

Docket Item #5  
BAR CASE # 2006-0280

BAR Meeting  
March 7, 2007

**ISSUE:** Addition and alterations  
**APPLICANT:** Andrew Macdonald by Cathleen Curtin  
**LOCATION:** 217 North Columbus Street  
**ZONE:** RM/Residential

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

(Insert sketch here)

NOTE: Docket item #4 must be approved before this docket item can be considered.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for additions and alterations to the residential rowhouse at 217 North Columbus Street.

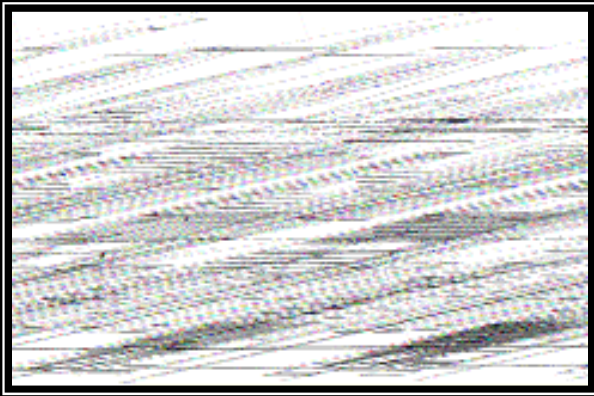


Figure 1- Proposed west elevation



Figure 2 - Proposed east elevation

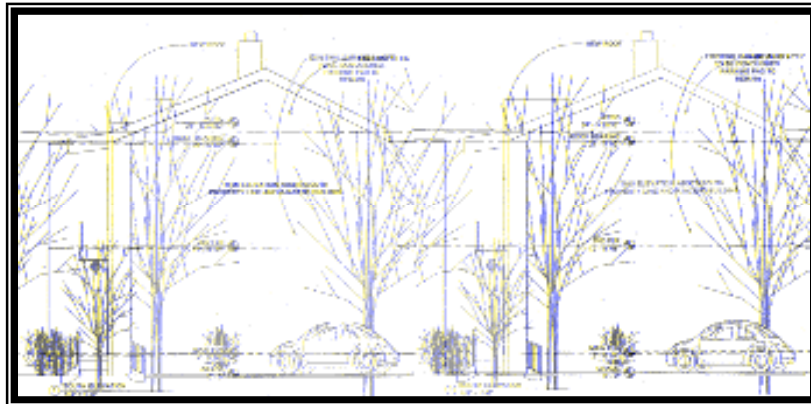


Figure 3 - Proposed south elevation

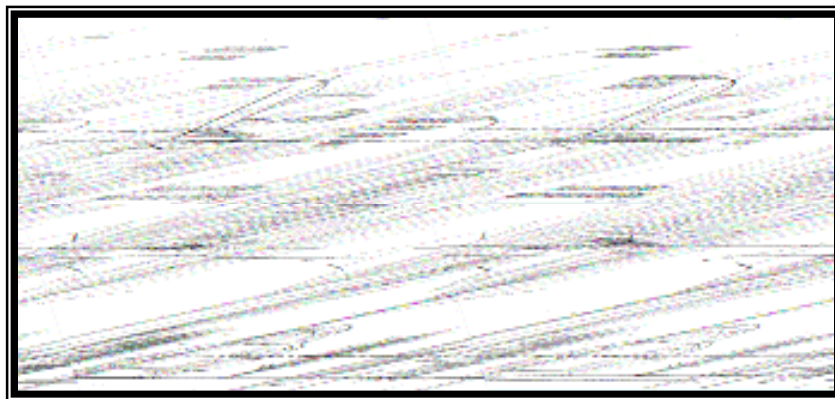


Figure 4 - Proposed north elevation

### **Additions**

Two sections of additions are proposed for the rear of the house to create a new bedroom and an enlarged kitchen. A one story addition will infill the existing open space between the rear ell and the north property line. This section will be approximately 5'6" in width and 11'7" in length with a skylight.

An addition at the rear will run across the entire width of the property, approximately 14'7" and will extend approximately 3'9" beyond the furthest point of the existing rear of the house. The first story of this rear section will have paired two-over-two windows and a multi-light door with a single light transom on the rear (east) elevation. A section of the addition will be built over the existing one story rear ell. This second story section will have paired two-over-two windows on the west elevation and on the north elevation.

