

Docket Item #13
BAR CASE #2004-0114

BAR Meeting
August 18, 2004

ISSUE: Addition and alterations

APPLICANT: Stew Clark

LOCATION: 921 South Alfred Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

BOARD ACTION, JUNE 16, 2004: The Board combined the discussion of docket item #'s 15 & 16. On a motion by Ms. Neihardt, seconded by Mr. Smeallie the Board deferred the application for restudy. The motion passed on a vote of 5-0.

REASON: The Board believed that the design of the addition was too high style for the simple townhouse and that the fenestration pattern needed work as well as the placement of the addition on the lot because as drawn it would create set back problems for any adjacent additions.

SPEAKER: Stew Clark, project designer, spoke in support
Martha Bethe, homeowner, spoke in support
Andrea Snow, 917 S. Alfred Street, spoke in support
Hal Arata, 919 S. Alfred Street, spoke in opposition
Clifford Wilkering, 915 Church Street and 921 S. Patrick Street, spoke in support

UPDATE: The form of the proposed addition has been revised. Instead of a gable roofed addition perpendicular to and centered on the rear wall of the main block, it now has a flounder form and is located on the south property line and 3' off the north property line.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

- 1) That the windows and doors on the addition be simulated divided light windows with fixed exterior grilles; and,
- 2) That the skylights have integral shades.

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 an addition on the basement and first story levels at the rear of the existing two story rowhouse at 921 South Alfred Street. The addition will be 16' long and 14.75' wide. The existing house is 28.4' long and 17.77' wide. The flounder form addition will be clad in brick and painted to match the existing exterior walls. The roof will slope from south to north (right to left). The rear (west) elevation will be several feet below grade on the basement level. This level will have a wood door with multiple lights on the left and a pair of six light windows on the right. There will be a carriage lamp type exterior light fixture to the right of the door. There will be a brick watertable between the basement level and second level (first floor). The second level will have a set of centered, multi-light french doors. A railing will be located in front of the french doors. The material of the railing is not indicated on the drawing, but is assumed to be wood or metal.

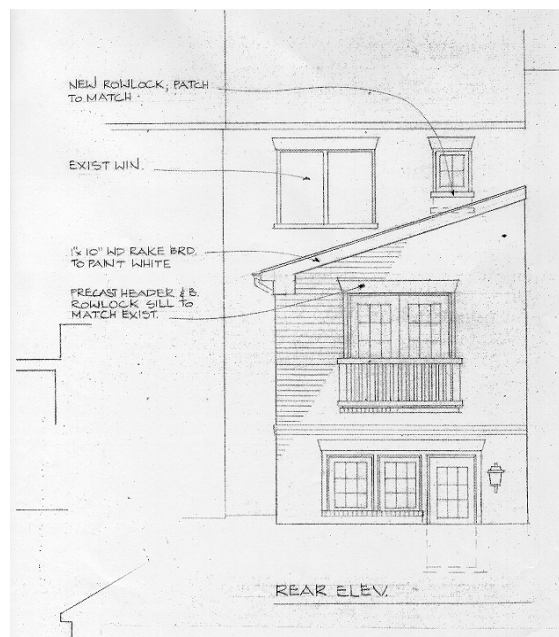


Figure 1 - Rear (west) Elevation

The south (left) side of the addition will be blind and clad in brick veneer. It will be 16' long and 20' high. The north (right) side of the addition will be 14' high at the eaves and will have a single false window located in the center of the second level (first floor). The false window will have paneled wood shutters in the closed position. There will be two 2' x 4' velux skylights located on the roof of the addition.

