

Docket Item # 9
BAR CASE # 2006-0270

BAR Meeting
January 17, 2007

ISSUE: After-the-fact approval of replacement windows

APPLICANT: Jessica Bernanke

LOCATION: 707 Chetworth Place

ZONE: RB/Residential

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 windows that have been installed at the residential rowhouse at 707 Chetworth Place. The windows that have been installed are vinyl casement windows with sandwich muntins and replaced metal casement windows. The windows were installed several years ago by the current homeowner.



Figure 1- south elevation



Figure 2- north elevation

II. HISTORY:

707 Chetworth Place is a two story brick and stone veneer revivalist style rowhouse constructed in the mid-20th century as part of a residential subdivision.

Last year the Board approved a rear addition to this house (BAR Case #2006-0243, 11/15/06). At that time members noted the windows that had been installed without approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness and included as part of the motion for the approval of the addition that an application be filed for approval of the windows as installed. This application complies with that condition.

III. ANALYSIS:

The installed window comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

The type of windows that have been installed, vinyl casements with sandwich muntins, are a discourage window type according to the Board's adopted *Design Guidelines*.

The Board has considered replacement windows for metal casement windows on numerous occasions in the last several years.

Staff is fully cognizant of the fact that numerous houses in this subdivision have had their original metal casement windows replaced and that the forms of the replacement windows have taken a variety of styles and configurations. Staff further notes that very few of the window replacements have been reviewed by the Board. However, in the instances in which the Board

has looked at replacement windows for these houses the Board has preferred windows that replicate, to the extent possible, the original window style and configuration.

Earlier this year the Board approved new replacement windows at 1322 Michigan Avenue (BAR Case #2006-0171, 9/6/06). Those windows were Andersen brand aluminum clad wood windows. In a case last year involving replacement windows at 1308 Michigan Avenue the Board required that all windows on the front, side and rear of the house (excluding the one story rear addition) be replaced with Marvin aluminum clad wood casement windows with simulated divided lights (as defined in this report) that replicate the appearance of the original windows as closely as possible (BAR Case #2004-0106, 3/2/05).

Windows are prominent features of any building, and particularly so for these houses. The small rowhouses are designed in a vaguely Tudor style vocabulary, including the use of brick and masonry veneers, steep gables and casement windows. Although a relatively modern technology at the time, metal casement windows were used in the Tudor style houses from the 1920s through the 1940s to evoke the multi-light leaded windows of Tudor England. Here casements of varying sizes and configurations are combined in a variety of ways, including with transoms, to lend visual interest to the relatively simple houses. While there has been considerable unapproved window replacement, the majority of the houses in this development still retain their original windows. Fortunately, many of the window replacements, though unapproved, attempt to replicate the appearance of the original multi-light casement windows.

The Board has considered the replacement of metal casement windows in a substantial number of other instances in the historic district. For example, the Board has approved the replacement of metal casement windows for a number of rowhouses in the 400 block of Gibbon Street. In 1991 the Board denied after-the-fact installation of vinyl replacement windows at 413 Gibbon Street. That decision was appealed to City Council which upheld the Board's decision. In 2001 the Board approved the request to replace the original steel casement windows with aluminum casement windows with fixed exterior muntins matching the original windows in configuration and operation at 408 Gibbon Street (BAR Case #2001-208, 9/5/01). That same year the Board approved after-the-fact the installation of vinyl casement windows with interior muntins at 412 Gibbon (BAR Case #2001-254, 3/6/2002). In 2002 the Board approved the replacement of the existing non-original vinyl windows with wood casement windows with fixed exterior muntins in a configuration similar to the original steel windows at 406 Gibbon Street (BAR Case #2002-173, 7/17/02). The following year in 2003 the Board approved the installation of wood casement windows with fixed exterior muntins in a configuration similar to the original steel windows at 421 Gibbon Street (BAR Case #2003-169, 10/1/2003). The next year, in 2004, the Board approved wood replacement windows for the metal casement windows at 419 Gibbon Street (BAR Case #2004-0061, 5/5/04). In the 600 block of South Pitt Street the Board also approved replacing existing metal casement windows with new wood true divided light casement windows in a rowhouse (612 South Pitt Street, BAR Case #2001-0128, 6/6/01).

In previous cases, the Board has also acknowledged that the repair of this type of window is difficult and expensive. However, the Board has recently approved the rehabilitation of metal casement windows as well as the use of new steel casement windows as part of a project for the

rehabilitation of a dwelling and construction of a new addition at 211 Lee Court (BAR Case #2006-00116, 7/5/06).

While staff is of the opinion that metal casement windows are a character defining feature of these Cotswoldian style cottages, Board members have expressed the opinion that metal casement windows are not an essential part of the visual characteristics that are significant to this rowhouse style. In a number of other instances the Board has indicated a strong preference for aluminum clad casement windows as a replacement for metal casement windows.

Thus, the Board has considered this style of window on a number of occasions and has approved a wide variety of treatments for replacement windows for houses with metal casement windows as well as the restoration of existing metal windows.

In the case of this application, therefore, staff believes that the vinyl windows that have been installed are inappropriate and that windows that are more appropriate to the architectural style of this rowhouse and that of the subdivision should be used as replacements.

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 No comments

Historic Alexandria:

No comments were received.