

Docket Item #15
BAR CASE #2006-0041

BAR Meeting
March 15, 2006

ISSUE: HVAC unit

APPLICANT: Donna A. Epperson

LOCATION: 211 North Alfred Street

ZONE: RB/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the lattice have a rectangular pattern rather than a diamond pattern; and,
2. That the HVAC screening fence be painted or stained within 6 months of construction.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of an HVAC unit and screening in the yard on the south side of the three story brick building at 211 North Alfred Street. The applicant proposes to place the HVAC unit at the back of the building adjacent to the rear porch. The HVAC unit will be 29 1/8" high by 34 1/4" wide by 38 1/4" deep and will be mounted on a 2" high plastic base pad. The unit will be screened on the west side by the back wall of the enclosed side porch and partially screened on the north side by the open rear porch. The applicant proposes to screen the unit on the east and south sides by a 3' high fence composed of 4x4 wood posts with diagonal wood lattice in between. The fence will be installed approximately 2' out from the unit to allow for easy access for maintenance.

The property is visible from the front along North Alfred Street and from the rear from the public alleys that form a T-shape on the interior of the block. The alley immediately to the south of the property is a private alley.

II. HISTORY:

211 North Alfred Street is a three story Victorian style brick house constructed between 1891 and 1896, according to Sanborn maps. At the time of construction, there was a house at 209 North Alfred Street, in the location of the present south side yard of 211 North Alfred Street. However, by 1901, that house had been removed and a porch had been added along the south side dogleg of 211 North Alfred Street. The side porch was subsequently enclosed on the first story. Staff could not locate any record of previous BAR approvals for the property.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed HVAC unit meets the requirements of the zoning ordinance.

In the opinion of Staff, the proposed HVAC installation is acceptable. The location of the unit at the rear of the house, adjacent to the rear porch will ensure that the unit is not readily visible. The proposed two-sided screening fence is acceptable, with the exception of the use of diagonal lattice. According to the *Design Guidelines*:

Modern mass-produced wood diagonal lattice is ... not appropriate in the historic districts. Wood lattice should have a rectangular pattern rather than a diamond pattern. (Fences - Page 2)

Furthermore, the application makes no mention of how the screening fence will be finished. The guidelines require that wood fences be painted or stained (Fences - Page 3).

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the lattice have a rectangular pattern rather than a diamond pattern; and,
2. That the HVAC screening fence be painted or stained within 6 months of construction.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 Construction permits are required for the proposed project.

Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”