

Docket Item #8
BAR CASE # 2007-0002

BAR Meeting
October 3, 2007

ISSUE: Addition and alterations
APPLICANT: Amy & Brien Biondi
LOCATION: 833 South Lee Street
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, OCTOBER 5, 2007: Staff recommends deferral of the application to continue to work on refining the design of the east side addition and dormers. However, should the Board decide to approve the project, staff recommends that the following conditions be included:

1. The applicant must allow Staff an opportunity to review and approved the brick prior to construction;
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;
3. The applicant must not allow metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology; and,
4. The above statements 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, SEPTEMBER 5, 2007: The Board combined docket item #'s 5 & 6 for discussion. On a motion by Dr. Fitzgerald, seconded by Ms. Neihardt, the Board voted to defer the application for restudy, encouraging the applicant to look at a different approach to the shed dormer on the west side of the proposed third story addition, consider a different design approach of the dormers and roof elements on the east addition facing South Lee Street, and consider changing the material on the east addition to brick rather than Hardiplank. The vote on the motion was 7-0.

REASON: While the Board appreciated the work the applicant had done since the last meeting in March, the Board felt that additional revisions were necessary and should be considered.

SPEAKERS: Amy Biondi, applicant, spoke in support
Rebecca Bostick, project architect, spoke in support
John Hynan, representing Historic Alexandria Foundation, spoke in opposition
Eve Capps, 824 S. Lee Street, spoke with concerns
Ted Mannen, 831 S. Lee Street, spoke in support
Elaine Mannen, 831 S. Lee Street, spoke in support
Scott Oswald, 832 S. Lee Street, spoke in support

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, SEPTEMBER 5, 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 applicant must not allow metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology; and,
3. The above statements 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, MARCH 21, 2007: The Board combined the discussion of docket item #'s 11 & 12. On a motion by Dr. Fitzgerald, seconded by Mr. Wheeler the Board deferred the applications for restudy. The vote on the motion was 6-0.

REASON: The Board had concerns regarding the size of the proposed additions to the house including extending the front of the house and the increased height. The Board also expressed reservations about a number of design details. The Board concluded that the overall composition of the reworking of the house needed to be reconsidered.

SPEAKER: Rebecca Bostick, project architect, spoke in support

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, MARCH 21, 2007: Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy of the massing approach to the additions and the design details.

BOARD ACTION, FEBRUARY 7, 2007: Deferred at the request of the applicant.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, FEBRUARY 7, 2007: Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy of the massing approach to the additions and the design details.

(Insert sketch here)

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

UPDATE: Since the September 5, 2007 hearing, the applicant has revised the proposal to address the concerns of the Board.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new third story and a new side addition for the end unit residential rowhouse at 833 South Lee Street.

