

Docket Item #16
BAR CASE #2004-0222

BAR Meeting
October 20, 2004

ISSUE: Alterations

APPLICANT: Brian Walsh

LOCATION: 601 South Washington Street

ZONE: CL/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

Note: Docket item #15 must be approved before this docket item can be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the two story brick building at the southwest corner of Washington Street and Gibbon Street. The alterations will be on the rear (west) and south side elevations and are part of a project to change the building from retail to office use. The proposed alterations are described below:

Rear elevation:

An open exterior stair leading to the second story will be located against the rear wall on the left side. The stair will be a simple steel structure supported by 4" x 4" steel posts, covered with sheet metal roofing and having uprights and handrail of 2" steel tubing. The stair will be 3' wide and will not project beyond the rear wall of the section to the right. It will have a flat black finish. A new door opening will be cut in the second story at the head of the new stairs on the left side of the rear elevation. According to the applicant, the door will be a wood four panel door, rather than that which is shown on the drawing.

The two existing metal doors on the right side of the building on the first floor will be removed and the openings will be used for a window (on the left) and a door (on the right). According to the applicant, the window will be a single glazed, six-over-six, wood window with true divided lights to match the existing windows. The window head will be a brick segmental arch and the sill will be wood, matching the existing windows. The area below the window will be infilled with brick and painted to match the rest of the wall. The door will be a four panel wood door, rather than that which is shown on the drawing.

South side elevation

Three new openings are proposed for the south elevation. A second door is proposed to the left of the existing door on that elevation. According to the applicant, the new door opening and door would match the existing. The existing door opening has a segmental arch with a wood panel with scrollwork in the arch. The doorway holds a pair of wood doors with multilight windows in the top half and a four light transom above. In addition, two new windows openings are proposed directly above the two doors. These windows will be single glazed, six-over-six, wood window with true divided lights to match the existing windows. The heads and sills will match those of the existing windows.

The rear (west) and south sides face open paved areas and are visible from Gibbon and Washington Streets.

II. HISTORY:

The building at 601 South Washington Street was originally two buildings, 601 and 603 South Washington Street. At least a portion of the Italianate style buildings may date from before 1877. They long served as a grocery and residence and most recently functioned as an antique shop.

Over the years, the buildings have undergone a variety of alterations, most significantly in 1964, when the storefront windows were added and the buildings were combined into a single commercial building.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations comply with the zoning ordinance requirements. In the opinion of Staff the proposed alterations are acceptable. With the exception of the exterior stair, the alterations are relatively modest, confined to secondary facades and compatible with the historic character of the building. The stair is required by fire code and is similar to those routinely approved by the Board throughout the district at the rear of historic buildings.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 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. (USBC 704.5)
- C-2 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 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-4 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.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.