

Docket Item # 2
BAR CASE# 2005-0213

BAR Meeting
January 18, 2006

ISSUE: New residential building

APPLICANT: John Sheridan by Stephanie Dimond

LOCATION: 634 South Pitt Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

BOARD ACTION, SEPTEMBER 21, 2005: On a motion by Ms. Neihardt, seconded by Mr. Smeallie, the Board deferred the design of the new house for restudy. The motion passed on a vote of 7-0.

REASON: The Board members were concerned that the building was too tall at three stories and that the building needed to be smaller. Members also expressed concerns about the mansard roof and window configuration on the side elevation.

SPEAKER: Stephanie Dimond, project architect, spoke in support.
John Eisenhower, 630 S Pitt Street, spoke with concerns about the proposed design and the need for a sidewalk in front of the property..
Duane Deason, 632 S Pitt Street, spoke in opposition to the proposed three story height.

UPDATE: The plans have been revised. The footprint and basic concept remains the same but the third story is now within a gable roof and the dimensions of the footprint have shifted somewhat.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. The statement below must appear in the General Notes of the site plan 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.
2. The gutters and downspouts should be shown on revised drawings;
3. Cut sheets and/or materials samples should be provided for the windows, doors, roofing, siding, and bricks. Staff should approve the brick.
4. The applicant needs to confirm that the cementitious siding proposed has a smooth finish.
5. The applicant needs to confirm location and number of exterior lighting fixtures.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is seeking approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a three story, single family, detached, frame house to replace the existing two story frame house at 634 South Pitt Street. The Board approved the demolition of the existing house on September 21, 2005 contingent on the approval of the design of the new construction (BAR Case #2005-0024).

The proposed new house will have an "L"-shaped footprint with the long and narrow front block perpendicular to the street and the wider rear block at the back and extending toward the south property line. The front block will be 16' wide and 28' long and the rear block measuring 24' wide and 21' long. From the front, both blocks will share an intersecting gable roof.

At its highest points, the house will be 34' above grade, an additional 2' taller than the previous submittal. The roof will be clad in pre-finished standing seam metal roofing in black. The walls will be clad in cementitious siding, in a taupe color, with a reveal of 4". The trim and corner boards will be also be cementitious material and will be painted white. The windows will be double-hung, true-divided-light wood windows.

Front (west) elevation:

The 16' wide front block will have three bays with a porch at the first story. The shed roofed porch will rest on brick piers with lattice panels between the piers. The porch roof will also be pre-finished standing seam metal in black. The porch will be supported by painted tapered wood columns in white. The railing will be wood pickets. The first floor of the house will have three full length French doors opening onto the porch. A transom will be located above each door.

The door surrounds will consist of flat casing approximately 4" wide. The second story will have three two-over-two double-hung, true-divided light, wood windows centered over the doors below. The window surrounds will also consist of flat casing approximately 4" wide with a projecting sill and a simple cap. One single two-over-two double hung window will be located within the gable at the third floor.

An 8' wide section of the rear block will project beyond the back of front block on the south side of the house. This section will be set back 28' from the front wall of the house. There will be one large window on the first floor with what appears to be a two-over-two double-hung window, with a divided transom above. At the second floor, one two-over-two double-hung true-divided light wood window will be centered over the ground floor window. A gabled casement wood window with true-divided light will be located on the third floor, centered over the windows on the first and second floors.

Rear (east) elevation:

This elevation is 24' in width. In the first story, there will be two fully glazed wood French doors with transoms above that lead to a stone terrace. A brick chimney is centered on the elevation, separating the two French doors. The chimney will contain an exterior firebox with a raised hearth. On the second story, matching french doors will be located above the first floor doors. These doors will not have transoms, and will have what appears to be an iron railing. At the third floor, two gabled windows will be located on either side of the chimney and centered over the doors on the first and second floors.

North side elevation:

The intersecting gable roof runs the length of the house. The north elevation has six bays. The basement level is accessed by a pair of french doors and has one window well, both are largely below grade. The first story has only three, two-over-two double-hung wood windows located in the second, fourth, and sixth bays. The second story has a total of five windows, with four being casement wood windows with true-divided lights to simulate double-hung windows. These are located in the first, third, fourth, and sixth bays. A small square four-light casement window is located in the fifth bay. The third story has one casement wood window matching the ones on the second floor, located in the second bay. A grouping of three gabled windows is located at the third story, in the fifth bay.

