

Docket Item # 13  
BAR CASE # 2006-0278

BAR Meeting  
December 20, 2006

**ISSUE:** Addition and alterations

**APPLICANT:** Robert Brandt

**LOCATION:** 219 South Royal Street

**ZONE:** RM/Residential

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** If the Board approves the proposed new addition, Staff recommends that the approval include the following conditions:

1. That the fiber cement siding be smooth and installed so that the nails do not show;
2. That any replacement windows in the brick section be true-divided-light windows;
3. That the front door, if replaced, be appropriate to the Victorian period of the brick portion of the house and be approved by Staff prior to installation;
4. That the skylights have integral shades; and,
5. That the following statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including sheeting and shoring and grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement:

Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.

(Insert sketch here)

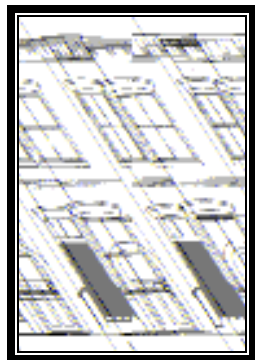
**Note** – Docket item #12 must be approved before this docket item may be considered.

**I. ISSUE:**

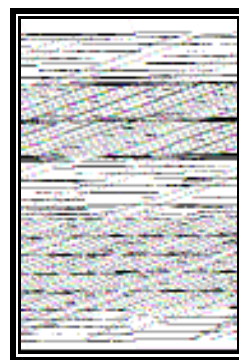
The applicant is requesting approval of a certificate of appropriateness for a new rear addition to replace the existing rear frame portion and for various alterations to the front brick portion of the house.

Addition – The proposed new two story rear addition will extend the across the full 14’6” width of the front portion of the house and will extend back approximately 30’6”. The addition will be on the same footprint as the larger of the two frame blocks that are to be demolished. The narrower and shorter rearmost block will not be rebuilt. Thus the gross floor area of the house will be reduced by 384.56 square feet. The new addition will have a flat roof that will be somewhat higher than the present roof at the back, but that will be no higher than the lowest point of the roof on the brick front portion. According to the drawings, the addition will be clad in Hardiplank “German siding.” It will have no openings on the south side, which is on the property line. It will have a pair of French doors on the north side in the first story. The doors will be Pella Architect Series wood doors with integral lights (simulated divided lights). The rear (west) elevation will have a pair of multiple light French doors flanked by full length windows with multiple lights in the first story. The second story will have a row of four ganged two-over-two double hung windows. There will be a Velux skylight at the east end and near the center of the roof.

Existing brick house – The applicant proposes to replace the existing multi-light wood windows in the front of the house with new Pella Architects Series, wood, simulated divided light, double hung windows. The new windows will have a two-over-two configuration. The existing front door is a six panel wood door. The drawings do not indicate whether this door will be retained or another six-panel door will be installed. Three existing window openings on the west side of the house (one standard window on the first story, one standard window on the second story, and one circular window lighting the stair hall in between the first and second stories) will be infilled. The drawings do not provide any information about how they will be infilled, but presumably it will be done with brick to match the existing. Two Velux skylights will be installed in the roof of the brick portion of the house. One is shown on the south side of the house above a bathroom. The other is above the new stairhall and spans both the brick portion and the proposed new addition. The drawings call for the existing brickwork to be patched and painted. Currently, the front (east) and south sides are painted but the north side is not.



**Figure 1 – Front elevation**



**Figure 2 – Proposed Rear Elevation**

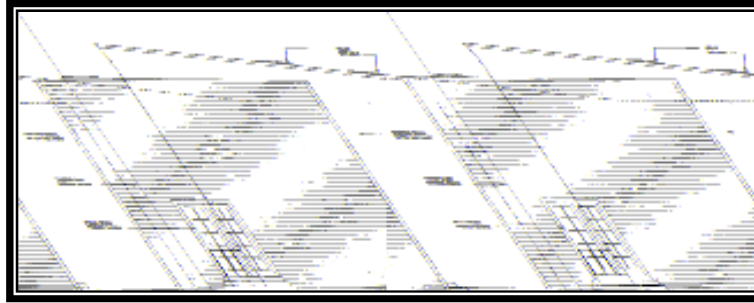


Figure 3 - Proposed north elevation

## II. HISTORY:

As discussed in docket item #12, the evolution of the house is not entirely clear. Portions of the house may date to before 1857. Between 1889 and 1890, significant improvements were made. These include either re-facing the front portion of the house in brick or tearing down the front and building an entirely new masonry structure. Physical evidence in the interior suggests that both the frame and brick portions may date to the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Staff could not locate any record of prior BAR review for this property.

