

Docket Item # 9  
BAR CASE #2005-0243

BAR Meeting  
November 2, 2005

**ISSUE:** Alterations

**APPLICANT:** Christine and Steven Jobs

**LOCATION:** 402 North St. Asaph Street

**ZONE:** RM/Residential

---

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of Option #2 of the new wrought iron fence and gates but denial of the use of the pergola form on the front facade.

### **I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is seeking approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the alteration of the front facade by extending existing brick walls to create a full front courtyard and new fencing and garden gates, removing the existing brick stoops, adding a new wood pergola structure across the front facade, and new exterior light features.

### **II. HISTORY**

According to the 1986 survey, 402 North St. Asaph Street was constructed prior to 1891. The 1891 Sanborn map shows a two-story dwelling located on this lot.

There does not appear to have been any earlier requests for exterior alterations to this property before the BAR.

### **III. ANALYSIS**

402 North St. Asaph Street is a two-story brick structure with a hipped roof with simple architectural decorative elements. Currently, the property has a front garden wall surrounding a portion of the front yard area, creating a courtyard space.

The Petitioners are proposing to maintain the existing brick walls and extend the masonry to connect the existing walls, creating one full front courtyard. New front gates are proposed, with two options: one would consist of a new open wood fence and gate with decorative lattice top over the new section of the proposed front wall, and a new solid wood gate with decorative lattice in the existing gate opening; the other front gate option would use a wrought iron fence on top of the new front wall section with wrought iron gate. A new 42" wide solid wood gate is proposed for the rear access gate. This property appears to be an anomaly on this block of N. St. Asaph Street, being setback approximately 18' from the sidewalk. The adjacent properties maintain no setback from the sidewalks. While Staff is somewhat concerned with the full enclosure of the front yard area as a courtyard by the addition to the existing masonry walls and adding fencing, Staff can support Option #2 with the use of wrought iron fencing and gates to maintain some sense of openness. The guidelines state: "Ornamental iron or metal fences and gates are appropriate for late-19th and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Victorian structures."

---

The Petitioners are proposing to add a painted cypress pergola across the front facade, with a height of 10'4" from the top stoop, and would project 5'10" from the building's front facade. On the 12" square support columns, four exterior gas lantern fixtures will be affixed. Staff is concerned that the proposed pergola alters the simplistic character of the front facade and is not visually appropriate. The proposed pergola would alter the character of the front facade by introducing an architectural element that does not relate to the architectural style or time frame of the property. Pergolas are garden structures that tend to be located to the rear or sides of residential structures rather than on the front. Staff would recommend that the proposed pergola

be denied.

Other proposed alterations include removing the existing awning over the front door, adding louvered shutters on both sides of the French-style door to the existing courtyard, and new stone steps leading to the French-style door. Staff can support these alterations, as long as the new shutters on the side of the French-style door are operable and sized to fit the opening.

#### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of Option #2 of the new wrought iron fence and gates but denial of the use of the pergola form on the front facade.

## 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:

“Seems like a lot of decorative elements for the front facade of a more vernacular building.”