

Docket Item #'s 22 & 23
BAR Case#'s 2005-0142 &
2005-0143

BAR Meeting
July 6, 2005

ISSUE: Addition and alterations and Waiver of Vision Clearance Requirement

APPLICANT: Lance L.J. Marine

LOCATION: 700 South Royal Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends:

1. Approval of the Waiver of the Vision Clearance Requirement;
2. Deferral for restudy of the design details of the addition; and,
3. Approval of the garden wall as submitted.

If the Board approves the addition, Staff recommends the following additions conditions:

4. 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,
5. 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 #21 must be approved before this docket item can be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is seeking approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a three story addition to abut the north sidewall of the existing house on this corner lot, currently identified as 700 S. Royal Street. Proposed alterations also include the reconstruction of the perimeter garden wall, adding masonry piers and steel railing in lieu of existing pickets.

The west elevation is proposed to be altered by closing the existing door opening and inserting a double hung window to match the existing one at this level. It is further proposed to excavate an areaway to provide access to the basement at this location, and the opening of the wall to include a window and a door into the space. The north elevation will be entirely encapsulated by the new structure.

Alterations to the rear elevation include extending the first floor approximately 8' to the east, with a bank of three casement sash and a French door. The upper level of this extension will be a deck with wood posts and iron railings, topped by a trellis-like structure in wood. One window will be converted to a door for access to this deck.

The garden is enclosed by an existing wall, comprised of a low masonry base, widely spaced piers and wood pickets. The garden itself is defined by a large specimen tree on the west and three smaller trees on the east side, separated by areas of lower shrubs. The trees will not be affected by the construction of the addition.

The addition is conceived as the next unit in the group of attached houses in that it is the same width as the others, 17', and presents a two bay, side gable facade to the west, facing Royal Street. There are two shallow recesses on the attic level above the windows below, replicating rhythm and scale. The side gable facing north or Franklin Street is broken into two planes, for the purpose of mitigating the scale of the building. The pavilion portion of the facade has a balanced two bay scheme at each level, with a single opening centered under the lower gable at the attic level. What appear to be flush soldier courses of brick to simulate a projecting belt

course contain two shallow recesses similar to those on the front elevation. The easternmost third of the elevation is set back about 2' from the plane of the pavilion and contains the main entry, under a shed roofed porch canopy resting on slender masonry piers. The east slope of the higher gable roof has a large dormer of wood frame, topped by a segmental arched roof of unknown materials. The main roof is to be slate.

II. HISTORY

As noted in docket item #21, 700 South Royal Street is part of Yates Garden and dates from the mid-20th century.

III. ANALYSIS

Applicant received vacation approval of the city land fronting on Franklin Street (VAC#2003-0006). Proposed addition complies with zoning ordinance requirements and VAC approval #2003-0006.

The proposal to re-construct the perimeter garden wall represents an upgrade in the materials and durability of the system, and in the main, an improvement in the streetscape scale of the feature. The substitution of the large-radius curve at the corner in lieu of the hard 90 degree masonry corner is an additional refinement which will enhance the setting. Staff recommends approval of the proposal for the wall as submitted.

The basic concept for the addition, which in large measure amounts to a complete new house, is carefully modeled to fit well in both of the streetscape elevations and in the spatial setting of the existing garden. As such, the basic premise complies with the spirit and intent of the guidelines for additions to residential structures and approval is generally recommended.

There are, however, some detail questions which should be examined before full and final approval can be recommended. The roofing material for the dormer needs to be specified. As detailed, the brackets and posts of the deck appear to somewhat heavily proportioned and could be refined in larger scale details. It is recognized that this feature will be largely out of the public viewshed however. The shed roof at the new main entry is both anomalous in form and somewhat out of character with the vocabulary of the larger development. The slender piers and framed sidewall in particular seem to be inconsistent with the refinement of the generic revival vocabulary. The issue is further complicated by the fact that the new primary entry is located at the rear of the side elevation, highly inconsistent with the typical front side hall entry, and even with traditional houses where a side entry exists but is usually centered on the facade. The location question can be accepted as a function of a modern plan concept which clearly provides a degree of differentiation to denote new from old. The primary concern is how to accomplish the "entry statement" in a more compatible manner. Staff recommends consideration and study of a gable roof entry canopy, to be compatible with the larger concept of the side gable north elevation. Given the scale and other constraints of the site, the structural supports for the porch roof might work better in wood framing, rather than masonry.

The intersection of South Royal and Franklin Street is a four way stop. As such, Staff has no objection to waiving the Vision Clearance Requirement.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends:

1. Approval of the Waiver of the Vision Clearance Requirement;
2. Deferral for restudy of the design details of the addition; and,
3. Approval of the garden wall as submitted.

If the Board approves the addition, Staff recommends the following additions conditions:

4. 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,
5. 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 All exterior walls within 5 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides of the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance. Openings in exterior walls between 3 and 5 feet shall not exceed 25% of the area of the entire wall surface (This shall include bay windows). Openings shall not be permitted in exterior walls within 3 feet of an interior lot line.
- 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.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

No comment.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 Tax records indicate that houses were present on this block by at least 1810, although the exact addresses are not known. The current development property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities 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 all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

- F-1 Although the applicant is requesting a vision clearance waiver for a fence within the 100 foot vision clearance, T&ES Staff does not support the proposed placement of the fence within the vision clearance if the fence height is greater than 3½ feet.
- R-1 A plot plan showing all improvements and alterations to the site must be approved by T&ES prior to issuance of a building permit. The footprint, elevations, and proposed parking on the plot plan shall be consistent with what is proposed in this application. (T&ES)
- R-2 Relocate the proposed fence outside of the vision clearance or reduce the height to 3½ feet. (T&ES)
- R-3 Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R-4 An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R-5 If construction of the residential unit results in land disturbing activity in excess of 2500 square feet. The applicant is required to comply with the provisions of Article XIII of the City's zoning ordinance for stormwater quality control. (T&ES)
- R-6 City Code Section 8-1-22 requires that roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation & Environmental Services. (T&ES)
- C-1 All utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3)

C-2 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61)