## III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed addition and alterations comply with the zoning ordinance requirements.

As discussed in docket item #12, Staff believes the larger frame portion should be retained and restored. However, should the Board approve the demolition, Staff has no major objection to the proposed new addition. Its basic massing is very similar to the existing rear section of the house. The addition is to be clad in Hardiplank siding. The Board has adopted the following policy with respect to fiber cement products.

1. That fiber cement siding not be installed on an historic structure;
2. That historic materials should not be removed to install fiber cement siding;
3. That fiber cement siding replace other artificial or composite siding;
4. That the nails not show in the installation of the siding;
5. That smooth siding be installed; and,
6. That BAR Staff may administratively approve the installation of fiber cement siding on *non-historic* buildings (those constructed in 1975 or later).

As this will be new construction, the use of fiber cement siding is appropriate. However, the siding must be smooth (not wood grained) and must be installed so that the nails do not show. Staff notes that the drawings specify “German siding” but the submitted cut sheet shows “Smooth” (beveled) siding with a 6” reveal. Hardiplank does not make “German siding,” but their “Colonial” siding is similar. Either would be acceptable.

With respect to windows, Staff notes that the *Design Guidelines* recommend the use of true-divided-light windows and discourage the use of simulated divided light windows except in areas with minimal visibility from the public way (Windows – Page 2). However, Staff believes the use of simulated divided light windows and doors would be appropriate for the addition as it is new construction and the windows are well removed from public view. On the other hand, Staff believes the new windows to be installed in the front façade of the historic brick section should

be true-divided-light windows. These windows are immediately adjacent to the sidewalk and highly visible. As explained in docket item #12, Staff believes the two standard, rectangular window openings in the south wall of the brick section should be retained. If retained, these should also have true divided light replacement windows.

As noted above, it is not clear whether the existing six panel front door is to be replaced. If the door is replaced, the new door should be appropriate to the Victorian appearance of the brick front section and should be approved by Staff prior to installation.

Staff has no objection to the proposed skylights but recommends that they have integral shades to control light seepage at night. Staff notes that the skylight proposed for the south side of the house over the front bathroom will not meet code. It must be at least 3 feet from the property line.

The Boards strongly discourage the painting of previously unpainted masonry (*Design Guidelines*, Paint Colors – Page 1). However, Staff does not object to the proposed painting of the north wall of the brick section as the front and south side walls have already been painted.

It is assumed that the project will involve the installation of an HVAC system. If there will be any HVAC condensing units in the yard, their location must comply with the zoning ordinance requirements and they must be screened from public view. If placed on the roof, they must be screened with architectural materials or features of the same type and quality used on the exterior walls of the building or the applicant must apply for a waiver of rooftop screening from the Board (Section 6-403(B)(1) of the zoning ordinance).

#### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

If the Board approves the proposed new addition, Staff recommends that the approval include the following conditions:

1. That the fiber cement siding be smooth and installed so that the nails do not show;
2. That any replacement windows in the brick section be true-divided-light windows;
3. That the front door, if replaced, be appropriate to the Victorian period of the brick portion of the house and be approved by Staff prior to installation;
4. That the skylights have integral shades; and,
5. That the following statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including sheeting and shoring and grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement:

Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- 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:

No comments.

Alexandria Archeology:

- F-1 Tax records indicate that free black households were present on this street face in 1830 and 1850, but the exact addresses are not known. The G.M. Hopkins Insurance Atlas indicates that a house was present on this lot by 1877. The property therefore has the

potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities, perhaps relating to African Americans, in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Alexandria.

- R-1 Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
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