

Docket Item # 4
BAR CASE # 2007-0220

BAR Meeting
April 2, 2008

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: National Foundation of Republican Women
LOCATION: 124 North Alfred Street
ZONE: CD Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant retains and restores all wood windows that appear to pre-date 1958 located on all elevations to operating condition, and
2. That the windows on the first floor east elevation and rear addition may be replaced with the proposed Weathershield wood window.

BOARD ACTION, MARCH 19, 2008: The Board viewed sample materials.

This docket item will be considered at the next public hearing.

The Board viewed a sample of the proposed replacement window. The Board had requested that Mr. Baker return after the last public hearing with an actual sample of the proposed window. Mr. Baker displayed a sample of the Weathershield historical wood window proposed to be used. Members agreed that the sample was a good example of an attempt to replicate historical wood windows. Members also believed that using all the same window replacements would create a uniform appearance for the building.

BOARD ACTION, MARCH 5, 2008: On a motion by Dr. Fitzgerald, seconded by Mr. Keleher, the Board approved the proposed windows for installation on the first floor east elevation and rear addition and deferred for restudy the replacement windows on the other elevations for examination of a sample of the proposed window. The vote on the motion was 6-0.

REASON: The Board agreed with the staff that the replacement windows on the first floor east elevation and rear addition were appropriate. The Board also believed that a review of an actual sample of the replacement window would be beneficial. The applicant offered to provide such a sample at the next public hearing.

SPEAKER: Mike Baker, contractor, spoke in support

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant retains and restores all historic windows located on all elevations to operating condition, and
2. That the windows on the first floor east elevation and rear addition may be replaced with the proposed windows.

BOARD ACTION, FEBRUARY 6, 2008: Deferred prior to the hearing due to lack of public notice.

BOARD ACTION, NOVEMBER 14, 2007: On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Mr. Keleher, the Board deferred the application for restudy. The vote on the motion was 6-0.

REASON: The Board believed that a statement of policy concerning replacement windows should be developed prior to taking action on this application. Mr. Neale said that all new windows would create a uniform appearance for this building. He also suggested that Mr. Fowler be part of any Board discussions regarding replacement windows.

SPEAKERS: Mike Baker, contractor, spoke in support
Robert Fowler, contractor, spoke in support
John Hynan, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation, spoke in opposition

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant retains and restores all historic windows located on all elevations to operating condition, and
2. That the windows on the first floor east elevation and rear addition may be replaced with the proposed windows.

(Insert sketch here)

UPDATE: At the March 19, 2008 meeting, the Board examined a sample of the proposed replacement window proposed by the applicant. It is Staff's understanding that the applicant would like to replace all windows on the building with the Weathershield model.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a certificate of appropriateness for the replacement of all windows on all facades with the exclusion of the rear 3rd story facing the driveway on the west side of the building. The current windows are 6/6 double-hung true-divided wood sash windows. The new windows will be installed within the original framed openings and will maintain exterior trim, exterior casing, and sill detail. Minimal repair may be required to masonry openings, exterior casing and/or sill nosing, including re-pointing and painting. All repairs will be made with the intention to maintain and preserve the building's historic appearance and integrity.

The proposed replacement windows are Weather Shield Wood HR175 windows with 7/8" mullion, true divided light glazing. Glazing will be Low-e and appear to replicate 6/6 double-hung light configuration. The top sash is stationary and sized to meet existing masonry openings. All hardware and balance mechanism associated with the new windows will be either metal or wood.

The applicant intends to replicate all exterior trim detail and sill extensions will be replaced when required with correct appearance and sizing in an effort to completely restore window openings.

The house fronts directly adjacent to the Cameron Street and N. Alfred Street public right-of-way.

II. HISTORY:

Historic documentation suggests the building may have been constructed as early as 1822. According the Ethelyn Cox in her book, *Historic Alexandria Virginia Street by Street*, the property may have incorporated earlier structures when the lot sold in 1812. Edward Smyth owned the property in 1822 and an inventory of his estate recorded in 1849 lists a "one two-story brick dwelling, one one-and-a-half story framed dwelling, ice house, and stables" located on the lot.

When built, the property's address was 122 North Alfred Street. However, the address changed to 124 North Alfred Street in 1990 when two buildings were built adjacent to the property on North Alfred Street.

The National Foundation of Republican Women was founded in 1938 and purchased the property in 1992.

There have been no previous BAR Cases concerning 124 North Alfred Street. However, an image c.1976 included in Cox's book suggests that the first-story façade fenestration was altered to include two large multi-light windows which have since been replaced with four 6/6 double-hung wood sash windows.

III. ANALYSIS:

The subject property is zoned CD, Commercial Downtown. The proposed window replacements and alterations comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

The Design Guidelines describe window size, type and trim as defining elements of a building's historic heritage. And thus, to ensure the longevity of a building's historic integrity the Board feels that original historic material should be retained and repaired rather than replaced whenever feasible. When replacement windows are deemed necessary, single glazed true divided light wood windows are preferred.

The applicant has stressed a desire to retain defining window elements such as size, exterior trim, window casing and sill details. However, the staff continues to feel that the best recommendation for the property based on its historic significance and condition is the retention of existing wood windows that appear to pre-date 1958 and that the Weathershield windows may be used as a replacement window for windows that the applicant demonstrates are later replacements.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant retains and restores all wood windows that appear to pre-date 1958 located on all elevations to operating condition, and
2. That the windows on the first floor east elevation and rear addition may be replaced with the proposed Weathershield wood window.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-2 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:

- S-1 Windows on the north and south facades including upper story of facade facing N. Alfred Street appear to be of an early date. Suggest that these windows be restored to operating condition with interior storm windows. The first floor windows facing North Alfred Street post-date 1976 and should be replaced with molding profile matching north and south first floor facades.