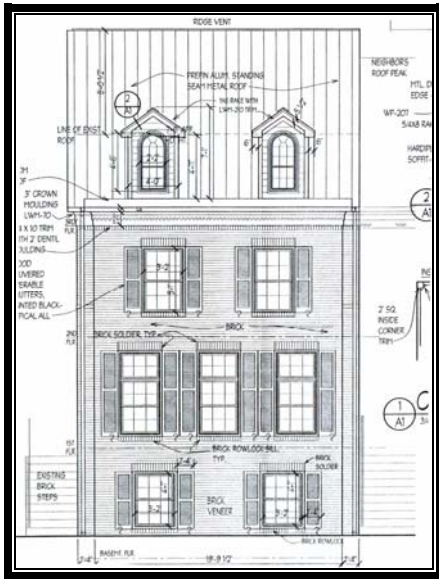


Figure 1: Proposed east elevation

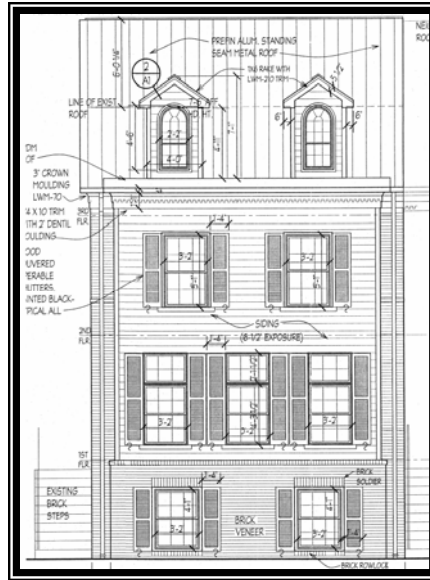


Figure 2: Sept. 5, 2007 proposed east elevation



Figure 3: Proposed south (front) elevation



Figure 4: Sept. 5, 2007 proposed south (front) elevation

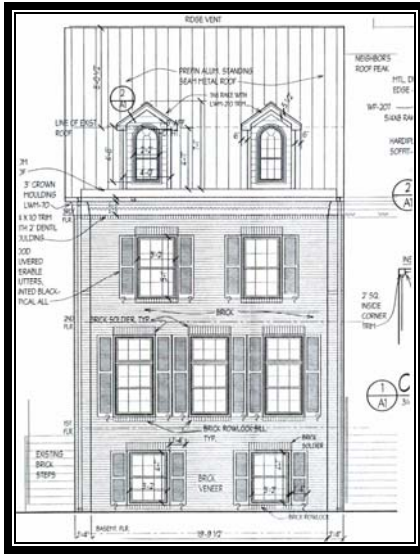


Figure 5: Proposed west elevation



Figure 6: Sept. 5, 2007 proposed west elevation

Additions

Third story addition

A new third story will be added to the existing house. The south elevation facing Green Street functions as the main entrance to the residence. A new gable spanning the full width of the existing house will be constructed with the gable end facing Green Street. In addition, a recessed shed roof dormer will intersect with the gable on the western slope of the roof. Two new gabled dormers will be added to the front (east) slope of the new gable roof. The roof peak of this new larger gable will be approximately 2' higher than in the previous iteration and approximately 8' higher than the existing. The new front roof pitch will be 12/10. With the addition, the total height of the house will be 39' at the peak of the roof line.

The new gable roof element will be clad in brick to match the existing brick, and will have corner trim boards of Hardiplank, painted white, to define the gable. The ends will have a dentil molding cornice that wraps, connecting to the other roof elements. One six-over-six, double-hung, double-glazed wood window with simulated divided lights, by Pella, will be installed in the gable, with a small round accent window above. The six-over-six window will have operable wood louvered shutters.

The shed dormer on the west slope of the new front gable is smaller than in the previous iteration. It no longer originates at the peak of the gable, but is set into the slope 2' down from the peak. It is recessed back from the south edge of the building facing Green Street by 1'. This southern side facing Green Street will be clad in smooth finish Hardiplank siding, with nails concealed, and painted white. Where there had been a window in this side, there is now none. The west face of the new third floor shed dormer will also be clad in smooth-finish Hardiplank, with concealed nails, and painted white. There will be one six-over-six double-hung, double-glazed wood window, with simulated divided lights, by Pella. The window will have shutters.

On the eastern side of the new gable roof, two dormer windows will be installed, with arched windows by Pella. The sides of the dormers will be sheathed in smooth finish Hardiplank. The new roof will be a prefinished aluminum standing seam metal in dark gray, with Hardiplank rake boards and trim, painted white.

To conclude, the elements of the third story addition are basically the same as in the previous submission, except that the gable is now larger and the shed dormer smaller.

Eastern addition facing South Lee Street:

Also proposed is an addition for the east elevation facing South Lee Street. The addition will extend approximately 6'4" from the face of the existing rowhouse and project 2' from the front façade of the townhouse immediately to the north. The sides of the addition will be indented approximately 1'4" from the corner ends of the original rowhouse so as not to extend across the full width of the house. The entire addition from grade to cornice will be clad in brick veneer to match the existing brick. The sides of the addition will be blind and without any architectural features. On the ground level there will be two six-over-six windows; on the second level three evenly spaced double-hung six-over-six windows with transoms, and on the third level will be two six-over-six double hung windows. There will be rowlock sills and lintels. All the windows will be double-glazed wood windows, painted white, with simulated divided lights manufactured by Pella. All wood shutters will be painted black, and operable, with shutter dogs. This addition will have a very slight sloping shed roof, with single ply EPDM membrane roofing, and a 2" dentil molding at the cornice. All gutters and downspouts will be copper.

