

Docket Item #4
BAR CASE #2005-0232

BAR Meeting
November 2, 2005

ISSUE: Addition and alterations

APPLICANT: Nicholas Lucarelli

LOCATION: 715 South Lee Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy. However, should the Board approve the project, Staff recommends inclusion of the following conditions:

1. That there be no fire-rated windows installed on the front or south side elevations of the historic main block;
2. That any replacement windows on the historic main block be wood, true-divided-light windows with a two-over-two configuration;
3. That the shutters be hinged and operable;
4. That the front cornice be retained;
5. That the front mansard roof be either true slate or metal shingles, to be approved by Staff;
6. That the wood siding on the historic main block be either repaired and retained or replaced with wood German siding to match the original siding; and,
7. That the fiber cement siding be used only on the new additions and 1978 addition and that it be smooth and installed so that the nails do not show.

Note: Docket item #3 must be approved before this docket item may be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for two areas of addition and various alterations to the two story, free-standing, frame house at 715 South Lee Street. The two additions are located at the back of the main block and the rear addition. In addition, the application includes a number of alterations to the existing historic main block, including changes to the fenestration pattern and replacement siding and windows. The front and side elevations of the house are visible from South Lee Street. The proposed work is explained in greater detail below:

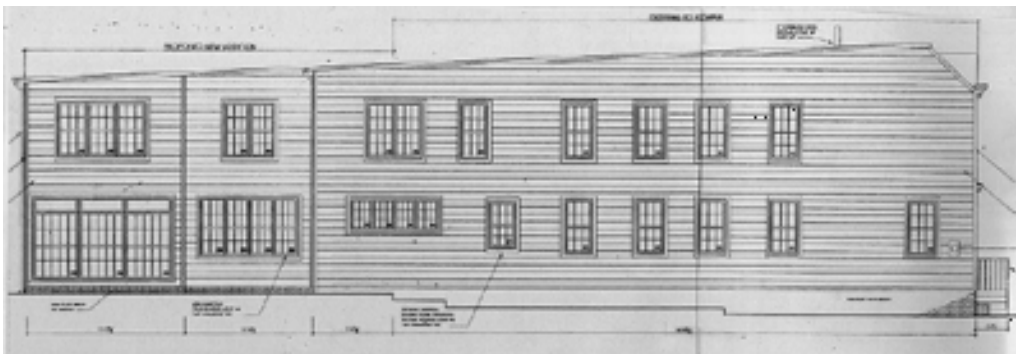


Figure 1 Proposed south elevation

Additions:

A small infill addition (5.6' wide and 7.8' long) will be located at the southwest corner of the main block adjacent to the existing rear addition. This addition will continue the roofline of the main block and will appear as an extension of it. On the south elevation, it will have a ganged row of four small nine-light windows on the first floor and a pair of long 12-light windows on the second floor. These window groupings extend into the existing main block, replacing two existing windows. Per code requirements, these new windows, located on the property line, must

be fire-rated. As Staff understands, fire-rated windows must have metal sash and frame and must be fixed. The applicant has provided a cut sheet for steel windows manufactured by Optimum Window Manufacturing Corporation and has been asked to bring samples of the proposed fire-rated windows to the hearing. The rear (west) elevation of the addition will have a pair of 12-light fire-rated windows on the first and second floors. This addition will be clad in painted Hardiplank siding as will all elevations except the rear (west) wall of the new addition. There will be an aluminum gutter across the rear and a downspout at the southwest corner.

A larger addition (13.7' wide by 15.6' long) will be located at the back of the existing rear addition. It will continue the same roofline as the existing addition. On the south elevation, the new rear addition will have a set of three ganged, full-length, 20-light windows with transoms on the first floor and a ganged set of three 12-light windows above in the second floor. These windows, located approximately 3' from the property line, must be fire-rated.

The rear (west) elevation of this addition will have a pair of full-light french doors flanked by fixed full light windows and surmounted by transoms on the first floor. The second story will have a ganged set of three 12-light windows with full-light transoms above. The notes on the drawing indicate that the windows and doors on the rear elevation are shown will be true-divided light with 7/8" muntins. The applicant has provided a cut sheet for Marvin wood windows. The drawings indicate that this elevation will be clad in painted 8.5" wood siding. The drawings do not include the north elevation of the new addition. It is assumed that it is blind and clad in Hardiplank. The flat roof of the new addition will be a single-ply membrane roof. There will be an aluminum gutter across the rear and a downspout at the southwest corner.

