

Docket Item # 11
BAR CASE # 2006-0272

BAR Meeting
December 20, 2006

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Rita and Thomas Greene
LOCATION: 523 Wilkes Street
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of a new wood railing to match the other railings on the house.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a certificate of appropriateness for a new metal railing to be located on the brick steps leading to the house, replacing a wood railing which matched the railing on the deck and porches. The applicant wishes to replace the railing in steel rather than wood because a wood railing presents maintenance problems. The railing will be located on the right side of the steps. It will attach to an existing wood post at the bottom of the steps. The top rail will be steel and will have a curved profile. The pickets will be 1" tube steel with a square profile. The railing will be painted white.

The alteration will be visible from Wilkes Street.

II. HISTORY:

The six houses at 513 through 523 Wilkes Street were constructed as a row in 1950 (Building Permit #04742, 3/28/1950) on what had been a vacant lot. Subsequent alterations have made the row appear less uniform. The Board approved alterations at 521 and 523 Wilkes Street on June 3, 1992 (BAR Case #92-121, 6/3/1992). This project joined and substantially renovated the two-story cinderblock houses to appear as one house with a gable and a flounder roofed section and a side porch. Staff could not locate any further Board actions for the property, henceforth known as 523 Wilkes Street. In 1995, the Board approved alterations to 513 Wilkes Street (BAR case #95-52, 8/20/1995). In 2004, the Board approved a permit to demolish for work at the rear of 519 Wilkes Street which was not visible from the public right-of-way (BAR Case #2004-0218, 10/20/2004).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alteration complies with the zoning ordinance requirements.

In the opinion of Staff, the railing on the steps should match the wood railings found on the deck and double porch of the house at 523 Wilkes Street. The previous railing in this location was a matching wood railing. This is what was approved by the Board in 1992 as part of the larger renovation project which joined 521 and 523 Wilkes Street. A wood railing is consistent with the overall design and the level of detail and quality found on the house. Therefore, Staff does not recommend approval of the proposed metal railing, but rather a wood railing to match the other railings on the house in dimensions, design and material.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of a new wood railing to match the other railings on the house.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

C-2 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

C-3 Construction permits are required for this project.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments.