

Docket Item #13  
BAR CASE # 2005-0188

BAR Meeting  
December 7, 2005

**ISSUE:** Construction of a one story addition to the rear elevation; alteration to existing south elevation

**APPLICANT:** J. & Katy Kenny

**LOCATION:** 114 North Payne Street

**ZONE:** CD/Commercial

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### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends deferral to in order for the applicant to re-study the roof forms and pitch of the addition and that further study be given to the proposed new openings on the south wall. If the Board approves the application, the following condition should be included as part of the approval:

1. The statement below must appear in the General Notes of all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement:

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.

NOTE: Docket item #12 must be approved before this item can be considered.

### **I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is seeking approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a one story frame addition to the rear elevation of the house located at 114 North Payne Street.

The proposed new construction will abut the west wall of the existing two story addition. Two existing windows, a narrow door and a wood porch would be encapsulated or removed by the new work. In plan the new work measures 16' deep by 20.7' wide. The south elevation of the addition is visible in acute perspective from the street and has two window openings, proportionally and dimensionally the equivalent of the windows on the original front part of the house. A pair of shallow windows are set into wells below the upper sash and a new wood gate and fence is proposed to close the passageway between the house and the adjacent property.

The rear or west elevation is defined by a 4:12 pitch gabled "pavilion to the south which abuts a shallow shed roof plane to the north, an unusual configuration and one which recalls a more contemporary or suburban context than is usually found within the Historic District. The west wall has a single window to the north side, and a triple leaf French door with 8 lights and three light transom over each under the gabled "pavilion". A wood railing and steps define the narrow open porch deck which fronts the French door ensemble. A single window set into a well illuminates the new basement space under the wing. A 12" fascia defines the water table which is painted stucco over masonry substrate. There are no openings proposed for the north wall of the addition which rests upon the property line.

The new wing will be clad in wood siding, with narrow, flat corner boards and the roof is proposed to be covered with asphalt shingles. Window and door trim consists of flat board surrounds and lintels with aprons under the window sills.

It is proposed that the existing frame wing will be altered by the removal of a pair of small, anomalous double hung sash, which will be replaced by a bank of four eight light French doors contained within a common entablature. A corresponding bank of four transoms of six lights

each is proposed for placement above the doors but physically separated from them by a band of wall siding between the window sills and the door lintel. The door sills are shown to be at exterior grade level, not related to the main floor elevation and not clear with respect to interior space configuration.

## **II. HISTORY:**

The front part of the house facing the street was constructed in 1875 by a local carpenter who resided there. The house originally had a steeply pitched cross gable typical of “Gothic” cottages of the mid to late Victorian period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It may have had a full ensemble of “gingerbread” trim as was typical of these modest cottages but no images are known to exist showing this condition. The cross gable was removed, possibly in the 1980’s, and the existing two story addition was created probably in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> c. The fundamental character of the house has been compromised over time by these generally unsympathetic alterations.

## **III. ANALYSIS:**

On November 10, 2005, the Board of Zoning Appeals granted a special exception to construct a one story rear addition on the north side property line conditional on the review and approval of the Old and Historic Alexandria Board of Architectural Review.

The proposed addition will create approximately 331 sf of new space at grade. Most of the proposed details on the addition appear to be compatible with those on the existing house and the general proportions of new window and door openings are consistent with the overall scheme of the building.

The massing of the addition is basically compatible with the principle of subordination as it occurs at the rear of the building mass and is considerably and appropriately, lower in profile. To this point the project is generally acceptable. However, two important aspects of the project should be re-examined before a full recommendation for approval can be considered.

As noted above, the 4/12 pitch on the roof of the addition is a typical for the context and consideration for raising it substantially should be explored. It appears as if there is sufficient height in the area between windows of the second level of the existing wing to create a ridge for a more traditional and steeper gable for the main roof of the new wing. The porch/entry feature could be marked by a secondary gable of the same pitch but with a lower ridge elevation. It is believed that these changes can be effected without significant impact upon interior space allocation, not verifiable in the absence of a plan however.

The large bank of doors proposed for the south wall of the existing wing is anomalous in several respects. Preservation of historic fabric appears not to be an issue, but retention of traditional fenestration patterns and rhythm as well as the relationship of openings to wall planes (solid to void) should be considered as well. This proposal fundamentally opens up a substantial portion of the supposedly bearing wall in a glazed display perhaps more appropriate for a commercial than residential context. The question of light spillage onto the adjacent property should be considered as well. The question of the door sill relationship to grade is less significant, but the bay nearest the new wing should be perhaps pulled back slightly from the implied joint between

old and new work.

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

Staff recommends deferral in order for the applicant re-study the roof forms and pitch of the addition and that further study be given to the proposed new openings on the south wall. If the Board approves the application, the following condition should be included as part of the approval:

1. The statement below must appear in the General Notes of all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement:

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.

## 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 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.
- C-10 Basement windows shall meet the requirements for Emergency Escape per the USBC.

### Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 The G.M. Hopkins Insurance map shows that a house was present on this property by 1877. Therefore, there is the potential for archaeological resources to be present that could provide insight into residential life in early 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-3 The above statement in R-1 must appear in the General Notes of all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.