

Docket Item # 13
BAR CASE # 2007-0265

BAR Meeting
December 19, 2007

ISSUE: Alterations & Addition

APPLICANT: Bill Cromley

LOCATION: 214 A North Pitt Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends deferral for restudy.

(Insert sketch here)

NOTE: Docket item #12 must be approved before this docket item can be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations and an addition for the existing 2-story brick structure located at 214 A North Pitt Street. The building was originally constructed for carriage and automobile uses and is being converted to a single-family residence. The current building is 20.40' by 34.00' (693.6 square feet) and is now used for garage parking for two vehicles and storage. The northern portion of the lot is vacant and used for surface parking.

Alterations:

The alterations will consist of removing the existing east wall of the shed roof addition with three bays and replacing with a new wood garage door, and a series of three bays of French-style wood doors and side lights. The existing two openings on the second floor of the east elevation will have new wood casement windows installed and a new window is proposed between the two existing openings. Flush cedar siding will be used on the ground floor. A new standing seam metal roof will be installed on the existing structure. An existing door opening on the second floor of the south elevation will be retained.

Addition:

The two-story addition will encapsulate the north elevation of the existing structure. It will have a footprint of 19.5' x 20.4', totaling approximately 397.8 square feet, projecting just slightly more to the east of the existing one-story frame shed addition on the existing building. Stone is proposed for the base and first story of the addition, with flush cedar siding to be used on the second floor. On the east elevation, a paired wood casement window will be centered on the elevation, with a single wood casement window on the either side. A projecting bay window will be centered on the second floor on this elevation, with the bay containing primarily window groupings, with simulated divided lites. The bay element will project and intersect into the complex hipped roof. Wood beams will be located below the bay element. On the north elevation of the addition, the bay element is repeated with an identical window grouping. On the ground level, paired French doors will be centered below the bay element, with single casement windows on either side. The addition will have a complex hipped roof with standing seam metal, and what appears to be glazing within the roof near the peak. The west elevation addition will not contain any windows or doors on the first and second floor, but proposes clerestory glazing just below the roof peak, and repeats the stone and wood material of the other elevations.

II. HISTORY:

214 A North Pitt Street is a two-story brick building that appears to have been constructed to serve as a secondary/carriage house/garage structure for adjacent buildings in the area. Historically, the building and lot were associated with 509 Cameron Street and probably served as a stable for that residence. The 1877 Hopkins maps shows a structure with a small addition on the lot. A two story structure with what appears as a one-story addition is shown on the 1891 Sanborn Fire Insurance map. The 1907 map shows just a two-story structure. The 1921 Sanborn map shows a two-story structure with two, one-story additions, with the northern most addition projecting slightly further to the west. The map also indicates the structure was used for "autos".

The 1941 and 1958 Sanborn maps show just a two-story structure that appears to be the footprint of the current building.

Staff did not locate any prior Board approval for this property.

The applicant recently received approval of a special exception from the Board of Zoning Appeals to construct a two-story addition on the rear property line (BZA Case #2007-00029).

III. ANALYSIS:

Proposed addition, alterations, and demolition comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff would like to commend the applicant for recognizing the importance of retaining this historic carriage house structure and for the proposed adapted reuse as a single family residence. In general, Staff supports the alterations to the existing structure but has concerns about the proposed addition. While Staff understands the desire for the addition and supports an addition to the historic structure, Staff is concerned that the architectural treatment as proposed introduces a higher style design vocabulary that is not compatible with the very simplistic nature of the existing historic structure. As proposed, the addition becomes more a focal point than the historic structure. Elements such as the stone base, the complex hipped roof with clerestory glazing, and the projecting bays are design elements that are more characteristic of other, higher styles, and appear to be incongruous in this context and inappropriate.

According to the Design Guidelines in respect to additions, “it is the strong preference of the Boards that architectural elements of particular styles not be mixed and matched on the same addition. For example, Victorian windows and surrounds should not be combined with a Federal style cornice on an addition.” The Guidelines go on to say that “as a general rule, the Boards favor contextual background buildings which allow historic structures to maintain the primary visual importance...Additions must be designed so that they are compatible with both the architectural character of the existing house and the immediate neighborhood.” In Staff’s opinion, the proposed addition does not meet the Design Guidelines.

Therefore, Staff would recommend a deferral for restudy of the proposed addition.

Also, Staff would request the applicant to submit information on the manufacturer of the casement windows and the French doors proposed for use.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral for restudy.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 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 be taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-2 Before a building permit can be issued on any proposed future alterations, a certification is required from the owner or owner's agent that the building has been inspected by a licensed asbestos inspector for the presence of asbestos (USBC 110.3).
- C-3 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully details the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-4 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit. Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application. The plans must include all dimensions, construction alterations details, kitchen equipment, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical layouts and schematics.
- C-7 The new handrails must comply with USBC for a minimum/maximum height of 30 to 34 inches. The ends must extend 12" beyond the top and bottom risers. The handgrip position must not be more than 2-1/4" in cross-sectional dimension, or the shape must provide an equivalent gripping surface. The handgrip portion must have a smooth surface with no sharp corners. The space between the wall and handrail must not be less than 1-1/2".
- C-8 Guardrail height and openings must comply with USBC 1012.2 and 1012.3.
- C-9 Sheeting and shoring shall not extend beyond the property line; except when the developer has obtained a written release from adjacent property owners which has been recorded in the land records; or through an approved encroachment process.
- C-10 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-11 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-12 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-13 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-14 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:
Comments Pending

Alexandria Archaeology:

1. The applicant/developer shall 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/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
3. The statements in 1 and 2 above shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.