

Docket Item #10
BAR CASE# 2004-0131

BAR Meeting
September 23, 2004

ISSUE: Replacement windows

APPLICANT: Lee Carosi

LOCATION: 519 South Lee Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the four windows on the front and two windows in the north side nearest to the front be true divided light wood windows. Either the existing windows should be retained or new true divided light windows which replicate the existing as closely as possible.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of new wood windows. The existing windows date to the mid- to late-20th century and are double hung wood windows with true-divided lights in an eight-over-eight configuration. The proposed new windows will be Pella Architect Series. These double hung wood windows have simulated divided lights with permanently bonded exterior and interior wood muntins in an eight-over-eight configuration. The applicant has already placed a deposit on these windows, believing that they were historically appropriate and would meet the Board's approval.

In addition, the applicant will replace the two shutters missing from the second story of the front facade with new shutters to match. The shutters will be operable wood shutters sized to fit the openings.

The house is sited on the front property line and is quite visible and accessible from the sidewalk.

II. HISTORY:

According to Ethelyn Cox's Historic Alexandria: Street By Street, the two story frame house probably was constructed before 1803 by Alexander Veitch (p. 93). In 1942, J.D Mathew, owner and architect, applied for a building permit to renovate the frame house and add a brick chimney, porch and kitchen addition. The permit and accompanying plans suggest that the windows and window trim were replaced at that time (Building Permit #4636, 7/8/1942). Staff was unable to locate any record of BAR review for this property.

In a recent similar case involving an early 19th century building located right on the sidewalk, the Board declined to approve the simulated divided light windows requested and approved true divided light windows instead (515 Queen Street, BAR Case #2003-00224, 10/1/2003).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

Staff believes that simulated divided light windows are not appropriate for this early 19th century structure which is located directly on the sidewalk and thus highly accessible. Although the existing windows are not believed to be the originals, they are true divided light wood windows. They are appropriate to the early period of construction and conform to the *Design Guidelines*, which clearly state that true divided light wood windows are the preferred window type and that simulated divided lights are acceptable only in locations that have minimal visibility from the public right-of-way (Windows - Page 2).

Staff understands that the applicant wishes to replace the existing windows because they are not

weather tight. However, there are options which are more acceptable than replacement with simulated divided light windows. The *Design Guidelines* encourage the use of exterior or interior storms to improve the efficiency of such windows (Windows- Page 4). Approval of the Board is not required for the installation of storm windows. Staff notes that a number of houses on the 500 block of South Lee Street dating from the same period have single glazed true-divided light windows with storm windows. In addition, a number of window manufacturers, such as Kolbe & Kolbe, Marvin and Weathershield, make true divided light windows in both single and double glazed versions. Some of these have the narrower muntin profiles (7/8") that are appropriate for a building of this period. Unfortunately, Pella does not make a true divided light window.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the four windows on the front and two windows in the north side nearest to the front be true divided light wood windows. Either the existing windows should be retained or new true divided light windows which replicate the existing as closely as possible.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 Construction permits are not required if exact replacement of windows within existing openings occurs. Any enlargement or modification/addition to existing openings will require construction permits and compliance with applicable provisions of the USBC.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”