

Docket Item #14  
BAR CASE# 2005-0180

BAR Meeting  
September 7, 2005

**ISSUE:** Alterations

**APPLICANT:** Zahra Khosravijou

**LOCATION:** 221 North Washington Street

**ZONE:** CD/Commercial

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends denial of the application.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is seeking approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of new metal railings to replace horizontal rail boards at the second level of the two level porch on the street elevation of 221 North Washington Street. There is no railing at the lower level of the porch which is at grade.

The proposed railing sections in metal would replace wood boards in the full width of the upper level porch structure.

**II. HISTORY:**

The building at 221 North Washington Street is part of a contiguous row of Federal Revival townhouse offices constructed in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Period detailing is simple and restrained such as is exemplified by the wide flat surrounds at the door and window openings and the square columns refined by only a shallow ovolo at the top with a narrow necking band simulating a capital.

In 2004, the Board approved the signs for Solage International Hair Salon & Spa (BAR Case #2004-0187, 9/23/04).

**III. ANALYSIS:**

The proposed alterations comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

As noted, these structures were built in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> c for commercial use and were intended to be generic infill Federal Revival style row houses. They are not architecturally distinguished but do form a generally compatible backdrop to the streetscape. The two level porch or gallery on the street elevation of the building is an unusual manifestation of a feature usually found on the side or flounder wing of historic examples. It establishes an anomalous treatment, a fairly subtle way to differentiate the modern adaptation from the historic precedent. The horizontal board configuration is typical of historic examples and is appropriate for this installation.

Although the front porch, double gallery feature is noted as an anomalous feature, it is nonetheless consistent with and appropriate to the basic vocabulary of the simplified Federal Revival architecture of this complex. The proposed elaborate metal railings are more typical and appropriate for structures from the mid to late years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and would be visually and historically inconsistent with the character of that earlier stylistic system. This proposal is not an acceptable, compatible solution for this building. The porch should retain its basic simplicity with a wooden rail system.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Therefore, Staff recommends denial of the application.

## CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

### Code Enforcement:

- 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 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:

“Is there a source for the use of this design?”