

Docket Item #15
BAR CASE #2005-0004

BAR Meeting
February 2, 2005

ISSUE: Alterations to previously approved plans

APPLICANT: Steve Stylianoudis and Vallery Vandegrift

LOCATION: 510 North Columbus Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the rear addition be clad either entirely in fiber cement or in brick;
2. That if fiber cement, that the fiber cement have a smooth, not wood grain, finish; and
3. That the following statement appears in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement:

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.

UPDATE: On July 21, 2004, the Board approved the demolition of the rear wall of 510 North Columbus Street for a new three level rear addition. On August 18, 2004, the Board approved the rear addition. The property subsequently sold and the new owner is seeking approval of modifications to the previously approved plans. The revised addition is approximately 1' shorter and more traditional in its design approach than that previously approved. There is no need to re-approve the Permit to Demolish as the present plans call for less demolition than previous plans. The owner also owns 508 North Columbus Street and is seeking approval for a mirror image of this addition for that property.

ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to previously approved plans for alterations and a rear addition to the brick residential rowhouse at 508 North Columbus Street. The rear of the house is visible from Alfred Street as well from as the public alley behind the property.

Alterations to existing house

The revised submission incorporates a number of conditions from the prior approval, such as the retention of the existing standing seam metal roof, retention of the existing chimneys and the use of wood windows with simulated divided lights. The only alteration from the previously approved plans with respect to the existing house is the use of brick clad concrete steps with metal railings rather than metal steps with metal railings. Both plans call for simple metal railings with a straight picket and lamb's tongue return. In addition, the current proposal calls for an exterior light fixture (Kichler 3-Light Wall Lantern #197878) will be installed beside the front door.



Figure 1- Existing front 510 North Columbus Street (on right)

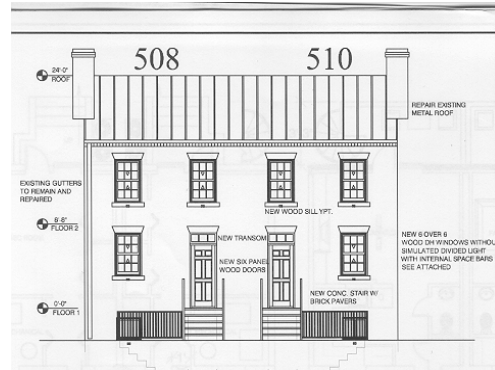


Figure 2 - Proposed front elevation 510 North Columbus Street (on right)

Addition

As in the previously approved application, an addition is proposed to be constructed at the rear (west) of the existing house. The flat roofed addition will be 20'8" in length (10" shorter than the previous proposal) and will run from lot line to lot line. As the lot falls away from east to west, the rear addition will be three stories in overall height. The south side of the addition will abut the proposed addition at 508 North Columbus Street along its entire length. As the house to the north, at 512 North Columbus Street, has no addition, the north wall will be exposed for 20'8" on the three levels. As the north wall is on the property line, it will have no openings. The applicant proposes to clad the north wall in 8" fiber cement siding. The west elevation of the addition will be clad in brick veneer to contrast in color with the brick at the front. The windows and doors on this elevation will be wood with simulated divided lights. The basement level will have a multi-light french door flanked by a fixed, full length, multi-light window in the center of the west wall. A wall lantern matching that at the front of the house will be installed alongside the door. Above, in the second level, a 6' deep wood deck will be located outside a multi-light door and fixed full length window matching that below. This door will also have a matching wall lantern. Spiral stairs will lead from the wood deck to the ground level. The third level will have two evenly spaced six-over-six windows.

The HVAC units will be located on the ground beneath the rear deck.

The proposed addition at 510 North Columbus Street is the mirror image of the addition proposed for the neighboring house at 508 North Columbus Street (BAR Case #s 2005-0002 & 3), item #s 13 & 14 on tonight's docket.



Figure 3 - 510 North Columbus existing rear (on left)



Figure 4 - 510 North Columbus proposed rear elevation (on right)

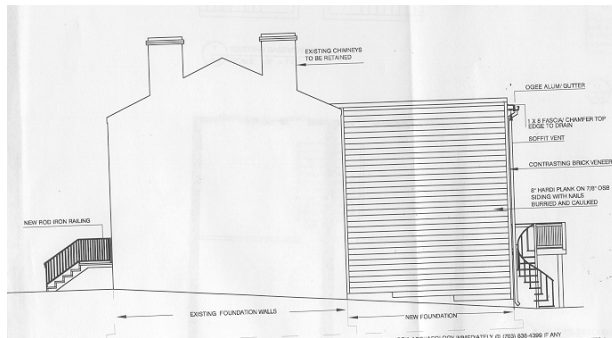


Figure 5 - Proposed addition north side

HISTORY:

