

Docket Item #15
BAR CASE #2004-0207

BAR Meeting
October 6, 2004

ISSUE: Additions and alterations
APPLICANT: Richard and Harriet Larsen
LOCATION: 307 South Lee Street
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends:

Main House

Front

1. Denial of the proposed new chimney;
2. Approval of the new wood gate and standing seam metal roof.

North Side

3. Approval of the change out of the door to a window and infill with brick with the condition that the new window is a true divided light wood window to match the others existing on the front and sides of the house.
4. Approval of new operable wood louvered shutters on the windows on the north side of the house.

Rear

5. Approval of the new addition of the screened porch.
6. Deferral for restudy of the size and scale of the proposed dormers.
7. Approval of the extension of the chimney.
8. Approval of the rooftop HVAC condenser and wood screening.

Carriage House

9. Denial of the changes proposed for the carriage house, including the rooftop HVAC unit; and,
10. Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds; and,
11. The above statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

Note: Docket item #14 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 and alterations to the residential rowhouse and carriage house at 307 South Lee Street. The addition and alterations proposed are:

Main House

Front

A new brick chimney is proposed on the north side of the existing house.

A new painted wood gate at the entrance to the horse alley on the south side of the existing house. The new gate is approximately 3' wide and 6' in height.

A new standing seam metal roof is proposed to be installed.

North Elevation

On the main historic block an existing door will be replaced with a new six-over-six double hung simulated divided light wood window. The area beneath the window will be infilled with brick. The new window and the three existing windows in the brick section will all have new operable wood louvered shutters.

Rear

Infill porch addition

East elevation

The existing porch will be infilled and will be sheathed with painted wood siding. At the first level there will be three pair of multi-light French doors with multi-light transoms above. There will be square painted wood columns between the French doors and at each end of the house. On the second level there will be three new six-over-six double hung simulated divided light wood windows all with operable wood louvered shutters.

North elevation

This section of the addition will have a six-over-six double hung simulated divided light wood window on the first level and a multi-light transom window on the second level.

South elevation

This elevation is not visible from the public right-of-way.

Roof dormers

Two new dormers are proposed, one on the south side and one on the north side. The dormers are approximately 7' in overall height, 5'6" in width and 10' in length. Each dormer will have a six-over-six double hung simulated divided light wood window with operable wood louvered shutters. The dormers will be sheathed in painted wood siding.

Rooftop HVAC unit

A new HVAC condensing unit with a wood lattice screen will be installed on the roof between the dormers.

Chimney

The existing chimney will be extended above the line of the roof ridge.

Carriage House

Alley (west) elevation

On the first level the existing wood doors will be replaced with new wood doors and the roll up garage door will be replaced with two new six-over-six double hung simulated divided light wood window with jack arches. On the second level three new simulated divided light wood window with (presumably) wood lintels are proposed.

East elevation

On the first level the existing door will be replaced with a new wood and multi-light door. On the second level a pair of new simulated divided light casement windows with wood panels under and new wood shutters is proposed.

Rooftop HVAC unit

A new HVAC condensing unit with a wood lattice screen will be installed on the north side of the roof.

II. **HISTORY:**

307 South Lee Street is a two story, three bay brick rowhouse dating from ca. 1830 and was built by James Brooks according to Ethelyn Cox in *Alexandria Street by Street* (p.83). The two brick carriage house at the rear of the property was originally part of the James Craik house on Duke Street and was built in either 1787 or 1795 (Cox, p.83). The two story rear porch was likely constructed in the 20th century. It was altered to its present configuration in 1965 and was approved by the Board on 11/1/0/65.

III. **ANALYSIS:**

Proposed alterations and addition comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

Front

Staff believes that the proposed new brick chimney proposed on the north side of the existing house alters the perception of the front of the house by introducing an element that creates an impression that historically the house had a fireplace on this side of the building when, in fact, a central fireplace is the historic configuration of the house. Thus, Staff opposes the introduction of this new chimney.

Staff has no objection to the new painted wood gate at the entrance to the horse alley on the south side of the existing house or to the new standing seam metal roof.

North Elevation

Staff has no objection to the replacement of the existing door with a new wood window so long as that window is a true divided light wood window to match the others existing on the front and sides of the house. Staff believes that infilling the area of the old doorway is acceptable. Staff also has no objection to the installation of new operable wood louvered shutters on the windows on the north side of the house.

Rear

Infill porch addition

In the opinion of Staff, the revisions proposed to the 1965 screened porch are acceptable. While the detailing of the addition is more high style than the simple vernacular vocabulary of the front of the house, the addition is minimally visible from the public right-of-way and is at the rear of the house. Therefore, Staff believes that the design of the addition is acceptable.

Roof dormers

As noted in the discussion section of docket item #14 Staff can support the installation of the rooftop dormers because the rear has been substantially altered in the 20th century. However, Staff believes that the proportions of the dormers are too large relative to the modest scale of the house and the detailing of the addition. Staff believes that the dormers should be reduced in overall size and scale.

Rooftop HVAC unit

Staff has no objection to the rooftop HVAC condensing unit and wood lattice screen.

Carriage House

Staff believes that the changes proposed to the fenestration of the carriage house and the addition of new windows on both the east and west elevation will fundamentally alter a largely intact 18th century outbuilding that is a rare survival in the historic district. Staff believes that the existing configuration of the building should remain unchanged.

Rooftop HVAC unit

In the same vein, Staff cannot support the installation of a rooftop HVAC condensing unit which is fundamentally not in character with an 18th century structure.

Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archaeology and has included them as a condition.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends:

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North Side

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11. The above statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 The proposed addition is located adjacent to a 10 foot wide alley. The renovation of the garage is located adjacent to a 10 foot and a 20 foot alley. All exterior walls within 5 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. The applicant shall determine whether the alley is public or private and shall provide such information at the time of building permit application. Walls located adjacent to private alleys shall determine fire separation distance as measured from the building face to the lot line between the property and the alley, unless information is provided to define ownership, use restrictions and if alley ownership transfers with the sale of adjacent lots. Fire separation distance determined in public alleys is measured from the building face to the center line of the public alley.
- C-2 The current use of the detached garage is classified as U, Utility / Miscellaneous; the proposed use is R, Residential. Change of use, in whole or in part, will require a certificate of use and occupancy (USBC 119.4) and compliance with USBC 119.2.
- C-3 Prior to the application for new Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall submit a building permit for a change of use. Drawings prepared by a licensed architect or professional engineer shall accompany the permit application. These plans shall show provide existing conditions, construction type data, and a plot plan. In addition, these plans shall show proposed conditions and provide data by the design professional which details how the proposed use will comply with the current edition of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code for the new use in the area of structural strength, means of egress, passive and active fire protection, heating and ventilating systems, handicapped accessibility and plumbing facilities.
- C-4 The submitted plans show a conflict in stair configuration with the requirements of the Uniform Statewide Building Code. The applicant shall revise the stair turn / landing to comply with the USBC.
- C-5 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-6 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-7 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.

- C-8 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-9 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-10 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-11 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-12 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 This property was occupied at least by the early nineteenth century. There is the potential for archaeological resources to be present that could provide insight into residential life in early Alexandria.
- R-1 Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
- R-2 The above statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.