

Docket Item #8
BAR CASE # 2007-0051

BAR Meeting
April 4, 2007

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Michael Peck by Robert Bentley Adams
LOCATION: 420 North Union Street
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends deferral for restudy.

(Insert sketch here)

NOTE: Docket item #7 must be approved before this item can be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations of the residential rowhouse at 420 North Union Street, including modifying a front dormer, the front door surround, and a new garage door. The applicant is also requesting approval to demolish the rear dormer and construct a new one.

Front dormer:

The existing Palladian style front dormer located on the east slop of the front gable of the house will be modified. A new gable roof will be added to the dormer over the central section containing the semi-circular window. The roofing material of the gable will be field formed standing seam metal. The new moulding will be made of fypon and a fypon keystone will be installed above the existing semi-circular window in the dormer. Harditrim corner boards with fypon mouldings will be applied to the front sides of the dormer.

The applicant is proposing to add a new 1'8" panelized parapet above the existing parapet wall on both the front and rear sides. The material for this alteration is a harditrim cementitious material for the flat panels with harditrim or azek piers at the top cap.

Other front alterations:

The existing six panel front door will remain, however, a new historically patterned wood door surround with pilasters and a cornice is proposed. A new carriage style lamp fixture, in antique bronze finish, is proposed to be located to the right of the front door.

A carriage house style garage door is proposed to replace the existing door. The proposed door is a three panel/section painted wood garage door with three transom style windows in a six light configuration. New wood trim is proposed to be added above the garage door.

The applicant is proposing to add decorative "fypon" lintels above the windows on the second and third levels of the house.

Rear dormer:

The existing rear dormer will be removed and replaced with a new dormer of the same width, consisting of three sections, with a large central section containing new French-style casement windows, flanked by a single casement window on either side. The central section will have a pedimented roof. The roof will be metal. The dormer will be sided with smooth finish, cementitious siding with harditrim. The rear is not readily visible from the public right-of-way.

The new dormer windows will be simulated divided lite wood windows by Kolbe and Kolbe.

The applicant did provide information and manufacturer cutsheets on the proposed windows and details.

II. HISTORY:

The three-and-one-half-story brick veneer townhouse at 420 North Union Street was constructed

in 1974 as part of a complex of Federal revival style townhouses. When originally constructed, this development was not within the boundaries of the Old and Historic Alexandria District. Since that time, the boundaries have been adjusted and the property now falls within the boundaries. The Board has reviewed a number of applications for rooftop alterations to the houses in the 400 block of North Union Street. Many have involved the addition of rooftop balustrades/or dormers.

The Board most recently approved a new Palladian style front dormer at 430 North Union Street on February 7, 2007 (BAR Case # 2007-0012). The Board also approved a Palladian style dormer at 424 North Union Street (BAR Case #2002-187, 11/7/2001).

Staff could not locate any Board approvals for 420 North Union Street, including approvals for the existing dormers.

III. ANALYSIS:

Proposed changes comply with the zoning ordinance.

During the past several years the Board has reviewed a number of substantial alterations and additions to the properties within this development, including new Palladian style dormers at 420, 424 and 430 North Union Street.

Staff believes the proposed changes to the front dormer, the rear dormer, and the front door surround are appropriate and visually compatible with the adjacent townhouses. However, staff is concerned about the proposed addition of the panelized parapets, the new garage door, and particularly the fypon lintels above the windows on the front façade. These proposed design elements introduce a new and formal design vocabulary then has existed within this subdivision since its construction in the 1970s. Staff is concerned that by adding these design details, 420 North Union Street will adopt a higher style appearance than its neighbors, and disrupts the existing design simplicity of this development.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral for restudy.

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 Additions and alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit (USBC 108.1). Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application (USBC 109.1).
- C-3 A Construction permit will be required for the proposed project.
- C-4 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC)

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.