

Docket Item #4
BAR CASE #2005-0256

BAR Meeting
January 18, 2005

ISSUE: Additions and Alterations

APPLICANT: Lee Carosi

LOCATION: 519 South Lee Street

ZONE: RM Residential

BOARD ACTION, NOVEMBER 16, 2005: The Board combined the discussion of docket item #'s 9 & 10. On a motion by Mr. Keleher, seconded by Mr. Smeallie, the Board deferred the application for restudy. The motion passed on a vote of 6-0.

REASON: The Board was concerned about the proposed scale and mass of the new addition and its impact on the historic property.

SPEAKER: Dale Overmeyer, project architect, spoke in support.
Brendan Dunn, property owner, spoke in support.
Harry Mahon, 513 S. Lee Street, spoke in opposition.
Lawrence O'Connor, representing Historic Alexandria Foundation, spoke in opposition.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral to restudy the design in order to further reduce the mass and scale, with particular attention to eliminating the proposed addition area over the existing brick side porch. If the Board decides to approve the application, Staff recommends the following conditions be included:

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.
2. The above statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including sheeting and shoring and grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.
3. The Hardi-plank on the new addition should have a smooth finish, not the proposed “beaded smooth” and the nails should not show in the installation of the siding.

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

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a two-story addition at the rear of 519 S Lee Street and to add a second story to an existing one-story side brick porch.

The addition will be visible from South Lee Street and from the side from Gibbon Street. A brick side porch that was added after 1941 will have a second-story addition over the existing porch, which will visible from South Lee Street. There is no alley behind the project.

The addition will have a footprint of 459.6 square feet and will be constructed directly behind the existing historic property. The existing footprint of the house and side porch is 909 square feet.

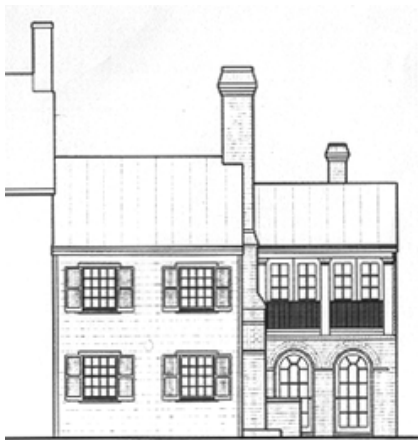


Figure 1 Previously proposed East elevation

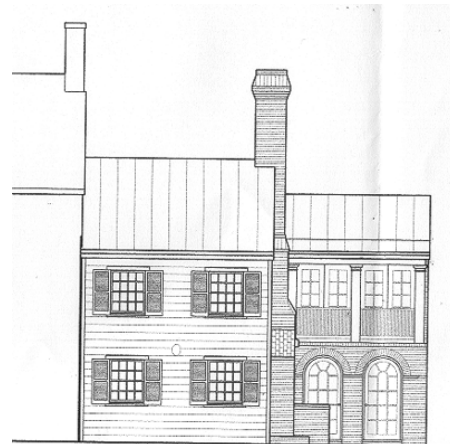


Figure 2 Current proposal for East elevation

Porch:

The existing side porch will be enclosed and an additional story added, with a balcony and railing. On the brick porch, new French-style doors will be placed within the existing arched openings. The new second floor will have Hardi-plank siding on the east elevation, with a “beaded smooth” finish. The second story addition will have a standing seam metal gabled roof, which will continue with the roof line of the new addition. On the north elevation, new brick on the ground level will match the existing brick in size, shape, color, texture, and bond pattern. Redwood or PVC trim supports and fascia are proposed for the balcony supports and railing. Two sets of double French-style doors will provide access to the new second level balcony. One new square window will be inserted on the east elevation between the balcony and the main section of the addition.

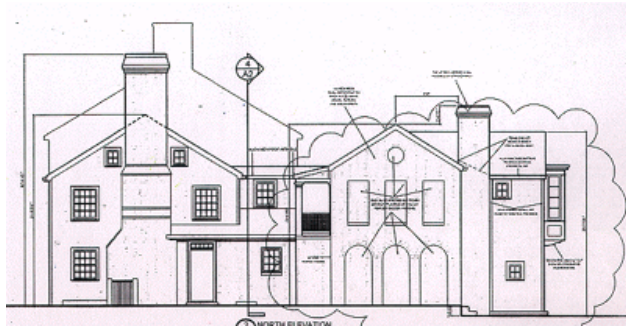


Figure 3 Previously proposed North elevation

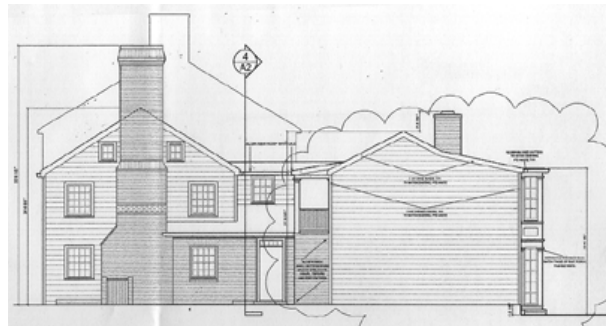


Figure 4 Currently proposed North elevation

New Addition:

The addition will be constructed to the rear of the main section of the historic house, off a later addition with a shed roof. The addition will be 25' 2 1/2" wide, with a depth of 17' 5 7/8". This is a reduction in foot print from the prior submittal. The addition will have a height of 21' 8 5/8" to the peak of the gabled roof, almost 2' in reduction of height from the prior submittal. The addition’s standing seam metal roof will also expand to cover the second story addition over the existing brick porch. On the north side, the addition will be constructed to the property line, which is allowed under the zoning ordinance if a 5' side yard setback is maintained on the other property line. However, the addition does not maintain the 5' side yard setback on the south elevation due to the bump-out of the chimney.

