

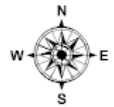
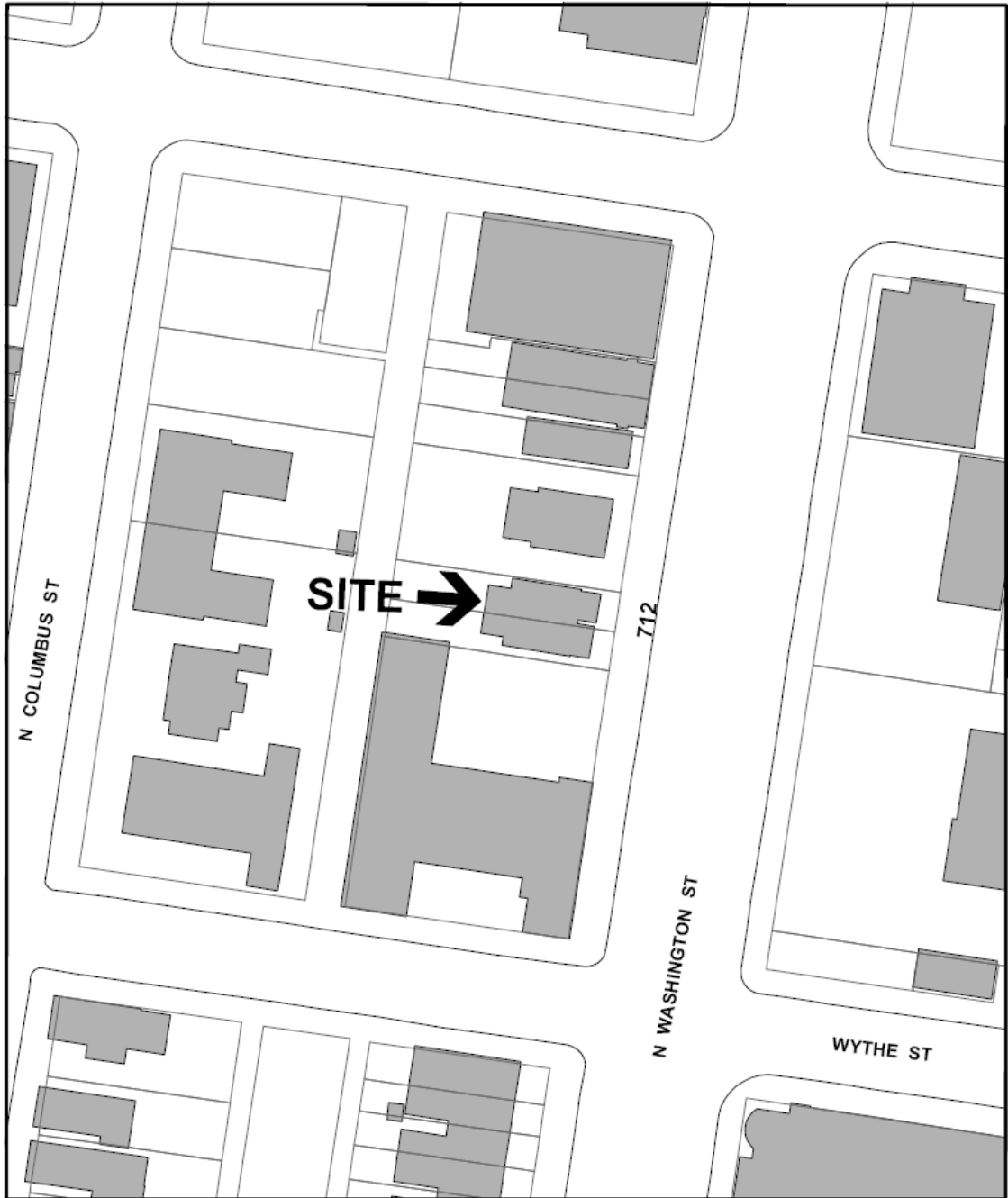
Docket Item #11
BAR CASE # 2008-0102

BAR Meeting
July 30, 2008

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Mark Latsios
LOCATION: 712 N. Washington St
ZONE: CDX

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. That the rear porch ceiling be constructed of solid wood bead board to match as closely as possible the existing bead board ceiling of the front porch;
2. That the applicant repair and retain the historic basement windows that remain;
3. That the applicant be allowed to replace the first and second floor windows with appropriate all wood, single glaze, true-divided light replacement windows that exactly mimic the glazing pattern of the original windows that were removed and exhibit a multi-light vertical muntin divided upper sash and a single light lower sash, with specification sheets to be submitted and approved by Staff prior to purchase and installation;
4. That the applicant reconstruct the surrounding window frame casing to match the original framing that was removed and that remains at the matching twin building at 710 N Washington Street;
5. That the applicant pay a fine of \$1,600 dollars for removal of the first and second floor original windows without prior approval; and,
6. That the replacement rear door for the building be all wood and emulate the original door still installed at the twin building at 710 N. Washington Street and that the applicant submit specification sheets for the replacement door for staff approval prior to purchase and installation.



