

Docket Item # 7
BAR CASE #2006-0023

BAR Meeting
May 17, 2006

ISSUE: Addition
APPLICANT: Ann Sennewald
LOCATION: 326 South Pitt Street
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the proposed addition and deferral for restudy of the HVAC unit relocation and screening.

(Insert sketch here)

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

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new rear one-story sunroom addition to replace the existing one story sunroom addition at the rear of the historic brick building at 326 South Pitt Street. The existing one story frame addition measures approximately 8' long by 10' wide. It capsulates the rear (east) wall of the two story brick ell at the back of the house. The proposed new one story addition will be 11' long by 13'8" wide. It will also capsulate the rear wall of the two story brick ell and will extend beyond the ell to the south property line, closing off the dogleg along the south side of the rear ell. The existing shade garden created by the dogleg will remain and will be accessed by a door from the sunroom addition.

The rear of the house is visible from Wolfe Street, with the view somewhat obscured by the rear fence and the addition at 328 South Pitt Street.

The new 11' long by 13'8" wide sunroom will have a conservatory appearance, with a standing seam metal roof and a gable end over a pavilion projection. 22" x 22" skylights will be located in the gable section of the roof. The glass in the gable end will have wood mullions. The sunroom will have painted wood trim. On the east elevation opening to the rear courtyard, the sunroom will be largely glass with wood French-style doors with transoms flanking the central section with a grouping of two paired windows with nine-over-nine, simulated double-hung wood windows. A transom will be located over the paired windows and sidelights will also be incorporated. The French doors will exit onto wrought-iron 18" deep balconies in black, with one having a landing and two steps to allow access into the rear yard. On the sides of the pavilion projection of the sunroom, new six-over-six double-hung, simulated divided light wood windows will be used.

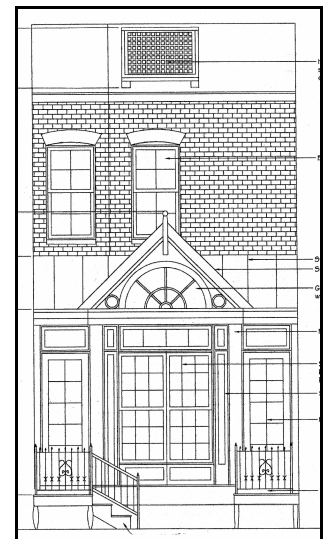


Figure 1 Proposed rear elevation

The applicant is also proposing to relocate an HVAC unit on the roof of the historic ell section of the property, to be screened with wood lattice on three sides.

II. HISTORY:

The row of four houses at 320-326 South Pitt Street were constructed between 1902 and 1907, according to the Sanborn Atlas maps. The two story brick houses were constructed with narrower rear brick ells. The front facades display modest late Victorian detailing. Several of the houses in the row of four, including that at 326 South Pitt Street, have had alterations to front doors and windows which seek to give them an earlier appearance. These additions most likely

were made in the last quarter of the 20th century. As early as the 1920s, some of the houses had frame additions or porches added to the rear and today all four have additions. The house at 326 South Pitt Street had a one story frame addition by 1941, according to the Sanborn Atlas of that year. However, from the footprint on the map, it appears that this addition was smaller than the present addition. Staff did not locate any record of BAR review for the house at 326 South Pitt Street.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed addition and alterations comply with the zoning ordinances requirements. On April 13, 2006, the Board of Zoning Appeals granted a request for a variance to replace and enlarge the existing rear one-story sunroom addition reducing required open space from 413 square feet to 368 square feet (44 feet) (BZA Case #2006-0010). However, Zoning Staff had recommended denial of the request. It was the opinion of Staff that there was no hardship and that the proposal would have an adverse affect on the development of the block. The interior of this portion of the block is open and visually unobstructed and Staff is concerned that the proposed addition will continue the pattern of the depletion of limited visual and useable open space.

The guidelines state that additions must be designed so that they are compatible with both the architectural character of the existing house and the immediate neighborhood. The design should respect the heritage of the historic building to which it is attached as well as adjacent buildings.

326 South Pitt Street has modest late Victorian detailing on the front facade, with later alterations to the front door and windows . In staff's opinion, the proposed new sunroom is compatible to the historic structure, but is distinguishable as new due to its styling as a conservatory. Despite being slightly larger than the existing sunroom addition, the proposed addition is still smaller in scale with the historic building. Its one-story height helps mitigate its visual impact on the historic building. While colors were not discussed in the applicant's submittal, staff would encourage the addition's colors, both the wood trim and the color of the standing seam roof, to be compatible and blend with the existing colors of the historic house, as well as adjacent properties. With a consideration of colors by the applicant, staff can support the addition and recommend approval.

However, staff is concerned about the relocation of the HVAC unit to the roof the historic ell and the lattice screening. As shown, the HVAC unit and its screening will be highly visible from Wolfe Street. Staff would encourage the applicant to explore other options for the location of the HVAC unit and would recommend deferring this component for restudy.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed addition and deferral for restudy of the HVAC unit relocation and screening.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 Side windows are located 3 feet from interior lot line. See C-1 below.
- 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 design of the addition seems incompatible with the simplicity of the neighboring homes. Also, the HVAC unit on the roof would be prominently visible, even with screening.

Alexandria Archaeology:

There is low potential for this project to disturb significant archaeological resources. No archaeological action is required.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

- R-1 City Code Section 8-1-22 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 & Environmental Services. (T&ES)
- 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)