The only revision to this addition is the elimination of the lap siding in favor of brick.

Alterations:

A new wood door surround with Doric style pilasters and copper flashing will be added to the front door.

II. HISTORY:

833 South Lee Street is a two story, three bay residential rowhouse that was constructed as part of the Yates Garden subdivision in ca. 1954. It is an end unit rowhouse, one of a continuous row of 2 and 3 bay townhouses with alternately projecting and set back facades. The facade is distinguished from its neighbors primarily by its slightly projecting bay window at the first level. The construction of these rowhouses was approved by the Board on 3/12/1953. A garden wall was approved for this house by the Board on 11/12/1958.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed addition and alterations comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

Since this application was first reviewed by the Board, the applicant has met with staff to attempt to refine the proposal to address the concerns expressed by the Board and staff. Staff recommended approval of the addition at the previous hearing. The Board requested deferral to consider a different approach to the shed dormer on the west side of the proposed third story addition, to consider a different design approach to the two dormers and roof elements on the

east addition facing South Lee Street, and to consider changing the material on the east addition to brick rather than Hardiplank. Staff believes the current revisions improve the project in some respects, but not all.

Although the new roof arrangement of the third story addition results in a slightly higher roof peak, staff believes it does provide a much more harmonious appearance on the south elevation facing Green Street. The visual impact of the shed dormer is significantly reduced. The fenestration is more balanced and quiet. While the height has been raised, it will be only 2' higher than the peak of the roof at the neighboring house at 720 South Lee Street and will be relatively less massive than that roof.

Staff is not as convinced that the revision to the eastern addition is a success. The only alteration made was the change in material. While the brick may be an improvement when viewing the front (east) elevation, as it helps to tie the addition to the existing house, the resultant two-and-a-half stories of unrelieved brick wall on the south side of the addition is not an improvement. The wall should be broken up in some way that is in character with the simple Colonial Revival style of the house. Given the extensive use of brick in the additions, staff would feel more comfortable if given an opportunity to review and approve the brick. Staff notes that the relationship of the roofline of the east side addition and the main block and the dormers that concerned the Board remains unresolved. Therefore, staff recommends that the application be deferred yet one more time to continue to work on refining the design of the east side addition.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral of the application to continue to work on refining the design of the east side addition and dormers. However, should the Board decide to approve the project, staff recommends that the following conditions be included:

1. The applicant must allow Staff an opportunity to review and approved the brick prior to construction;
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;
3. The applicant must not allow metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology; and,
4. The above statements 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.

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 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 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-5 A Construction permit will be required for the proposed project.
- C-6 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-7 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 Tax records indicate that there was a free African American household on this street face by 1810, but the exact address is not known. Quartermaster maps from the Civil War era show that the block bounded by Lee, Green, Fairfax and Jefferson streets was the site of the kitchen, mess room, and barracks for Battery Rogers. While ground disturbance associated with this project is not extensive, particularly in the backyard area where there is greater potential, there is a possibility for development activities to uncover archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities in 19th-

century Alexandria, perhaps relating to African Americans, and into military life during the Civil War.

- 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 applicant must not allow metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
- R-3 The above statements in R-2 ad R-3 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.

Transportation & Environmental Services

- R-1 The applicant shall submit an annotated house location plat must meet the following criteria:
- No reduced, enlarged or faxed copies will be accepted.
 - The footprint area of the proposed improvements must be drawn to scale.
 - The additional 10' perimeter, construction access and other areas as described above must be shown to scale.
 - The overall dimensions of the proposed improvements must be shown.
 - The actual square footage of the disturbed area must be shown.

The applicant shall be required to provide this information to the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services, Construction and Inspection Division and/or Engineering Division prior to any applications for building permits. (T&ES)

- R-2 The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 8-1-22 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. 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.]
- R-3 Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity.
- R-4 All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design.