

Docket Item #13
BAR CASE# 2004-0112

BAR Meeting
July 21, 2004

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Barbara J. Kaye
LOCATION: 420 Gibbon Street
ZONE: RM Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the alterations to the north elevation and deferral of the alterations to the rear additions for restudy of a simpler design using traditional materials.

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

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the residence at 420 Gibbon Street.

North elevation

The proposed alterations to the front elevation include relocating the gas meter from the west elevation of the house to the front elevation just below the existing first floor window. The existing electric meter currently on the front of the house will also be relocated. The applicant plans to construct a box to hide the two meters. The new box measures 4'6" by 2'2" by 3'4" and will be located within an existing planter. The box will be covered in wood siding painted to match the house.

West elevation

The applicant is proposing to reconfigure the existing rooflines of the rear single story additions. The rear of 420 Gibbon Street is comprised of three separate 20th century additions all with different rooflines. The additions will be combined with a single flat roof.

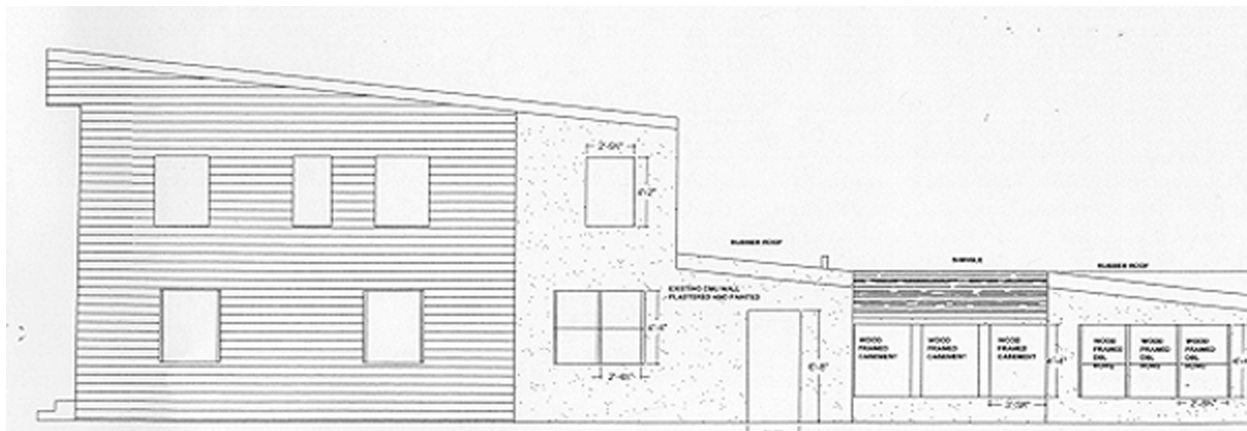


Figure 1 Existing West Elevation

The new flat roof will include a new rooftop deck covered by a wooden trellis. The rooftop deck and trellis will be minimally visible through the gap between 420 Gibbon Street and 422 Gibbon Street. In addition to the wood trellis, the rooftop deck will include a diagonal patterned lattice screening and a high density polyurethane balustrade system.

The addition will be covered in light almond colored stucco. The existing wood windows on the addition are proposed to be replaced with new vinyl casement and double hung windows. Staff notes that since the existing windows are located on the west property line, no changes to the size of the openings is permitted. The windows and the door will have high density polyurethane

lintels and trim. A decorative dentil molding and cornice and white fiberglass columns will also be added to the one story addition.

The existing cmu wall of the two story addition will be covered in wood siding to match the existing siding.

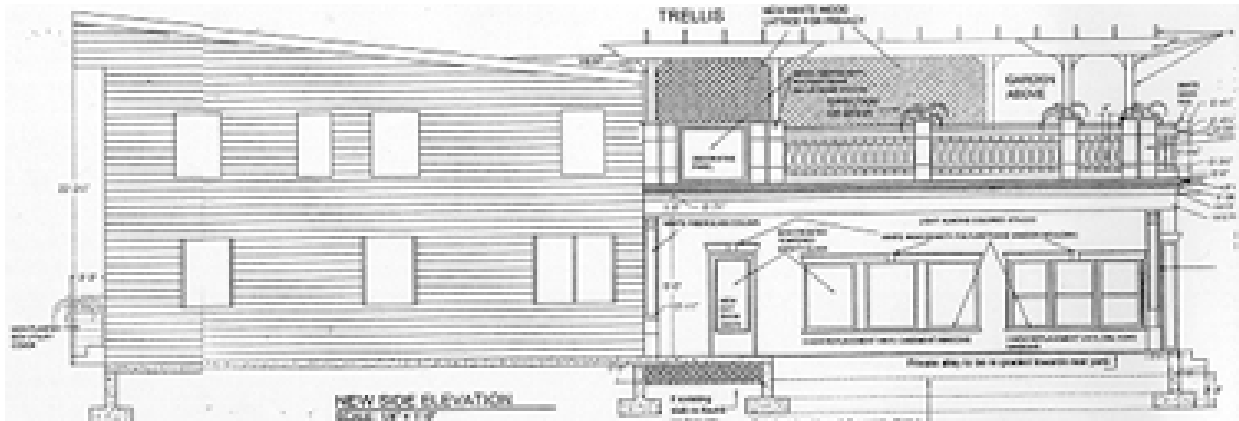


Figure 2 Proposed West Elevation

South elevation

Staff notes that the proposed alterations to the south elevation will not be visible from a public right of way and therefore are not under the purview of the Board.

II. HISTORY:

As discussed in docket #12, the residence at 420 Gibbon Street was constructed between 1912 and 1921. The two story frame house and its multiple one story cinder block additions occupies the entire lot.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff has no objections to the relocation of the gas and electric meters. The *Design Guidelines* recommend that electrical and gas service be located in the most inconspicuous location of a building (Electric & Gas Service - Page 2). While Staff would prefer not to have either meter located on the primary facade, the meters will be appropriately screened. Staff believes that the relocation and screening of the existing electric meter will be an improvement.

The proposed alterations to the rear additions of the property will be minimally visible through a small gap between 420 Gibbon and its neighbor 422 Gibbon to the west. Staff has no objections to the alteration of the rooflines of the rear additions. The additions were all constructed in the 1950s and appear to have been poorly constructed.

Open decks are primarily a late 20th century occurrence that have had wide spread popularity

since the 1970's. Generally the Board discourages the installation of open decks which are typically more suburban in character. The Board has on occasion approved open decks in locations of the historic district which are more suburban in character as well as minimally visible areas. In this case the rooftop deck will only be minimally visible through the gap between 420 and 422 Gibbon Street. Therefore, Staff has no objection to the installation of a rooftop deck at this location.

Staff does however have a number of concerns with the design and materials of the deck. Staff believes that the rear deck should be simplified so that it respects the main block of the house. For example, Staff would prefer to see simple wood pickets for the deck railing rather than the proposed balusters.

The *Design Guidelines* recommend that decks be constructed of materials which are sympathetic to the building materials generally found in the historic districts (Decks -page 3). Although the rear addition is only minimally visible, Staff believes that the vinyl windows and use of synthetic materials is not appropriate.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the alterations to the north elevation and deferral of the alterations to the rear additions for restudy of a simpler design using traditional materials.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The plat layout indicates that proposed addition will be located along the lot line(s). 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. This condition is also applicable to porches with roofs and skylights within setback distance.

- 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 taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.

- C-2 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.

- C-3 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.

- C-4 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

- C-5 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

- C-6 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-7 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-8 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:

“No comment.”