

Docket Item #12  
BAR CASE #2004-0170

BAR Meeting  
September 1, 2004

**ISSUE:** Deck alterations  
**APPLICANT:** Gail Manza  
**LOCATION:** 310 Princess Street  
**ZONE:** CD/Commercial

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### STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the replacement columns and caps be constructed of wood; and,
2. That the lattice screening be a uniform 42 1/4" to match the height of the adjacent deck railings.

#### I. Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the rear deck of the townhouse at 310 Princess Street. The alterations include replacing the existing 3.5' rails at the edge of the deck with new diagonal patterned lattice screening. The cedar screening will be painted white. The applicant is also proposing to replace the existing wood deck columns with new PVC columns and to replace the wood swing doors with new wood doors.

The rear deck is visible from North Fairfax Street.

#### II. History

The four story brick townhouses at 302-314 Princess Street were constructed in 1997-1998. The Board approved the overall design of the townhouses in 1996 (BAR Case #96-0041) and revisions to the approved plans in 1997 (BAR Case #97-0219) and 1998 (BAR Case #98-0154).

In 2000, the Board approved a replacement front door for the subject property (BAR Case #2000-257, 12/6/2000).

#### III. Analysis

The proposed deck alterations comply with zoning regulations.

The *Design Guidelines* state that:

Decks should be made of materials which are generally found in the historic districts. For example, throughout the historic districts painted wood is an appropriate material for porch construction. In addition, metal is an appropriate material for decks on 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings (Decks - Page 3).

Although the deck at 310 Princess Street is minimally visible from North Fairfax Street, Staff believes that the use of PVC is inappropriate for a number of reasons. First of all, the townhouses were recently approved by the Board for construction using traditional materials. Staff is also concerned that if synthetic materials are approved for this deck, which is set back from the street, it will set a precedent for the surrounding decks which are more visible.

Staff has no objections to the use of lattice screening which will match the existing privacy screening along the side elevations of the deck. Staff is however concerned by the proposed 5' height of the new lattice screening. Staff believes that the height of all of the rear decks in this row should be uniform.

#### IV. Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the replacement columns and caps be constructed of wood; and,
2. That the lattice screening be a uniform 42 1/4" to match the height of the neighboring deck railings.

## 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). A building permit is required. A plot plan must be submitted with the building permit application clearly describing the limits of the deck, screen, rails and overhead trellis in relation to property lines.
- C-2 Guardrail height and openings must comply with USBC R316
- C-3 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.
- C-4 PVC columns may not be used for structural support of deck.
- R-1 Proposed lattice guard should be able to withstand impact and uniform distributed loads described in ASCE 7-95 Minimum Design Loads for Buildings and Other Structures.

### Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”