

Docket Item #7  
BAR CASE #2005-0256

BAR Meeting  
April 5, 2006

**ISSUE:** Additions and Alterations

**APPLICANT:** Lee Carosi

**LOCATION:** 519 South Lee Street

**ZONE:** RM Residential

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the application, while expressing concern with the addition's impact on the integrity of the 1942 brick side porch and the following conditions to be included:

1. The HVAC units shown on the site plan within the southern side yard set back must be relocated in order to meet zoning requirements or receive administrative approval from the neighbor to be located within the required side yard.
2. All trim on the additions should be wood, or Harditrim, not pvc.
3. 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.
4. 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.

Note: Docket item #6 must be approved before this docket item can be considered.

**BOARD ACTION, FEBRUARY 1, 2006:** The Board combined the discussion of docket item #'s 4 & 5. On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Ms. Neihardt, the Board deferred the application for restudy. The motion passed on a vote of 4-3 (Dr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Wheeler and Ms. Quill were opposed).

**REASON:** The Board continued to express its concerned about the proposed scale and mass of the new addition and its impact on the historic property. The Board encouraged the applicant to listen to the Board's concerns and the concerns voiced by the public.

**SPEAKERS:** Brendan Dunn, property owner, spoke in support

Dale Overmeyer, project architect, spoke in support.  
Tim Elliott, representing Old Town Civic Association, spoke in opposition  
Lawrence O'Connor, representing Historic Alexandria Foundation, spoke in opposition  
Fred Parsons, 521 South Lee Street, spoke in opposition  
Tara Carter, 207 Wilkes Street, spoke in support  
John Groupe, 424 South Lee Street, spoke in support  
Jon Wilbor, 310 South Lee Street, spoke in opposition  
Twig Murray, 513 South Lee Street, spoke in opposition

**BOARD ACTION, JANUARY 18, 2005:** The Board combined the discussion of docket item #'s 3 & 4. On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Ms. Neihardt, the Board deferred the application for restudy. The motion passed on a vote of 4-3.

**REASON:** The Board was concerned about the proposed scale and mass of the new addition and its impact on the historic property. The Board encouraged the applicant to listen to the Board's concerns and the concerns voiced by the public.

**SPEAKER:** Dale Overmeyer, project architect, spoke in support.  
Brendan Dunn, property owner, spoke in support.  
Lee Carosi 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.  
Michael Hobbs, representing Old Town Civic Association, spoke in opposition.  
Tom Brosnan, 509 S. Lee Street, spoke in support.  
Stuart Dunn, 418 S. Lee Street, spoke in opposition.  
Frederick Parsons, 521 S. Lee Street, spoke in opposition.

**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.

(Insert sketch here)

Update: There have been additional changes and revisions in the design of the new addition as a result of comments from Board members and members of the public at the February 1, 2006 meeting. Staff met with the project architect following the February 1, 2006 meeting. The applicants and their architect have met with neighbors and civic groups since the February 1, 2006 BAR meeting to discuss revisions to the proposed addition.

**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 additions will be visible from South Lee Street and from Gibbon Street. There is no alley behind the property.

The revised addition will have a footprint of 399.8 square feet, reduced from the earlier 448.5 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.

**Porch:**

The existing side porch will be enclosed and an additional perceived half-story added with two dormers facing South Lee Street. The earlier proposal with a balcony has been eliminated. On the brick porch, new wood French-style doors will be placed within the existing arched openings. The new modified Gambrel roof of the addition will have a standing seam metal roof. The two new dormers facing South Lee Street will contain six-over-six double-hung aluminum clad wood windows by Weatheshield. The windows will be trimmed in redwood or pvc painted white. The north elevation has been revised to include a brick chimney, which will be flushed with the Hardi-plank siding. This chimney will closely match the design of a side chimney at 513 S. Lee Street, and was relocated from the south elevation on the earlier submittal. The height of the chimney has been reduced from the prior submittals.

**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 24' 2 " wide, with a depth of 16' 6 5/8". This is a further reduction in foot print from the prior submittals. The addition will have a height of 19' 2 ½" to the peak of the roof, a further reduction of height from the prior submittals. 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. On the south side, the site plan shows stairs leading to the basement and the location of HVAC units.

The exterior of the addition as proposed will be 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 earlier submittals. On the west elevation, a projecting squared-bay window on the second floor will be constructed of redwood or pvc trim, to be painted white. The bay 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. The addition will have a new chimney on the north elevation, constructed of brick to resemble the chimney located on the side of 513 S. Lee Street.

All new windows and doors will be manufactured by Weathershield, and will be aluminum clad wood windows 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 revisions of the addition comply with the zoning ordinance requirements, with the exception that side yard HVAC units must be located no closer than 5 feet from the side yard or request administrative approval from neighbor to be located in required side yard. The 5' side yard setback is maintained by the whole of the facade of the new addition on the south elevation, which has been revised since the January submittal. 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.

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.”

Staff would recommend that all trim on the new additions be wood or Harditrim, and not pvc.

The applicant’s architect met with BAR Staff on numerous times during this process to discuss the project and response from the BAR and the community. After listening to staff’s and BAR comments, the applicant has 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. This submittal further reduces the overall square footage of the new addition, addresses concerns of the location and impact of a new chimney, and attempts to lessen the visual impact of the addition on the early 19<sup>th</sup> century house.

Staff has reevaluated the project, looked at the direct impact on the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century house, how the addition is viewed from the primary vantage point (South Lee Street), and the attempts to keep the addition in line with the existing rear additions along South Lee Street. In staff’s opinion, the current proposal meets the Design Guidelines for the following reasons: the addition is visually compatible with the 19<sup>th</sup>-century house and does not negatively impact its historic and architectural integrity; the addition is compatible yet distinguishable from all historic sections of the house visible from the public right-of-way; and the addition is set back substantially from the primary public vantage point, South Lee Street, as to not disrupt the historic sense of place that characterizes the street. Staff still maintains that the 1942 brick side porch addition is historic and is concerned with the addition’s impact on its historic integrity and character. However, in the overall scope of the project, the current proposal does meet the Guidelines and Staff recommends approval.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application, while expressing concern with the addition’s impact on the integrity of the 1942 brick side porch and the following conditions to be included:

1. The HVAC units shown on the site plan within the southern side yard set back must be relocated in order to meet zoning requirements or receive administrative approval from the neighbor to be located within the required side yard.
2. All trim on the additions should be wood, or Harditrim, not pvc.
3. 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.
4. 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.

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.
- C-9 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.



Office of Historic Alexandria:

Area and volume have been reduced to meet the concerns of the Board but the placement of the dormer windows in the new proposal is awkward.

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.