

Docket Item #13 & 14
BAR CASE# 2004-0108 &
2004-0109

BAR Meeting
June 16, 2004

ISSUE: Alterations and waiver of rooftop screening requirement

APPLICANT: Charles Greenberg

LOCATION: 732 North Washington Street

ZONE: CDX/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

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

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations as well as a waiver of the rooftop screening requirement for the commercial office building at 732 North Washington Street.

Alterations

The alterations include:

- Removal of the existing freestanding sign;
- Removal of the mechanical units over the rear entryway;
- New skylights on the Mansard roof; each skylight is 31" x 47"; three will be installed on the North Washington elevation and three along the Madison Street elevation;
- Windows. All of the existing windows in the building will be replaced with new aluminum windows similar in configuration to those existing;
- Storefront windows. The existing first floor windows will be replaced with new aluminum storefront windows with operable casement;
- Doors. The front and rear doors will be replaced with similar aluminum doors.
- Front and rear canopy. New canopies will be placed on both the front and rear entrances. The canopy on the rear is approximately 24' in width and the one on the front approximately 16'. The canopy on the rear projects approximately 12' from the building wall and provides weather project for a new accessibility ramp; The canopy on the front project approximately 4'. The canopies will have metal framing, vinyl soffitts and a standing seam metal roof.
- Accessibility ramp. A new ramp will be constructed at the rear of the building to provide an accessible entrance. It will be a switchback ramp approximately 24' in width, 12' in depth and have a metal picket railing; and,
- Rooftop a/c units. Four new rooftop a/c units will be installed which will be approximately 46" in height.

II. HISTORY:

732 North Washington Street is a four and a half story freestanding brick office building constructed in 1963 according to the City's land records.

III. ANALYSIS:

Staff believes that the changes proposed are appropriate to the late 20th century design vocabulary of the building. The changes will update the overall appearance of the building, but will not alter its fundamental character. The proposed accessibility ramp, located on the rear of the building, will provide an upgraded entrance without disrupting the composition of the facade. In sum, Staff believes that the proposed changes are acceptable.

As a general rule, Staff does not oppose the waiver of the rooftop screening requirement. Screening the proposed rooftop equipment will add considerable bulk to the rooftop drawing more attention to the roof than if the units were to remain unscreened. Therefore, Staff has no objection to waiving the screening requirement.

Proposed alterations (i.e. skylight, handicapped ramp, canopies) comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, 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 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 Required exits, parking, and accessibility within the building for persons with disabilities must comply with USBC Chapter 11. Handicapped accessible bathrooms shall also be provided.
- C-5 Canopies must comply with USBC for support and clearance from the sidewalk. No vertical pipe posts are shown as support from the sidewalk to the canopy frame. The canopy is shown cantilevering from the building wall, therefore structural drawings will be required bearing the signature and seal of a structural design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia (USBC).

Office of Historic Alexandria:

This is a very difficult building to work with, a large structure on the Parkway. I am concerned that the canopy and covering for handicapped access on the side look too much like a carport/construction temporary.