

Docket Item #5
BAR CASE #2005-00195

BAR Meeting
September 7, 2005

ISSUE: Alterations to previously approved plans

APPLICANT: Steve Stylianoudis and Vallery Vandegrift

LOCATION: 508 North Columbus Street

ZONE: RB/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the wood decks and railings be painted or stained to match the trim of the house.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to previously approved plans for a rear addition to the brick residential rowhouse at 508 North Columbus Street. Previously, at the March 16, 2005 hearing, the Board approved revisions to the design for the new rear addition to include a second story deck and an elevator. Subsequently, at the June 1, 2005 hearing, the Board approved changing the door to the deck from a single door to a pair of multi-light doors. The current application calls for additional alterations to this same elevation. The elevator shaft location is to be shifted from the right to the left side of the elevation and the basement level door is to be a pair of multi-light doors. This door will match and be centered above the paired door below in the first story. Previously, there was a single, off center door in the basement level. As with the previously approved plans of the rear addition, the door will be wood with simulated divided lights, the walls will be clad in fiber cement and the decks will be wood.

The rear of the house is visible from Alfred Street as well as from the public alley behind the property.

II. HISTORY:

508 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 building has had minor alterations over the years, including new windows, doors and stoop. As mentioned above, the Board approved alterations to the previously approved plans for a rear addition on June 1, 2005 (BAR Case #2005-00114) and on March 16, 2005 (BAR Case #2005-00038). Prior to that, the Board approved new plans for a rear addition (BAR Case #2005-0002/3, 2/2/05).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alteration complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff believes the proposed alteration complies with the *Design Guidelines* and is acceptable. The proposed alteration further regularizes the rear facade, matching the basement level door to

those above. In addition, with the latest proposed alterations to the previously approved plans for 510 North Columbus Street (BAR Case #2005-196), item #6 on the docket, the two rear elevations will be highly regular and will be a mirror images of each other. Such repetitiousness of appearance is not generally appropriate, given the highly individualized development of the district. However, this row of eight attached houses had identical rear elevations until recent decades. Thus the proposed alterations will reestablish that condition for these two adjacent houses.

Staff does note that the March 16, 2005 approval included the condition that the wood decks and railings be painted or stained to match the trim of the house. As this note is not present on the drawings, Staff recommends that the condition be repeated.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the wood decks and railings be painted or stained to match the trim of the house.

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.

- C-10 The handicapped elevator must comply with the requirements of USBC Chapter 11 and related requirements of the USBC.

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.