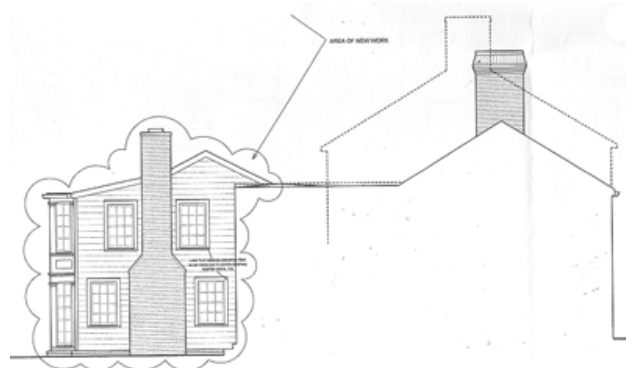


Figure 5 Proposed South elevation

The exterior of the addition as proposed will be “beaded smooth” Hardi-plank with a 7" exposure, painted beige to match the existing siding. All trim on the addition will be either redwood or pvc trim, painted white. All new rake boards, fascias, and soffits shall match the existing. The new soffits will have a 2" slot vent. The west elevation of the addition has been simplified in design from the November submittal. On the west elevation, a projecting squared-bay window on both the first and second floors will be constructed of redwood or pvc trim, to be painted white. This architectural detail is a change from the November submittal. The bays will contain windows on all three sides. It is unclear if these windows will be operable. Two single French-style doors will be located on either side of the bay windows, with two, nine-lite windows on the second floor centered over the doors. This is also a change from the November submittal. The addition will have a new chimney on the south elevation, constructed of brick to resemble the existing chimney.

All new windows and doors will be manufactured by Weathershield, with 7/8" simulated divided light. The windows and doors will have 4 3/4" trim with 4 3/4" thick cap.

II. HISTORY:

According to Ethelyn Cox's *Historic Alexandria, Street by Street, A Survey of Existing Early Buildings*, the two-story frame house was constructed before 1803 by Alexander Veitch (p.93). In 1942, J.D. Mathew, owner and architect, applied for a building permit to renovate the frame house and add a brick chimney, porch, and kitchen addition. The permit and accompanying plans suggest that the windows and window trim were replaced at that time (Building Permit #4636, 7/8/1942).

The Sanborn maps show a one-story rear addition on the 1921 map; however, the 1941 map shows the addition as two-stories.

The current owner came before the BAR in September 24, 2004, and received approval to replace windows on the front and side elevations with true divided light wood windows (BAR Case #2004-131).

III. ANALYSIS

The proposed addition does not meet the zoning ordinance requirements as proposed. The chimney bump-out on the south elevation decreases the required 5' side yard setback. The 5' side yard setback must be maintained by the whole of the facade of the new addition. The subject property is zoned RM and is a lot of record as of February 10, 1953. Section 3-1108(C)(2) of the zoning ordinance states that any lot of record which is at least 25 feet but less than 35 feet wide is required one 5.00 feet side yard. Under the previous submittal, the applicant met this requirement on the south side of the property. However, with the chimney bump out, the requirement is not met on the south elevation. The applicant will need to eliminate the chimney bump-out on the south elevation or seek a variance.

According to the Design Guidelines, “an addition to a historic building should be clearly distinguishable from the original structure. An addition should not obscure or dilute the architectural and historic importance of an existing building by creating a false sense of the past.

To create a differentiation between the existing building and an addition, different traditional materials can be utilized. For example, a wood addition would be appropriate for an existing brick residential structure. In addition, changes in the same building material can be used to create differentiation.”

The applicant’s architect met with BAR Staff on two occasions to discuss the project prior to the November submittal, and again after the November meeting. After listening to Staffs’ and BAR comments, the applicant attempted to reduce the scale and mass of the new addition, so as to not visually overwhelm the rather small scale, historic two-story frame house. While Staff appreciates the efforts of the applicant and their architect, particularly in respect to reducing the height and footprint of the new addition, Staff is still concerned about the addition over the existing brick side porch and maintains that this addition increases the perception of more mass for the overall addition. While the height of the addition is less than the height of the main house and has been reduced since the November submittal, the footprint of the addition is more than half the size of the existing footprint of the historic house and side porch. Also, by adding a second-story to the existing brick side porch, the massing of the additions appears even more overwhelming from the vantage point of South Lee Street.

The applicant’s use of roof lines, windows light-configurations, and materials helps distinguish the addition from the main house. However, the proposed “beaded smooth” Hardi-plank is not recommended. The Board’s Fiber Cement Policy states:

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, (non-simulated wood grain) siding be installed; and
6. That BAR Staff may administratively approve the installation of fiber cement siding on *non-historic* buildings (those constructed in 1975 or later).

While Hardi-plank may be used on new construction and additions, it should be a smooth finish. Staff would recommend that the Applicant use a smooth finish as a condition.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral to restudy the design in order to further reduce the mass and scale. If the Board decides to approve the application, Staff recommends the following conditions be included:

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.
2. The above statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including sheeting and shoring and

grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

3. The Hardi-plank on the new addition should have a smooth finish, not the proposed “beaded smooth” and the nails should not show in the installation of the siding.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 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-2 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-3 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-4 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 Alterations to the existing structure 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.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 According to Ethelyn Cox’s *Historic Alexandria, Street by Street, A Survey of Existing Early Buildings*, the house on this lot was probably constructed by Alexander Veitch prior to his selling it to George Noble Lyles in 1803. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into residential life in Alexandria during the early nineteenth century.
- 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 all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including sheeting and shoring and grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.