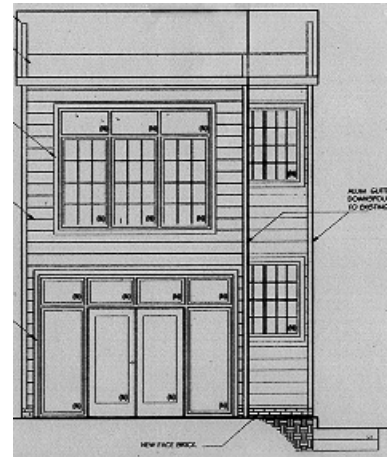


Figure 2 Proposed west elevation

Alterations:

South elevation - A 12.5' long section of the existing rear addition will remain exposed on the south elevation. The existing simple fenestration consisting of a door on the first floor and window on the second will be completely reworked. This elevation will have a set of four ganged 12-light windows on the first floor and a set of two 12-light windows above on the second floor. These windows will be fire-rated.

There will be a number of alterations to the fenestration of the south elevation of the main block, which currently consists of twelve matching windows, aligned vertically with six per floor. A new window of a similar size is proposed at the front (east) end. Although not indicated on the plans as fire-rated, Staff believes that code requires that this new window be a fixed steel window in steel frame as shown elsewhere for new openings. Toward the rear (west) end of the south elevation, the last two windows on the first and second floors will be removed and new windows in slightly different locations will be installed. Each of the windows in new locations will be fire-rated (fixed, steel windows and frames). On the first floor, the window on the right will be replaced with a shorter window in the same location. The window above it will be

replaced by a window of the same size, but located slightly more to the west. The first floor window to the left will be eliminated, with a section of the new ganged set of four extending into its former location. The window above that will be eliminated and replaced with a new ganged pair, a portion of which will extend into its former location. The remaining windows will be double hung windows with true- divided-lights and 7/8" muntins in a six-over-six configuration. These are assumed to be wood windows by Marvin. The existing windows are wood, six-over-six windows which are believed to date from the second half of the 20th century. The existing asbestos shingle siding is to be replaced with Hardiplank siding with an 8.5" reveal. The cornerboards will be Hardiplank. There will be a 2' high, 6" diameter aluminum pipe on the south side of the roof near the front to vent a new fireplace.

Front elevation - The applicant also proposes to replace the windows of the front elevation with double hung windows with true- divided-lights and 7/8" muntins in a six-over-six configuration. Again, these are assumed to be wood windows by Marvin. There will be new wood louvered shutters at the windows. The existing beveled wood siding on the front is to be replaced with Hardiplank siding with an 8.5" reveal. The cornerboards will be Hardiplank. Staff is not certain whether the cornice is to be retained and painted or to be replaced. The railing at the front stoop will be replaced with a simple metal railing. The brick stoop and foundation will be repointed and repaired.



Figure 3 Proposed east elevation

North elevation - No drawings were provided for the north elevation.

Staff assumes that there will be no new openings in the north elevation, which is on the property line and that the existing asbestos shingle siding will be replaced with Hardiplank siding with an 8.5" reveal.

Site

There will be a new at grade patio with pavers set in a concrete pad at the rear of the new addition. A new HVAC condenser unit will be located at the end of the patio on the north side. The brick planter at the front will be repaired and repointed. No other site alterations were indicated.

The front (east) and north and south sides of the house are visible from South Lee Street.

II. HISTORY:

As discussed in docket item #3, the detached, two story frame house with faux mansard roof and Italianate cornice appears to date to before 1877. The rear addition was approved in 1978 (building permit #10358).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed additions and alterations meet the requirements of the zoning ordinance.

Staff is pleased that this neglected historic property will be rehabilitated and finds the proposed additions and alterations to be generally acceptable. The proposed additions are reasonably

sized, particularly in view of the large size of the historic main block and the size of the T-shaped lot. Staff does note that the new addition will extend at least 36' beyond the rear of 713 South Lee Street, the house to north. On the other hand, it will extend only 8' or so beyond the rear of 717 South Lee Street, the house to the south. However, Staff does have a number of minor concerns about the additions and alterations:

Infill addition

The infill addition at the southwest corner of the historic main block appears as an extension of the historic main block. According to the *Design Guidelines*, “an addition to a historic building should be clearly distinguishable from the original structure.” (Residential Additions - Page 5). Optimally, Staff would like to see any addition here be pulled in from the south side elevation so that the full extent of the historic building can be “read” and understood. However, at the very least, Staff believes the addition should be designed so that it is readily viewed as a separate and new piece. One step toward this goal would be to leave all the fenestration on the historic main block as it is and begin the new ganged fenestration pattern on the new construction. Of course, this would, require alterations to the interior plan.

