

Docket Item # 7  
BAR CASE # 2006-0295

BAR Meeting  
January 17, 2006

**ISSUE:** Alterations  
**APPLICANT:** Thomas & Rebecca Ellis by Robert Bentley Adams  
**LOCATION:** 105 Pommander Walk Street  
**ZONE:** RM/Residential

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

(Insert sketch here)

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting a certificate of appropriateness for alterations to the front façade of the three story rowhouse at 105 Pommander Walk Street. The alterations include the removal of the existing vinyl shutters and the installation of wood shutters at the first floor window, the addition of a door surround and the replacement of the existing door. The new shutters will be wood panel shutters sized to fit the window opening and with working hardware. The shutters will be painted. Only the first story window will have shutters. The new door will be a wood door with four panels and two lights, similar to the existing door. The door will be painted. The shutters flanking the door will be removed and a new door surround will be installed. The surround will consist of flat pilasters supporting a simple entablature. The surround will be of wood and Azek, a cellular PVC product. The top of the entablature will be flashed in copper. The existing coach type exterior light fixture to the left of the door will be replaced in the same location with a globe fixture with an historic appearance.

**II. HISTORY:**

105 Pommander Walk Street is a three story, brick clad rowhouse constructed ca. 1971 as part of larger development. The houses exhibit some variety in façade design, but all share a vaguely Colonial Revival design vocabulary. The Board approved alterations at 105 Potomac Walk in 1986, but the minutes do not record the exact nature of the alterations (BAR Case #86-110, 7/9/1986). More recently, the Board has approved a number of alterations for neighboring properties, including the installation of a pair of new windows on the side elevation of 100 Pommander Walk (BAR Case #2004-0148 & 149, 8/18/04) and replacement of the door and alteration of front steps to a ramp at 113 Pommander Walk (BAR Case #2002-0234, 9/18/2002 and BAR Case #2002-0157, 7/17/2002). The Board recently approved similar, but more extensive, alterations to the façade of a circa 1966 Colonial Revival type house at 500 Jefferson Court (BAR Case #2006-0247, 11/15/2006).

**III. ANALYSIS:**

The proposed alterations comply with the zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff believes the proposed alterations are appropriate and comply with the *Design Guidelines*. The removal of the shutters will improve the appearance of the house and bring the façade into compliance with the *Guidelines*, which call for the use of operational wood shutters mounted on hardware. The existing shutters are vinyl and nonfunctional. An early photograph of the house suggests that as built it had no shutters, except flanking the door. The arrangement of the windows in the façade makes use of shutters on the upper stories awkward if not impossible. Interestingly, the 1986 approval for alterations at 105 Pommander Walk was conditioned upon the elimination of shutters proposed for the second story windows (BAR minutes, July 9, 1986, p. 4). Apparently, the shutters were installed without approval. Staff has no objection to the use of operational wood shutters at the first story window where there is room for a full set of shutters. Staff also has no objection to the removal of the shutters at the door and the installation of the new door surround. The surround is simple and in keeping with the Colonial Revival design vocabulary of the house and its neighbors. Although Staff and Board prefer the use of traditional materials in the historic district, particularly in accessible locations, Staff does not object to the use of Azek in the door surround in this case as the house is not historic. The Board

has approved the use of Azek several times in recent months. Lastly, Staff believes the proposed new door and exterior light fixture are acceptable.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

C-2 A Construction permit will be required for the proposed project.

C-3 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

Historic Alexandria:

No comments.