

Docket Item #28
BAR CASE# 2005-0151

BAR Meeting
July 6, 2005

ISSUE: Addition and alterations

APPLICANT: Douglas and Grace Marie Turner by Stephanie Dimond

LOCATION: 415 Wolfe Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. Contact Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks prior to any ground disturbing activity (such as coring, grading, filling, vegetation removal, undergrounding utilities, pile driving, landscaping and other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of The Zoning Ordinance) on this property. City archaeologists will provide on-site inspections to record significant finds;
2. 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,
3. The above statements in 1 and 2 must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.

Note: Docket item #27 must be approved before this docket item can be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition of a larger front porch on the east elevation of the main house as well as other alterations to the freestanding residential townhouse at 415 Wolfe Street.

Porch

The new porch will replace the existing porch, but will be several times as wide as the existing porch. The new porch will be approximately 28' in overall length, 8' in width and one story in height. It will be constructed of wood with handrails and turned wood columns. There will be a standing seam metal roof to match the existing materials.

Alterations to east addition

The existing ganged wood double hung wood windows on the east elevation of the east addition will be replaced with a pair of French doors. Three skylights will be installed on the one story section of the east addition.

Fence

The existing stockade fencing will be removed and replaced with a brick wall of the same height constructed of brick to match the existing pattern and texture.

II. HISTORY:

The residential structure at 415 Wolfe Street is a freestanding two story brick flounder center hall plan townhouse whose nucleus dates from ca.1788 according to Ethelyn Cox in *Alexandria Street by Street* (p.199). The east wing and loggia were largely re-worked by Ward Brown in ca. 1930.

Earlier this year, the Board approved an addition and other alterations to this residence (BAR Case #2005-0023, 3/2/05).

III. ANALYSIS:

Proposed porch and replacement wood fence to brick wall complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

Porch

A one story porch has existed on the east facade of the main house since at least the early 20th century. Prior to 1935 it was somewhat larger than the present fence and evidence of this earlier porch is found on ghosting marks on the building wall as well as on the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps. Staff also notes that there are a number of other flounder houses in the historic district that have attached porches. Specifically Staff notes examples in the 500 block of Queen Street and the 300 block of South St. Asaph Street. While Staff believes that the existing porch represents a studied Colonial Revival design response regarding 18th century architecture from the work of a master, Staff is persuaded that a somewhat larger porch is an acceptable alternative that continues the Colonial Revival response into the 21st century. Therefore, Staff finds the proposed porch acceptable.

Alterations to east addition

Staff finds these alterations to the late 20th century porch of this addition acceptable. In addition, they are largely obscured from the public right-of-way.

Fence

Staff believes that the proposed brick replacement fencing is historically replacement fencing. The *Design Guidelines* note that mass produced stockade fencing is “not appropriate in the historic districts.”

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

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. Contact Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks prior to any ground disturbing activity (such as coring, grading, filling, vegetation removal, undergrounding utilities, pile driving, landscaping and other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of The Zoning Ordinance) on this property. City archaeologists will provide on-site inspections to record significant finds;
2. 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,
3. The above statements in 1 and 2 must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 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-2 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-3 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 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-6 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-7 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

This changes the entire facade and puts a large porch with railings into an area which was far simpler.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 This property has the potential to yield significant archaeological resources dating to the 18th and 19th centuries. The possibility exists for the recovery of materials that could provide insight into the lives of Quakers and African Americans in Alexandria. The primary significance of the site stems from its association with John Butcher, a merchant and member of one of City's prominent Quaker families. The nucleus of the house at 415 Wolfe may date from at least the 1780s, and in 1783, the first Quaker meeting in Alexandria may have been held in John Butcher's residence on the property. In addition, the 1877 G.M. Hopkins Insurance Atlas indicates that there were at least three other residences on the current lot near the corner of Wolfe and S. Royal Streets. The corner property also served as a barbershop for Jimmy Redd, an African American businessman.

While the proposed addition is small and is not in the vicinity of any of the known structures on the lot, there is the potential for construction activities to uncover buried evidence of past activities.

- .R-1 Contact Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks prior to any ground disturbing activity (such as coring, grading, filling, vegetation removal, undergrounding utilities, pile driving, landscaping and other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of The Zoning Ordinance) on this property. City archaeologists will provide on-site inspections to record significant finds.
- R-2 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-3 The above statements in R-1 and R-2 must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.