Fire-rated windows

In addition Staff is concerned about the appearance of the fire-rated windows. The fixed steel windows will not have the same appearance as double-hung wood windows and are not typical of or compatible with 19th century residential construction. The juxtaposition of the two types on the south elevation will be odd. Staff does not object to their use on the areas of modern construction, but would prefer to see them eliminated from the historic main block. Staff is particularly concerned by the proposed new window at the front of the south elevation. This window will be readily viewed from the public right-of-way. While the plans do not indicate that it will be fire-rated, Staff’s understanding of code requirements suggests that it must be.

Windows on the historic building

Staff is pleased that the applicant is proposing to replace the existing wood windows with new wood windows with true-divided lights. Based on building permit records, the windows at the front, and probably, the side were replaced in 1968. A photo accompanying the permit shows the original windows to have had a two-over-two configuration, as would be expected for a building of this type and date of construction. Staff has already urged the applicant to consider using two-over-two windows on the historic main block rather than six-over-six. This would further serve to distinguish the new construction from the old. Staff has no objection to the proposed addition of shutters on the front of the building. However, the shutters must be hinged and operable as required by the *Design Guidelines* (Shutters, Page 1).

Front cornice

The note on the drawing regarding the cornice is unclear. The existing historic cornice should be retained.

Mansard roof

The applicant is proposing to replace the shingled mansard roof with faux slate shingles. It is the policy of the Boards to require the use of roofing materials that are historically appropriate for

the period of the structure (*Design Guidelines - Roofing Materials*, Page 1). In this case, either true slate or metal shingles would be appropriate.

Hardiplank siding

The applicant proposes to replace the siding on the front and south elevations with Hardiplank siding with an 8.5' reveal. The same siding is proposed for the areas of new construction. Staff assumes that the north elevation is to be clad in the same way as well although this information is not provided. Only the rear elevation of the new addition is shown in wood siding. The front currently has a beveled wood siding with a fairly narrow reveal. The building permit record indicates that the beveled siding replaced wood German siding in 1953. On a recent site visit, Staff noted areas of wood German siding exposed under the asbestos shingles on the north elevation. The Board has developed the following policy with respect to the use of fiber cement siding:

1. That fiber cement siding not be installed on an historic structure;
2. That historic materials should not be removed to install fiber cement siding;
3. That fiber cement siding replace other artificial or composite siding;
4. That the nails not show in the installation of the siding; and,
5. That smooth siding be installed.
6. That BAR Staff may administratively approve the installation of fiber cement siding on *non-historic* buildings (those constructed in 1975 or later).

Staff believes that the use of fiber cement siding on the historic main block is contrary to the Board's policy. The original siding was clearly wood German siding and any replacement siding should match the original in design, material and reveal width. Staff has no objection to the use of fiber cement siding on the new additions and 1978 addition, but notes that item #s 4 & 5 should be included as conditions of the use of the material.

To conclude, Staff recommends deferral to allow the applicant to explore alternatives for the infill addition at the southwest corner of the main block and to address the other issues discussed above.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral for restudy. However, should the Board approve the project, Staff recommends inclusion of the following conditions:

1. That there be no fire-rated windows installed on the front or south side elevations of the historic main block;
2. That any replacement windows on the historic main block be wood, true-divided-light windows with a two-over-two configuration;
3. That the shutters be hinged and operable;
4. That the front cornice be retained;
5. That the front mansard roof be either true slate or metal shingles, to be approved by Staff;
6. That the wood siding on the historic main block be either repaired and retained or replaced with wood German siding to match the original; and,
7. That the fiber cement siding be used only on the new additions and 1978 addition and that it be smooth and installed so that the nails do not show.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The existing dwelling has numerous windows along the South face of the structure at the 0 lot line. The proposed plans indicate replacement and addition of windows along this wall. Replacement in kind, without modifications to the existing openings will be permitted. Additional windows or enlargement of existing openings along this wall is prohibited. Furthermore, Code Enforcement recommends the removal of all windows along the South face due to the location of the windows in relation to the interior lot line.
- 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 of the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance. Openings in exterior walls between 3 and 5 feet shall not exceed 25% of the area of the entire wall surface (This shall include bay windows). Openings shall not be permitted in exterior walls within 3 feet of an interior lot line.
- 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.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”

Alexandria Archaeology:

“There is a low potential for this project to disturb significant archeological resources. No archeological action is required.”