

Docket Item # 4  
BAR CASE #2006-0079

BAR Meeting  
May 3, 2006

**ISSUE:** Alterations  
**APPLICANT:** John and Caren Camp  
**LOCATION:** 208 South St. Asaph Street  
**ZONE:** RM/Residential

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

(Insert sketch here)

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a replacement garden gate and new basement window guards at 208 South Saint Asaph Street. The proposed gate and window guards will be fabricated of iron and will have a decorative scrollwork pattern. The gate and guards will be painted black.

The date of the existing wood paneled gate which is to be replaced is not known. A circa 1959 photograph shows the brick gate piers. The brick wall and gateway may be significantly older, however, Staff could not locate any Board approvals for these features. There are no window guards at 208 South Saint Asaph at present. The Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission holds an open space easement on the property. It has no purview over the existing improvements.

**II. HISTORY:**

The three story, Second Empire Victorian style brick residence at 208 South Saint Asaph Street was constructed in 1870 by William H. McKnight, according to Street by Street (Cox, p. 161). A two story brick, flounder style ell in the rear of the house runs along the north property line and appears to be original to the construction of the main house, based on its inclusion on the 1885 Sanborn Insurance map and a comparison of the brick bonding. For a period in the twentieth century, the house served as the “manse” for the Second Presbyterian Church (Cox, p. 161).

In 1932, the Board approved a tree house at 208 South Saint Asaph Street. On May 8, 1963, the Board approved cast stone replacement steps at the front entry. The Board approved a one story addition on the June 16, 1993 (BAR Case #93-99). On January 19, 1994, the Board approved alterations to the previously approved plans for the addition (BAR Case #94-16). The addition was completed in 1994. More recently, the Board approved installation of a gas lantern at the front door on the December 7, 2005 consent calendar (BAR Case #2005-0259).

**III. ANALYSIS:**

The proposed alterations comply with the zoning ordinance requirements.

Although preferring the simple appearance of the existing unguarded windows and wooden gate, staff does not believe the proposed changes are inappropriate for the property. Decorative ironwork similar to that proposed in the application would have been available in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the house was constructed, and was widely used for gates, guards and railings. Therefore, staff is not opposed to the proposed alterations.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 The installation of iron bars on basement windows shall comply with the USBC requirements for emergency escape and rescue.

Historic Alexandria:

The brick dwelling was begun by William H. McKnight, grandson of tavern-owner, William McKnight, in 1870 (Cox, p. 161). The proposed alterations are stylistically appropriate with the time period of the house.