The windows in the addition are proposed to be simulated divided light wood Kolbe and Kolbe windows.

The roofs of the additions will be flat. The material of the roof is not specified.

The type of siding has not been finalized. The applicant has provided three alternatives; to match the existing; to use a wood smooth bead board siding; or, a smooth lap siding.

According to the applicant, the door will match the existing. However, no cut sheets have been provided for the door nor has it been proposed that a door will be custom made.

A letter from the applicant indicates that an HVAC unit will be located on the roof. However, the submitted plans do not show an HVAC unit or the screening design.

Submitted detail sheets indicate that a light tube is proposed to be installed, however its proposed location is not shown on the plans. No cut sheet has been provided for the skylight shown on the plans.

The final paint colors have not been selected.

After the garage is demolished that area will be repaved and used for a surface parking pad.

### **II. HISTORY:**

217 North Columbus Street is a two story, two bay frame residential rowhouse that was constructed as part of a row of three similar townhouses (215, 217, & 219) in 1886.

### **III. ANALYSIS:**

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

The proposed addition is a relatively modest intervention for this house especially in comparison to the radical alterations that have taken place to the rowhouse immediately to the south. The additions basically continue the existing planes of the building and extend the envelope to the extent allowed under the provisions of the zoning ordinance.

While staff is concerned that the additions will infill and alter an essentially original rear elevation of an 1886 rowhouse designed by a significant architect, the proposed additions are, in most respects, similar to rear additions routinely approved by the Board for the rear of 19<sup>th</sup> century rowhouses throughout the historic district. Further, the overall integrity of the original design of these three rowhouses has already been substantially compromised by the alterations previously constructed and approved by the Board. Thus, staff concludes that the new additions and alterations to 217 will not further reduce the integrity of the design composition in a substantial manner over that which has not already been constructed and, accordingly, staff supports the overall design of the addition.

Staff is however concerned that the final details have not been selected or are inconsistent with the submitted drawings. For example, the applicant has not shown the location of the rooftop HVAC unit and design of its screening, and the location of a proposed Solatube. The applicant has also not shown the location and design of a Code required light fixture at the rear door and the proposed guttering system. Staff believes that additional information and clarification is needed including specifications of all materials prior to approval of the addition.

**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 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:

Request seems appropriate.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 The lot at 217 N. Columbus Street has potential to yield significant archaeological resources. The property is on the city block that contains the Lloyd House, built around 1798 by John Wise at the corner of Queen and Washington Streets. This house was

leased to Charles Lee (Attorney General under the administrations of Washington and Adams), James Marshall (brother of Chief Justice John Marshall), and Nicholas Fitzhugh (a circuit court judge) during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and the current development lot could contain artifacts associated with these early residents. In 1810, Wise sold the property to Jacob Hoffman, a merchant and former mayor of Alexandria. Hoffman built a sugar refinery and warehouse on the block that fronted on N. Washington Street. The current development lot would have been located in the rear yard of the sugar refinery structures. By 1832, Benjamin Hallowell, a Quaker educator, had adapted the structures for use as the Alexandria Boarding School, which served as a hospital during the Civil War. A Civil War Quartermaster's map shows a dead house and other structures in the vicinity of the development lot.

- R-1 Contact Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks prior to any ground disturbing activity (such as coring, grading, filling, vegetation removal, undergrounding utilities, pile driving, landscaping and other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of The Zoning Ordinance) on this property. City archaeologists will provide on-site inspections to record significant finds.
- R-2 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.
- R-3 The applicant must not allow metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
- R-4 The requirements stated in R-1, R-2, and R-3 above, must be included in the General Notes of all site plans, as well as on all site plan sheets that include ground disturbing actions. Additional statements may be required to be included on the Final Site Plans by Alexandria Archaeology.

Transportation & Environmental Services:

- R-1 City Code Section 8-1-22 requires that roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system. The building permit plans shall include information on the location of down spouts and/or sump pump discharge along with connections to a public storm sewer if within 100 feet of the property. If a connection is not available, other approved methods to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation and Environmental Services may be used. [Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (T&ES)
- R-2 Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- C-1 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61)

- C-2 Roof drains and sub-surface drains shall be connected to the city storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. (Sec. 8-1-22)
- C-3 Change in point of attachment or removal of existing overhead utility services will require undergrounding or a variance. (Sec. 5-3-3)