South side elevation:

The first 28' of this elevation consists of the front block with the second 21' being the rear block. The front block elevation has three bays. The first and third bays each has a two-over-two window on the first and second floors. A paired casement gabled window is on the third floor. The main entrance to the house is in the second bay. The entrance consists of a wood, true-divided lite french door with sidelites and a simple flat surround. The door is accessed by a set of wood steps with wood rails and simple wood pickets. A two-over-two window is centered above the entrance in the second story. The rear block has two bays with an exterior brick chimney between the bays. There will be a four-light window in each bay at the basement level. These will be largely below grade and served by window wells. In each of the two bays on the first and second stories there will be a two-over-two window with a transom.

Other:

The applicant submitted a cutsheet on an exterior light fixture, which is manufactured by Arroyo in a Craftsman Berkley Series. However, there is no indication on the elevations where the light fixture(s) will be located. Staff requests the applicant to confirm the location and number of the light fixtures.

Site:

The application contains no information concerning changes to the site. However, the architect has confirmed that the submitted plans show the grade raised approximately 2' to meet the existing grade at the front walk. All fencing noted on the site plan appears to be existing. New wood gates with posts are proposed. HVAC units will be contained on the south elevation.

The front and side elevations will be visible from Pitt Street. The rear elevation will be partially visible from Franklin Street and the public alley to the rear.

II. HISTORY:

The existing two story frame house on the property appears to date to circa 1891 and to have evolved from a 1 ½ story structure to its present form with two major building episodes, the first in 1920, raising the structure to a full 2 stories, and the second in 1938, adding a 2 story rear addition. A small frame store/dwelling was also located on the south side of the lot for a short period in the first half of the 20th century.

The Board approved the demolition of the existing house on September 21, 2005 contingent on the approval of the design of the new construction (BAR Case #2005-0024).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed new single family house complies with the zoning ordinance requirements. The subject property is zoned RM/residential and is a lot of record as of February 10, 1953. Section 3-1108(c)(2) of the zoning ordinance requires one side yard of at least 5 feet for lots 25 feet to 35 feet wide. The proposed project requires a plot plan submission to be filed with Transportation and Environmental Services.

Staff has no major objection to the proposed new house and believes that it conforms to the *Design Guidelines* for new residential construction. The proposed house appears to reference the architectural spirit, if not the size or utter simplicity, of the existing house. Thus it will provide some sense of visual continuity and acknowledgment of the history of the site. The overall height has been increased by 2' and the Board expressed that they were concerned that the prior submittal at 32' was too tall. However, in Staff's opinion, the revision of the roof shape from the previous mansard to a gable helps to reduce the perceived mass at the front of the building. While the architectural detailing is simple, apparently in deference to the existing house, it provides sufficient visual interest to enliven the facades. The proposed siting of the new house is dictated largely by zoning requirements, but seems both logical and attractive. Lastly, while the proposed new house is considerably larger than the existing, it does not appear out of scale for the setting. The adjacent masonry residences are fairly substantial. Portions of the residential complex at 628-632 ½ North Pitt Street are three stories high and are more than 3' higher than the

proposed new house.

Therefore, Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. The gutters and downspouts should be shown on revised drawings;
2. Cut sheets and/or materials samples should be provided for the windows, doors, roofing, siding, and bricks. Staff should approve the brick.
3. The applicant needs to confirm that the cementitious siding proposed has a smooth finish.
4. The applicant needs to confirm location and number of exterior lighting fixtures.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. The statement below must appear in the General Notes of the site plan 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.

2. The gutters and downspouts should be shown on revised drawings;
3. Cut sheets and/or materials samples should be provided for the windows, doors, roofing, siding, and bricks. Staff should approve the brick.
4. The applicant needs to confirm that the cementitious siding proposed has a smooth finish.
5. The applicant needs to confirm location and number of exterior lighting fixtures.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The height of the structure exceeds the height and area limitations of the IRC. The structure shall comply with requirements of the USBC.

- 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 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-7 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-8 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

- C-9 Basement and third floor windows shall comply with emergency escape provisions of the USBC.

Historic Alexandria:

“Design is satisfactory, but is the space between the two flanking properties sufficient?”

Alexandria Archeology:

- F-1 The G.M. Hopkins insurance map indicates that structures were present on this block by 1877. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities in 19th-century 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-2 The above statement must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.
- C-3 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 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.