

Docket Item #13
BAR CASE# 2005-0206

BAR Meeting
September 21, 2005

ISSUE: Replacement windows
APPLICANT: Downtown Baptist Church
LOCATION: 212 South Washington Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the windows be wood, true divided lights with Staff to approve the final window selection.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of five windows on the north elevation of the Downtown Baptist Church at 212 South Washington Street. The windows are located on the first story of the church along a private alley which is used by the Church for parking. The windows are proposed to be aluminum clad windows with 3/4" simulated divided lights.

The windows will be visible from South Washington Street.

II. HISTORY:

The Downtown Baptist Church, at 212 South Washington Street, is constructed on the site of the First Baptist Church, ca. 1805. The original building burned in 1829 and was rebuilt shortly thereafter. When this structure proved too small, a second floor and the present facade were added in 1858 in the Lombard style of northern Italy. Although S.T.G. Morsell was the architect of record, the design is attributed to noted architect Thomas Tefft of Rhode Island because of stylistic similarities to his other church designs in Connecticut and a sketch for an Alexandria church in his files (Morrill, Penny. Who Built Alexandria ?, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, 1979, p. 25-26).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed window replacements comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

As proposed, the windows do not comply with the *Design Guidelines*. The *Guidelines* list "plastic, vinyl and metal windows" as discouraged window types (Windows - Page 2). Staff does not support the use of aluminum clad windows on this historic church which is located on the George Washington Memorial Parkway. The Board is particularly concerned with protecting the memorial character of the Parkway which passes through Alexandria as Washington Street. Staff believes that the windows should therefore reflect traditional building materials found throughout the district and on Washington Street.

Staff notes that the windows are removed from the public right of way. However, Staff believes that the introduction of a second window type, is not appropriate. Staff also feels strongly that the windows should be true divided lights to match the original windows. Staff believes that simulated divided light windows are not appropriate for this 19th century structure which is located on the George Washington Parkway. Although the existing windows are not believed to be the originals, they are true divided light wood windows. They are appropriate to the early period of construction and conform to the *Design Guidelines*, which clearly state that true divided light wood windows are the preferred window type (Windows - Page 2).

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the windows be

wood, true divided lights with Staff to approve the final window selection.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

No comments.

Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”