

Docket Item # 13  
BAR CASE # 2007-0106

BAR Meeting  
August 1, 2007

**ISSUE:** After-the-fact Alterations to Previously Approved Plans  
**APPLICANT:** Natelli Homes, LLC  
**LOCATION:** 715 South Lee Street  
**ZONE:** RM/Residential

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION, AUGUST 1, 2007:** Staff recommends approval of the application as previously submitted for the June 6, 2007 hearing.

**BOARD ACTION, JUNE 6, 2007:** On a motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Ms. Neihardt, the Board deferred the application for restudy. The vote on the motion was 4-0.

**REASON:** The Board believed that the after-the-fact change to the addition roof form was highly visible and that the applicant should have worked with staff or come back to the Board prior to making changes to the original approved plan and building permit. The Board agreed that the application should be deferred for the applicant to look at different alternatives to correct the situation.

**SPEAKERS:** Pete Della Pietra, applicant, spoke in support.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION, JUNE 6, 2007:** Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

(Insert sketch here)

UPDATE: In response to the Board's comments from the June 6, 2007, hearing, the applicant has submitted a revised drawing/elevation showing a proposal to attempt to correct the alteration from the previously approved plan by constructing a new parapet wall.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of after-the-fact alterations to previously approved plans for 715 South Lee Street. The Board approved alterations and a new rear addition for the property on November 2, 2005.

New Submittal:

The applicant is proposing constructing a new parapet wall along the north elevation of the addition. At its tallest peak, the new parapet will be 3'4" in height, and visible primarily from Franklin Street. The proposed parapet wall will be constructed of 2x6 wood framing. Under this proposal, the new parapet wall would screen the new rooftop HVAC units from views from Franklin Street. However, additional screening of the rooftop units will be needed on all sides to comply with the Zoning Ordinance.

The other alteration is the change in two windows on the south elevation.

June 6, 2007 Submittal Proposal:

The alterations consist of the following items:

- 1) Change in the addition from a flat roof with parapet walls to a low pitched shed roof with a cricket between the existing block and the addition;
- 2) Change in two window sizes on the south elevation;
- 3) New rooftop HVAC units and screening.

Staff discovered these alterations when a revision to the building permit was received. The applicants were made aware that these alterations needed to be approved and have been working with Staff to resolve the issues. When approved, the project was to have one continuous roof sloping down from the original historic house to over the new rear addition, with parapets on both the north and south elevations. It was also thought that the north elevation would not be visible from the public right-of-way.

Two new rooftop units have been installed on the roof, approximately in the middle of the building. The proposed screening for the rooftop HVAC units consists of German siding to match the exterior siding of the house. The units are visible from Franklin Street.

**II. HISTORY:**

The detached, two story frame house with faux mansard roof and Italianate cornice appears to date to before 1877, as a house with a similar footprint as the existing main block is shown on Plate C of the *G.M. Hopkins Atlas of Alexandria* in the same location, across from the Little Zion Colored Church, now Zion Baptist Church. The area was not mapped again until 1907 when the same footprint appears on the *Sanborn* map of that year. Based on mapping, the 57' long, rectangular main block of the house appears to have been present from the 1870s. The half mansard roof may be a latter alteration.

Prior to 1978 when the existing rear addition was approved, building permits and Board of Architectural Review records reveal only minor alterations including: replacing wood German siding on the front of the house with beveled redwood siding (building permit #10858, 5/28, 1953); replacing front windows, steps and installation of planter (building permit #25463, 6/21/1968 & BAR approval 6/19/68); and installation of pediment over front door (BAR approval 6/10/70). Photographs included with the building permit records indicate the front and south side windows had a two-over-two configuration and that there was a transom but no cornice over the door prior to this series of alterations. The building permit for the existing two story rear addition was issued on October 16, 1978. It appears that Board of Architectural Review approval was not required for the inset addition as it was determined that it would not be visible.

The Board approved the current project consisting of alterations and the rear addition on November 2, 2005 (BAR Case #2005-0231 and 232).

### **III. ANALYSIS:**

When the alteration to the roof slope was discovered, Staff and the applicant looked at several options to correct the situation. The applicant explained the alteration to the roof slope occurred during construction, when the Board-approved continuous slope was determined by the applicant to be unfeasible to provide realistic interior floor-to-ceiling heights in the rear addition.

The current proposal of the applicant was shown to Staff prior to the June 6, 2007 hearing as a possible approach to correct the alteration. However, in Staff's opinion, this was not a preferred solution in that more wall mass would occur on the north elevation and would be more visible than the existing condition. Staff recommended that the applicant seek approval from the Board for the existing roof slope configuration, which was deferred in June.

While Staff certainly still maintains that it was extremely unfortunate that the applicants made the alterations to the previously approved plans without the approval of the Board or Staff, Staff believes that the proposal of constructing the parapet wall is not a preferred means to correct the situation, in that it adds more mass on the north elevation.

Staff has no objection to the window size alterations on the south elevation. The window alterations occur in the middle of the elevation and are only minimally visible from South Lee Street. Staff also has no objection to the proposed HVAC screening under the June 6, 2007 proposal.

In regards to other items on the front elevation, the applicant has agreed to repair and reinstall the historic transom that had been removed during the construction phase of the project. The non-historic front door will also be replaced with a four-panel wood door that is historically appropriate to the property.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application as previously submitted for the June 6, 2007 hearing.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The existing dwelling has numerous windows along the South face of the structure at the 0 lot line. The proposed plans indicate replacement and addition of windows along this wall. Replacement in kind, without modifications to the existing openings will be permitted. Additional windows or enlargement of existing openings along this wall is prohibited. Furthermore, Code Enforcement recommends the removal of all windows along the South face due to the location of the windows in relation to the interior lot line.
- 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:  
No comments were received.