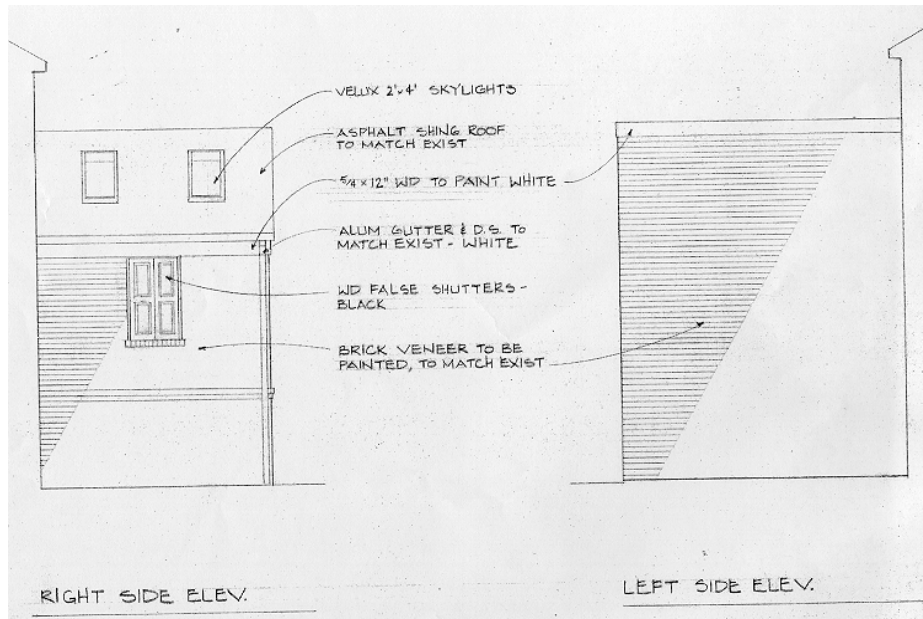


Figure 2 - North and South Side Elevations

The application also calls for an alteration to the existing house. The window on the right in the second story of the rear wall will be shortened to allow for the roof of the addition. A portion of the window at the bottom be infilled with brick and a new rowlock brick sill will be constructed to match the existing.

The windows and doors will be Kolbe & Kolbe wood, insulated glass with fixed interior grilles. The lintels will be precast concrete and sills will be rowlock brick, matching the existing construction. All trim, doors and windows will be painted white to match the existing. The roof will be clad in asphalt shingles to match the existing roof. The fascia boards will be wood and painted white. The gutters and downspouts will be white aluminum.

The rear of the house at 921 South Alfred Street is visible from the public court and alley at the center of the block. A 6' high wood fence obscures the lower portion of the house at the rear.

II. HISTORY:

As discussed in docket item #12, the two story, gable-roofed, brick clad, cinderblock rowhouse at 921 South Alfred Street was originally part of a mid-20th century apartment complex which was converted to eight single family rowhomes in 1977 and 1978. To date, none of the eight houses in the row have rear additions.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed rear addition and alterations comply with the zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff believes the applicant has satisfied the concerns of the Board expressed at the June 16, 2004 hearing. The design has been simplified, omitting the rather elaborate arrangement of fenestration on the rear elevation and changing the roof from gable to shed. In addition, the flounder form, located on one side property line and pulled back from the other, represents a traditional solution for additions on the tight urban lots of the historic district. Staff notes that as the north (right) side is now 3' from the property line, building code would permit a true, glazed window in this wall. It is assumed that the use of false shutters reflects the preference of the applicant or neighbor. The revised addition is 3' longer and 1' narrower than the previous design. Staff believes it remains relatively modest in size and is compatible with the simple Colonial Revival detailing of the house at 921 South Alfred Street and consistent with the *Design Guidelines* for residential additions. The impact of the 20' high, blank south side wall of the addition is mitigated by the existing large deck off the rear of the adjoining house at 923 South Alfred Street.

Staff does note that the proposed windows with interior grilles, but no exterior grilles, do not conform to the *Guidelines* (Windows - Page 2). The *Design Guidelines* encourage the use of true divided light windows, but do allow for the use of simulated divided light windows on rear elevations that are not readily accessible to the public. Staff believes simulated divided light windows would be appropriate for the addition at 921 South Alfred Street as it is well removed from public access and on the rear of the house. In addition, Staff notes the *Design Guidelines* call for integral shades on skylights to reduce seepage of light and recommends that this be made a condition of the approval (Skylights - Page 2).

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the windows on the addition be simulated divided light windows with fixed exterior grilles and that the skylights have integral shades.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 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-2 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-3 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-4 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-5 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-7 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-8 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-9 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Alexandria Archaeology

“There is a low potential for this project to disturb significant archaeological resources. No archeological action is required.”

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.