

Docket Item #10
BAR CASE # 2006-0233

BAR Meeting
November 1, 2006

ISSUE: After-the-fact alterations

APPLICANT: Jemals Cayre Murphys LLC by Michelle Vole

LOCATION: 108-112 South Washington Street

ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of an after-the-fact Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of HVAC ductwork and an exterior fan vent on the rear of the building. The existing ducting runs up the entire rear of the building and then turns and runs along the roof. The ductwork measures approximately 6'4" x 2'. The fan is installed approximately 10' above ground level and is 21" in diameter and extends 13" from the face of the building.

The ductwork and fan are currently an unpainted silver color, however, the proposal is to paint both a brownish color to blend with the brick work of the building.

II. HISTORY:

108-112 South Washington Street is a three story brick retail and office building that was constructed in 1947.

The Board approved signs for the current tenant of the building, Citibank, in September (BAR Case #2006-0182, 9/6/06). Alterations were approved to the storefront the Board in 2002 (BAR Case #2002-0108, 6/5/02) and re-approved in 2005 (BAR Case #2005-0060, 5/4/05).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed ductwork and fans comply with zoning ordinance requirements provided the applicant submits evidence of ownership of the rear alley.

The ductwork on the rear of the building was constructed without a building or mechanical permit. It is highly visible from the 600 block of Prince Street.

Because the ductwork is so large and outside of the building envelope it creates a disruptive visual intrusion to a severely planar building that adds a significant non-symmetrical discordant element to an otherwise fully modulated composition. While staff understands the necessity for modern HVAC equipment, staff believes that the size, location, form and configuration of the present ductwork should be restudied for a solution that respects the architecture of the historic district.

Staff does not believe that the fan is visible from the public right-of-way.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 Additions and alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit (USBC 108.1). Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application (USBC 109.1).

C-2 A Mechanical Permit will be required for this project.

C-3 An Electrical Permit is required for this project.

C-4 New construction shall comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.