

Docket Item # 15
BAR CASE # 2008-0025

BAR Meeting
March 19, 2008

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Eat Good Food, LLC
LOCATION: 110 S. Pitt St.
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends denial of the request to paint the unpainted masonry façade of the building and approval of the request of screening for the rooftop HVAC unit with the condition that the screening be constructed of wood rather than PVC.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of alterations at 110 S. Pitt Street. The alterations include screening of the AC unit that was recently installed in addition to painting the exposed masonry façade of the building. The AC unit was installed in its current location during the construction of an addition in 2007 and is visible from Prince Street. The applicant is requesting to paint the currently unpainted masonry façade of the building claiming that it is “badly worn and in need of repair.” The applicant has chosen BEHR Premium Plus paint in a *Beachwalk* color for the façade, and both *Swiss Coffee* and *Cottonseed* for the trim. The shutters and front door will remain black. The HVAC screening is proposed to be constructed of PVC fence and will extend approximately 3 inches above the AC unit and run the length of the east elevation of the roofline of the new east side addition.

II. HISTORY:

The two story red brick Federal style structure at 110 South Pitt Street was constructed as a warehouse between 1813 and 1827 according to Ethelyn Cox in Historic Alexandria Street by Street (p. 106). Map research indicates that throughout the 19th century and into the 1920s, the building had a long, two story brick ell at the back. By 1941, a second extension had been added at the rear, to the south of the original ell. It is not clear when the building achieved its present densely developed and irregular configuration at the rear. However, a survey plat dated 1988, appears to show the building in its current footprint exclusive of the most recent addition. Photographs submitted with the application suggest that the south and west walls that face onto the patio were fairly recently altered with multi-light French doors and windows.

In 2007, the Board approved a Permit to Demolish to allow for a single story addition at the rear of the building (BAR 2007-0026). The Board has also approved a number of signs for this property. In 1989 and 1993, the Board approved a sign and later an awning for the previous tenant, Santa Fe East (BAR Case #88-186, 1/18/1989 and BAR Case #93-0065, 5/6/1993). More recently, for Restaurant Eve, the Board approved a decorative metal and glass gate for the alleyway entrance and a hanging sign (BAR Case #2003-0207, 9/3/2003). These alterations were at the front of the building facing S. Pitt Street.

In 2006, the Planning Commission and City Council approved the expansion of the restaurant and modification of the zone transition setback requirements to allow for an addition (SUP2006-0037, 6/17/2006). On May 2, 2007, the Board approved the case for the permit to demolish and certification of appropriateness for the addition.

III. ANALYSIS:

Both the proposed screening and the paint comply with the zoning ordinance.

Although the building at 110 S. Pitt Street shows both remnants of paint on the north wall and a recently painted exposed portion of the south wall, it is the opinion of staff that because the west façade is currently exposed masonry it should remain unpainted. The Design Guidelines clearly state that the Boards “strongly discourage painting of a previously unpainted masonry surface.” There is some very limited evidence that the façade may have been painted decades ago,

however, the façade is now free of paint and appears as unpainted masonry. Staff views the unpainted masonry wall as an asset that provides a variety of color and texture and reveals more detail of the brickwork and mortar joints. Staff does not believe that the current disrepair of the masonry is cause for painting; rather, painting the west façade would mask any problems that would only continue to deteriorate over time.

Staff finds the height, design and placement of the AC screen appropriate to the building and the historic district. However, in accordance with The Design Guidelines that state “Rooftop HVAC equipment must be screened with architectural materials or features of the same type of quality used on the exterior walls of the building,” the use of PVC fence is inappropriate. Therefore, Staff recommends the use of wood for the screening.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends denial of the request to paint the unpainted masonry façade of the building and approval of the request of screening for the rooftop HVAC unit with the condition that the screening be constructed of wood rather than PVC.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

C-1 Screen must comply with the current addition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

Historic Alexandria:

No Comments received.