510 North Columbus Street. is a two story, gable-roofed, brick rowhouse that is located in a row of eight similar houses that were constructed together as a row (506-520 North Columbus Street). The houses were constructed prior to 1863, as they appear in a birds eye view of Alexandria with that date. Survey information in the Office of Planning and Zoning indicates that the row was constructed in the Federal period, prior to 1830. An early- to mid- 19th century date is supported by the massing of the houses, the brick coursing and the brick cornice. The houses were constructed as relatively simple, vernacular worker housing. Each of the houses has a side hall plan, two bays in width, two stories plus high basement, a continuous standing seam metal roof and shared front and back chimneys. Staff believes the row is unusual for the number of units built simultaneously. Smaller rows of four or less were more typically constructed in Alexandria in the 19th century.

The early date of the houses is supported by the fact that the houses were constructed without rear service wings. Service functions were most likely housed in the basement level. Due to a change in grade from front to back, the basement level is fully exposed at the rear of the house has both a door and window. Based on Sanborn mapping and BAR records, the row of eight houses remained without rear additions until the early 1950s and possibly until the early 1980s. In the subsequent years, there have been a number of changes to these houses. However, four of the eight, 508, 510, 512 and 520 North Columbus Street, remain without additions. The front of

the row retains a substantial degree of integrity, despite minor alterations. A 1946 building permit recently located by Staff, requests “to demolish west wall and rebuild on concrete footings” for the five houses at 508-516 North Columbus Street. Physical evidence suggests extensive repair or rebuilding was carried out at some point on the west wall of the row. 510 North Columbus has had its windows, door and stoop replaced on the front.

On July 21, 2004, the Board of Architectural Review approved the demolition of the rear wall of 510 North Columbus Street (BAR Case #2004-0067) and on August 18, 2004, approved the renovation of the existing house at 510 North Columbus Street and a new three level rear addition (BAR Case #2004-0068). Board records indicate that the additions at 518, 506, 514, and 516 North Columbus Street were approved on 8/13/1953, 6/2/1982, 1/3/1990 (BAR Case #89-211) and 7/18/1990 (BAR Case #90-154) respectively. The addition at 518 North Columbus covers the basement and first story only. The other three additions capulate the second story as well as basement and first story.

ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations and addition comply with zoning regulations.

Alterations

Staff has no objections to the alterations proposed for the front facade. As proposed, the front elevation is nearly identical to that approved by the Board on August 18, 2004 (BAR Case #2004-0068). Staff believes the alterations are appropriate and will improve the historic appearance of the house.

Addition

Staff is concerned by the large size of the addition, which represents an increase in the size of the existing house of nearly 72%. However, the proposed addition is similar in size to the addition on the neighboring house at 506 North Columbus Street and identical to the addition proposed for 508 Columbus Street. Moreover, the historic house and addition can not be viewed together. Lastly, Staff notes, the proposed addition is nearly 1' shorter than the addition that the Board approved for 510 Columbus Street on August 18, 2004.

The design of the addition is fairly routine. It uses traditional materials (wood and brick) and combines traditional features, like the six-over-six windows with more modern features like the rear deck and multi-light door and window unit. While the west facade is clad in brick, the brick will be different in color from that used for the historic building. This device is intended to distinguish the new construction from the old. Staff recommends that the north and west sides of the addition be clad in the same material, either fiber cement siding or brick. The use of siding on sides and brick on primary facades is a common convention in modern suburban residential construction and is not appropriate in the historic districts. The Board has adopted the following policy with respect to the product.

1. That fiber cement siding not be installed on an historic structure;
2. That historic materials should not be removed to install fiber cement siding;
3. That fiber cement siding replace other artificial or composite siding;
4. That the nails not show in the installation of the siding; and,

5. That smooth siding be installed.
6. That BAR Staff may administratively approve the installation of fiber cement siding on *non-historic* buildings (those constructed in 1975 or later).

Therefore the use of fiber cement is appropriate on this modern addition, as long as the nails do not show in the installation, as is noted on the drawing, and as long as the siding is smooth.

Staff is somewhat concerned that the proposed addition side by side with that proposed for 510 North Columbus will read as one. However, as originally constructed, the entire row of eight apparently read as one, with only the pattern of doors communicating the individual nature of the houses. On the whole, Staff believes the proposed addition is acceptable and complies with the *Design Guidelines* for residential additions.

Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archaeology and has included them as a condition if the Board approves the addition.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the rear addition be clad either entirely in fiber cement or in brick;
2. That if fiber cement, that the fiber cement have a smooth, not wood grain, finish; and
3. That the following statement appears in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement:
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.

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. This condition is also applicable to 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.

Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 Tax records indicate that development on this street face had begun by 1810 and that two free African American households were located on the block in 1830. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources which could provide insight into domestic activities, perhaps relating to free blacks, in early 19th-century 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 the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.