

Docket Item # 21  
BAR CASE # 2007-0231

BAR Meeting  
November 14, 2007

**ISSUE:** Alterations

**APPLICANT:** Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association

**LOCATION:** 201 Prince Street

**ZONE:** RM

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval with the condition that prior to the November 14, 2007 public meeting of the Board, staff receives a letter of support from the Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission.

(Insert sketch here)

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the flooring of the portico of the Athenaeum at 201 Prince Street. The alterations consist of replacing and patching the existing concrete infill on the flooring of the front portico with brush concrete and cutting the existing metal spikes in the steps flush with the step surface.

This request is a component of the work ongoing at the Athenaeum, with prior approvals from the Board.

**II. HISTORY:**

The Athenaeum was built c. 1851-52, and originally housed the Old Dominion Bank. The building is architecturally significant, as one of the few examples of the Greek Revival style in this district. The building was acquired by the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Commission in 1964.

The Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission holds an open space and facade easement on this property.

In 2006, the Board approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the Athenaeum, including replacement of a transom, an accessibility ramp, and approval of replacement stone pavers in the portico with the new pavers to be a reddish sandstone from a quarry in Ohio (June 21 and July, 5, 2006, BAR Case #2006-0084).

**III. ANALYSIS:**

Proposed restoration complies with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

The applicant has provided a narrative that explains that during the removal of patches of the existing concrete on the portico flooring, a setting-bed was uncovered with no evidence of the exact material that may have originally been used at these location. Furthermore, the applicant is concerned that additional investigation by digging could compromise the portico's construction. The applicant feels that if the new concrete patching is approved, the existing material would be left intact and could be investigated in the future to determine the original material nature.

While the Board has previously approved the replacement of the concrete with new stone pavers, Staff agrees with the applicant that a different material may be more appropriate and compatible for this important building, and that the proposal to use new brush concrete for patching would protect existing material for future investigations.

Therefore, Staff supports the application, pending agreement from the Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission upon their meeting of November 14, 2007.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval with the condition that prior to the November 14, 2007 public meeting of the Board, staff receives a letter of support from the Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 A Construction permit will be required for the proposed project.
- C-2 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 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).

Historic Alexandria:

Approve subject to conditions outlined in NVFAA memo of 10/15/07.