

Docket Item #3
BAR CASE# 2005-0176

BAR Meeting
September 7, 2005

ISSUE: Accessibility ramp and alterations

APPLICANT: Beulah Baptist Church

LOCATION: 320 South Washington Street

ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the Beulah Baptist Church building at 320 South Washington Street. The alterations include a new accessibility ramp at the front of the building and new concrete areaway and metal egress stair at the rear of the building.

Accessibility Ramp

The proposed ramp will run along the west (front) facade in a north-south direction on the north side of the entrance. The ramp will be 9'7" in length and have metal handrails, flagstone paving and will have a brick knee wall. On the south side of the facade a new brick stair will be installed with facing to match the ramp.

Alterations

On the north side of the building an existing window near the rear of the building on the first level will be infilled with brick to match the existing.

On the rear elevation, a new metal egress stair and metal egress door will be installed at the entrance on the south side of the building.

II. HISTORY:

320 South Washington Street is a two story front gable brick Gothic Revival church housing the Beulah Baptist Church. The building was originally constructed in 1863. The roof was raised two feet between 1885 and 1902. "The roof was raised again some years later, and the newer brick has a different bond than the lower section of the facade. Most of the facade has pressed brick in a running bond pattern; however the upper half of the gable is six-course common bond. Similarly the front facade shows clear evidence of alteration of the brick in the gable indicating that the roof pitch was substantially increased." (Source: National Register nomination form, African American Historic Resources of Alexandria, Virginia) A cornerstone states: "Rebuilt 1950".

The Board has approved a number of alterations to the building in the last several years. In 2004 the Board approved a new faux slate roof (BAR Case #2004-0176, 9/1/04). In 1996 the Board approved an awning over the front entrance (BAR Case #96-105, 6/5/96).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed accessibility ramp and alterations comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff has no objection to the accessibility modifications and the other alterations proposed for the building. The accessibility ramp and adjacent stair utilize the brick vocabulary of the building to blend with the existing architecture while creating needed improvements. The rear alterations are well removed from the public right-of-way and while merely functional do not detract from the architectural integrity of the building.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The proposed handicap ramp encroaches on the public right of way.

- C-1 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

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

- C-3 Before a building permit can be issued on any proposed future alterations, a certification is required from the owner or owner's agent that the building has been inspected by a licensed asbestos inspector for the presence of asbestos (USBC 112.1.4).

- C-4 The handicapped ramp must comply with the requirements of USBC 1003.3.4. The front approach to the exterior door (which is on the pull side) must comply with the landing requirements of USBC 1003.4.5. Handrails must comply with USBC 1003.3.4.7.

- C-5 Required exits, parking, and accessibility within the building for persons with disabilities must comply with USBC Chapter 11.

- C-6 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.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.