

Docket Item #6
BAR CASE# 2005-0070

BAR Meeting
April 20, 2005

ISSUE: Alterations

APPLICANT: Richard & Harriet Melmer

LOCATION: 130 Prince Street

ZONE: CD Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed wall, fence and pergola.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a garden perimeter wall and fence and for a pergola. The wall and fence will enclose three sides of the rear yard at 130 Prince Street. The retaining wall will be 6" high on the north and south sides and approximately 18" high on the east side, adjacent to the alley where the grade is lower. The wall will be constructed of concrete block with stone facing. On the east side where the wall abuts the alley, only the top 6" will be faced in stone with the remainder parged. A wood fence 5'-6" high will be installed on top of the retaining wall. The fence will be a louver fence with the boards set at an angle to the top and bottom rail. The top rail will be chamfered. The square, 4" by 4" posts will have copper caps. The fence will be white washed.

The pergola will be located in the rear yard against the back of the metal clad garage located at 122 Prince Street. The pergola will be 14'-6" long and 5'-6" wide and approximately 8'-4" tall. It will have two sets of 8" round columns supporting 2" by 6" boards with shaped ends which will serve as crosspieces and will in turn support smaller 2" by 4" boards which will serve as the trellis. The pergola will also be white washed.

The north side of the fence will be visible from Prince Street, but largely obscured by an existing brick wall and metal clad garage at the rear of the property at 122 Prince Street. The east and south sides of the fence will only be visible from the alley at the rear of 130 Prince Street. This alley is private. The pergola may be visible directly above the metal garage at 122 Prince Street as well as in oblique views from Prince Street. The pergola will extend more than 2' above the fence at the rear of the yard at 130 Prince Street. However, it is expected to be visible only from the adjacent private alley.

II. HISTORY:

According to Ethelyn Cox in *Alexandria Street by Street*, 130 Prince Street is a two story frame residence built in the late 18th century (p.121). In 1992, the Board approved a replacement gate on the North Lee Street side of the building (BAR Case #92-6, 1/2/92). More recently, in 2004, the Board approved rooftop HVAC units and screening and entrance lights (BAR Case #2004-0056, 4/7/2004).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations comply with the zoning ordinance requirements. Section 7-101(B)(3) permits open and closed fences not exceeding 6' in height in any yard except the front. Section 7-202(C) of the zoning ordinance permits the Board of Architectural Review to waive or modify a fence where the board finds such a fence is architecturally appropriate and consistent with the character of the district. Section 7-202(A)(5) of the zoning ordinance permits trellis, arbors and pergolas (80% open) in any required yard, except a front yard.

Staff believes the proposed fence and pergola are appropriate in materials, design and scale to the house at 130 Prince Street and surrounding neighborhood. Although the angled boards of the

louvered design are somewhat unusual, Staff believes they will not appear much different from a standard flat board fence when viewed from Prince Street, some 40' away. The wall and fence will be 7' high at the rear of the property when measured from the alley grade, but only 6' when measured from grade at the subject property. For zoning purposes the measurement is taken from within the property and thus the wall and fence will meet the zoning requirements under Section 7-101(B)(3). Neither the fence or pergola will be readily visible from the public right-of-way due to obstructions in the viewshed and a substantial setback from the sidewalk.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the wall, fence and pergola as proposed.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 A construction permit is required for the retaining wall shown on the plat plan.

C-2 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

Office of Historic Alexandria:

“No comment”