

Docket Item #'s 6 & 7
BAR CASE # 2007-0054
BAR CASE #2007-0055

BAR Meeting
May 2, 2007

ISSUE: Alterations & Waiver of Vision Clearance Requirement

APPLICANT: Erin & Charles Moseley

LOCATION: 701 South Pitt Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, MAY 2, 2007: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

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.
2. The above 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.

BOARD ACTION, APRIL 18, 2007: The Board combined the discussion of docket item #'s 14 & 15. On a motion by Dr. Fitzgerald, seconded by Ms. Quill the Board deferred the application for restudy. The vote on the motion was 6-0.

REASON: The Board did not agree with the staff analysis and noted that 7' high brick walls were not appropriate for Yates Garden and suggested that new plans be submitted for an appropriate fence.

SPEAKER: Charles Moseley, applicant, spoke in support

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, APRIL 18, 2007: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

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(Insert sketch here)

Update: The Board deferred the application at the April 18, 2007 meeting for restudy. The applicant has revised the design of the proposed garden wall along Franklin Street following guidance from the Board. However, the applicant has not made any changes to the proposed design for the front portico and wishes to keep the design as previously submitted to the Board.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations, including construction of a brick side yard garden wall along Franklin Street and a new wood portico at the front entry facing South Pitt Street. The applicant is also requesting a Waiver of Vision Clearance Requirement.

Wall:

The new brick garden wall will stretch 72' along Franklin Street and will replace the existing open wood fence. It will connect to the existing front brick wall and the existing rear brick wall. The design has been revised so that the wall will have 4 brick pillars of 6'2" in height. Between the pillars and recessed slightly, the wall will have brick 48" tall with an wrought-iron fencing on top, to provide a sense of openness. The wall will be constructed in a running bond pattern. The applicant has submitted photographs of similar walls found in the Yates Gardens area.

Alteration:

A new wood portico with round columns is proposed at the front entry. The columns will support a metal hipped roof, and will have crown molding. The new portico will extend approximately five feet from the façade of the rowhouse, covering the stoop.

II. HISTORY:

The two story brick dwelling at 701 South Pitt Street was constructed around 1941 as part of the Yates Gardens development.

Prior BAR approvals include a garage on November 13, 1952 and a fence on September 15, 1982.

III. ANALYSIS:

Fences in required front yards must be open and cannot exceed 3'6" in height. Also, in general, fences on corner lots cannot exceed 3'6" in any yard (Section 7-202(B)(3) of the Zoning Ordinance). Section 7-202(C) of the Zoning Ordinance permits the Board of Architectural Review to waive or modify the fence requirements where the board finds such fence is architecturally appropriate and consistent with the character of the district.

Staff supports the applicants' request for the construction of the brick garden wall and feels the revised design is more appropriate and compatible for the Yates Garden area of the historic district.

Section 7-802(C) of the zoning ordinance permits the BAR to waive or modify the vision clearance if appropriate and consistent with the historic character of the district.

Staff supports the applicants' request for the waiver of the vision clearance requirement, allowing for the construction of a garden wall along Franklin Street. A four-way stop exists at this intersection of Franklin Street and South Pitt Street. Therefore, staff believes that the new brick wall should not prove detrimental to safe traffic practices.

In regards to the proposed new front portico over the main entrance, staff is concerned about this new feature. However, staff is cognizant that such features have been approved by the Board recently and since the building dates from the 1940's, staff will support this request. Staff notes that the Board recently approved on March 21, 2007 a similar request for a front portico at 809 S. Royal Street (BAR Case #2007-0024). The applicant has submitted photographs of similar porticos found in the Yates Garden area.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

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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).
- C-5 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.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 The 1877 Hopkins fire insurance atlas indicates that this property is situated on part of the 2-block estate of Samuel Miller, deceased. Miller's house apparently faced Franklin Street. Tax records from 1830 suggest that the house was present by that time. Although construction of the current house on this lot could have disturbed some of the earlier resources associated with this early nineteenth-century estate, it is possible that evidence of deeper structures, such as wells, privies, or trash pits, could remain buried on this lot.
- 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.
- R-2 The above 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.