

Docket Item #7
BAR CASE #2006-0157

BAR Meeting
September 20, 2006

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Benjamin Molayem
LOCATION: 703 King Street
ZONE: KR/King Street Urban Retail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends denial of the proposed new windows and relocation of the wall lanterns.

BOARD ACTION, SEPTEMBER 6, 2006: On a motion by Dr. Fitzgerald, seconded by Ms. Neihardt, the Board voted to approve the awning and signage as submitted and to defer the proposed windows for restudy. The vote on the motion was 5-0.

REASON: The Board agreed with the Staff analysis regarding the awning and signage and believed that the proposed windows should be reconfigured and their proportions changed.

SPEAKERS: G. Ray Lewis, project architect, spoke in support
Philip Madison, neighbor, expressed concerns about the proposed project

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends:

1. Approval of the new awning and associated signage; and,
2. Denial of the proposed new windows and relocation of the wall lanterns.

(Insert sketch here)

Update: At the last public hearing, the Board approved the proposed awning and signage and deferred for restudy the new windows proposed on either side of the entranceway. The applicant has provided a new rendition of these windows which will now project more than 6' inches from the facade of the building.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the commercial building at 703 King Street.

Two new single pane fixed windows are proposed to be installed on either side of the center door. These windows are proposed to be single pane and measure approximately 4'6" in height and 2'4" in width and project approximately 6 ½" from the building.

The existing wall scones are proposed to be relocated above each of the new windows.

The existing single light transom is proposed to be replaced with a new multi-light fan type of transom.

II. HISTORY:

The three story, three bay brick rowhouse at 703 King Street was probably constructed by Benjamin Baden ca. 1816-1817 according to Ethelyn Cox in *Historic Alexandria Street By Street*. As built it was a prototypical early 19th century side hall Alexandria rowhouse with a Flemish bond facade.

In the 20th century, the first floor of the building has been altered a number of times. In 1949 the Board approved adding flanking small metal bay retail windows on either side of the center door. In 1965 the Board approved a new design for the first floor of the building which included the removal of the 15 year old bay windows and infilling the existing openings with brick as well as changes to the entrance threshold.

Subsequently, the Board has approved numerous signs for a succession of retail tenants and restaurants that have occupied the first floor of the building. Within the last ten years the Board has approved an awning and signage for a restaurant tenant in 1998 (BAR Case #98-0156, 9/16/98) and in 1996 the Board had approved signage for a previous restaurant (BAR Case #96-0104, 6/5/96).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed projecting windows will require approval of an encroachment ordinance by the Planning Commission and City Council.

The small retail bay windows approved by the Board in 1949 appeared as if they were applied

window openings as opposed to punched window openings with project windows which are proposed in this application. The bay windows, as noted above, only survived for a relatively short period of time. Creating two new punched openings for windows in the first floor of the facade of this building will substantially contribute to the further destruction of any semblance of historic continuity of the first floor. On the other hand, this building as with other surviving early 19th century rowhouses on King Street has undergone reconfiguration of the first floor. Without exception the first floors of early 19th century buildings that have been adaptively re-used for commercial purposes along both sides of King have been radically altered and retain little or no historic integrity. However, with the building at 703 there is still surviving on the first floor the opening for the original door as well as a substantial amount of the original Flemish bond brickwork. Because of this staff believes that it is extremely important to retain what exists of the early 19th century building fabric and accordingly recommends denial of the proposed new windows and relocation of the wall lanterns. Thus, Staff does not recommend approval of an encroachment ordinance for the new windows.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends denial of the proposed new windows and relocation of the wall lanterns.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 Construction permits are required for this project.

C-2 Awnings must comply with all applicable requirements of USBC 3105 and 3202. Retractable and fixed awnings must have a minimum 7 foot clearance form a sidewalk to the lowest part of the framework or any fixed portion of any retractable awning is required.

C-3 Fixed awnings must be designed and constructed to withstand wind or other lateral loads and live loads required by the USBC. Structural members must be protected to prevent deterioration (USBC 3105.2).

Historic Alexandria:

Proposed awning obscures the stonework above the transom.