

BAR Case #2006-0073
April 19, 2006

Docket Item # 12
BAR CASE #2006-0073

BAR Meeting
April 19, 2006

ISSUE: Addition and alterations

APPLICANT: Gregory and Pamela Chesterton by Robert Bentley Adams

LOCATION: 515 S. Fairfax Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the rear stoop and steps be no higher than 2';
2. That the fiber cement siding be smooth and that the nails not show in the installation; and,
3. That the following statement 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 #11 must be approved before this docket item may be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new one story addition.

The addition will wrap the circa 1960 rear ell, infilling the dogleg on the north side of the property. It will cover the full width of the lot and will be 18.9' beyond the back wall of the existing rear ell. The rear wall of the new addition will be even with the existing rear addition at 517 South Fairfax Street, to the south, and several feet back from the proposed new addition at 513 South Fairfax (BAR Case #s 2006-0070 and 0071 also on this docket).

The addition will have a flat roof clad in flat seam metal. It will be sided in fiber cement siding. The north and south elevations will be adjacent to proposed rear addition at 513 South Fairfax Street and the existing rear addition at 517 South Fairfax Street and thus will not be exposed (assuming the Board approves the addition at 513 South Fairfax Street). The only exposed elevation is the rear (west) elevation which will have a set of four simulated divided light french doors with a single simple entablature above. There will be an exterior light on the south side of the door. The doors will open onto a wood deck with a set of centered wood steps. There will be lattice at the base of the deck and wood railings at the front and south side. Due to open space limitations, the deck must be no higher than 2', approximately 1' lower than shown on the plans.

The house backs up to the Safeway building in the 500 block of South Royal Street. The alley behind the house is private and there is a 7' high brick wall at the back of the property. Views to the rear of the house are very limited now and Staff does not anticipate that the proposed addition would be significantly more visible.

II. HISTORY:

As discussed in docket item #11, the two story brick house at 515 South Fairfax Street was constructed c.1817 along with its twin, 517 South Fairfax Street. The modest two bay brick federal townhouse retains a high degree of integrity on the street facade. Based on historic mapping and BAR records, the current rear elevation of the main block and two story brick ell at 515 South Fairfax Street date to circa 1936 and 1960.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations and addition comply with the zoning ordinances requirements. The rear brick stoop must be no higher than 2' to ensure that the required open space remains.

Staff believes the proposed addition complies with the *Design Guidelines* and notes that the addition will not be readily visible from any public right-of-way. Staff notes the Board's policy regarding the use of fiber cement siding:

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 (not wood grained) siding be installed.

Items 4 and 5 should be noted and included in the conditions of the approval. Staff believes the use of simulated divided light doors is entirely appropriate here as the doors will be installed in new construction and will not be readily accessible to public view. Lastly, Staff notes the comments of Alexandria archeology and recommends that they be included in the conditions of the approval.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the rear stoop and steps be no higher than 2';
2. That the fiber cement siding be smooth and that the nails not show in the installation; and,
3. That the following statement 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.

Historic Alexandria:

The proposed re-design of the facade, especially the lower elevation, is incompatible with the early 19th century date of the house- too elaborate with railings, lattice, double stoop steps and doors.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 Tax records indicate the presence of free African American households on this street face in the early and mid-19th century, but the exact addresses are unknown. According to *Historic Alexandria, Virginia, Street by Street* by Ethelyn Cox, the house on this property probably dates to around 1817, when the lot was purchased by Levi Pickering. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities, perhaps relating to African Americans, 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 all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

- R-1 City Code Section 8-122 requires that roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation and Environmental Services.
- R-2 Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity.
- R-3 Any improvements to the city rightof-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design.
- C-1 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T & ES. (Sec. 5-3-61)
- C-2 Roof drains and sub-surface drains shall be connected to the city storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. (Sec. 8-1-22)
- C-3 Change in point of attachment or removal of existing overhead utility services will require undergrounding or a variance. (Sec. 5-3-3)