

Docket Item # 5
BAR CASE #2007-0172

BAR Meeting
December 6, 2007

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Robert Bentley Adams & Associates
LOCATION: 309 Cameron Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for installation of four pendant carriage style gas lights on the ceiling of the former vehicular drive-through at the building at 309 Cameron Street.

Each light is approximately 21” in height and will hang from a metal bracket approximately 15” in height at 9’4” o.c.

II. HISTORY:

309 Cameron Street is a two story brick addition to the east of the three story brick commercial building at 311 Cameron Street.

Last year, the Board approved extensive alterations to these properties (BAR Case #2006-0036, 3/15/2006).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff finds it difficult to support the installation of these proposed lighting fixtures for several reasons. The carriage lights are of a significantly different design era than the building to which they are proposed to be attached. In this sense, they appear to be architecturally anachronistic.

The covered drive through was built to allow horse drawn vehicles access to the rear of the property. Because the carriage lamps will hang so low into the drive aisle of the passage they would be an obstruction to historic access by a horse drawn vehicle. Thus, it is the opinion of staff that the installation of these light fixtures would effectively destroy the illusion of usability of the vehicular drive. Because of this, staff believes that the carriage lights would be a significant visual intrusion into the historic space.

If it is necessary to provide additional illumination in the drive through area, staff believes that light fixtures that are less visually prominent should be used. Therefore, staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 A mechanical permit will be required for the proposed project.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.