screening is approximately 32" in height, while one of the proposed units is 34" high. Staff recommends that the height of the screening be raised to effectively cover the height of both HVAC units.

Staff believes that the proposed light fixtures are appropriate and recommends approval of the lights as submitted.

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the screening fully covers the height of both HVAC units.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-2 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 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-4 Structural calculations are required to verify the ability of the existing roof to support the additional weight of the A/C unit (USBC).

Office of Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”