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new one story rear porch at 712 North Washington Street and new replacement windows on the first and second floor windows. The proposed porch is a reconstruction of the original porch which according to the owner was removed due to disrepair approximately fifteen years ago. The porch will be constructed as an exact replica of the rear porch at 710 North Washington Street which is believed to be the same design as the original porch on 712. The porch will be constructed entirely of wood and all decorative elements including the lattice work and railings will match similar elements on the front porch of 712 or the rear porch of 710. All of the first and second floor windows have been removed as discussed later in this report, with the exception of the two second floor windows on the front (these were installed about 5 years ago). The applicant has indicated that he intends to install wood, single glaze, true divided light replacement windows manufactured by Kolbe and Kolbe with a 7/8 inch muntin.

II. HISTORY:

712 North Washington Street is a semi-detached two story building constructed of masonry common brick and built around 1920. The original form of the structure is intact, with minimal alterations made to either 712 or 710 North Washington. The windows are three-over-one double hung, wood, and single glazed.

According to City records the building has been vacant for at least ten years and in various conditions of disrepair. There are no previous BAR cases for this property, however, the reconstruction of the front porch was approved under BLD#2004-03276 as appropriate replacement in kind. Additionally, the second floor front windows were administratively approved for replacement approximately five years ago after City Code Enforcement cited the property for broken glass.

III. ANALYSIS:

Proposed alterations comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

According to the design guidelines, porches are an important architectural element and should be appropriate to the historic style of the structure. Considering that the porch proposed for 712 is a reconstruction of an original historic element of the building, Staff feels that it would not only be appropriate but an improvement upon the existing building to reconstruct the rear porch in this notch in the building along the west and north elevations. In addition, due to the fact that the twin structure at 710 North Washington has retained its historic porch and construction proposed for 712 will be a match in-kind with this structure, Staff feels that all materials proposed are accurate replacements of the original. However, Staff is recommending that the rear porch ceiling be constructed of solid wood bead board similar to the existing front porch ceiling rather than plywood, as proposed, since it is likely that the plywood ceiling in the rear porch at 712 that is being copied is not original.

Additionally, the applicant is requesting replacement of first and second floor windows with

wood replacement windows, with the exception of the two newer front second floor windows. Staff initially inspected the building and believed that many, if not all, of the original windows were in satisfactory condition such that they could be repaired and retained. Staff inspected the windows on site in the presence of the applicant's contractor and discussed with the contractor that they needed to further examine the historic windows for possibility of repairing all the windows, and to call Staff to arrange a meeting on site to further discuss the window condition and repairs to determine next steps. Staff relayed to the contractors that while they could not remove the windows, they could continue interior renovation work. According to the applicant and his contractor, the property owner and the contractor did not understand that Staff had recommended continued investigation of repair of the existing windows that appeared to Staff to be original. Therefore the contractor, believing that the windows could not be repaired and not comprehending that the City Staff was recommending retention and repair of the existing windows, removed all of the windows and window framing. The window removal appears to have occurred over a very short period of time. By the time that Staff, and the public who called complaints into the City, noticed the removal, all windows and framing were removed and discarded in dumpsters, and much of the historic material removed from the site. Staff immediately visited the site and met the contractor to investigate and discuss the issue. Because the owner and contractor claimed that the windows were not in condition to repair, Staff instructed the property owner and contractor to pull from the dumpster all historic material that remained so that Staff could examine its condition. Upon inspection, Staff confirmed that some rot and insect or water damage did exist in portions of the wood that staff examined. To a significant degree the majority of the wood damage appeared to be splintering and cracking that was most likely caused by the crow bars, hammers, or other tools that were used to remove the windows. While it appears from Staff's examination that some portion of window members such as sills may have needed to be replaced, without having examined the windows more closely while they were in place, Staff is not able to clearly say which if any windows may have needed to be replaced. Considering the situation and the removal of the windows while Staff was in the process of working with the applicant to gain Board approval of the proposed exterior porch and window repair or replacement, Staff recommends a fine for the wholesale window removal prior to approval.

Per Article 10 and 11-207 of the zoning ordinance, removal of exterior windows is categorized as a class three violation for an exterior alteration that does not require a building permit. The first offense of a class three violation is subject to a \$100 fine per day per each occurrence. In this case, staff recommends that the applicant be fined \$100 per historic window unit removed, or \$1,600 for removal of 16 window units. The property owner relayed and Staff confirmed that two of the windows on the building façade had been replaced approximately five years ago after City Code Enforcement issued a notice of violation of property maintenance code for the poor condition of and broken glass in these windows. The zoning ordinance states that a violation occurs whether by commission or omission and does not address intent. The applicant states that he has the best intentions to renovate the property. However, the design guidelines are clear that "windows are principal character defining feature of a building and serve both aesthetic and functional purposes." The guidelines continue that "a central tenet of the philosophy of historic

preservation is that original historic materials should be retained and repaired rather than replaced.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. That the rear porch ceiling be constructed of solid wood bead board to match as closely as possible the existing bead board ceiling of the front porch;
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3. That the applicant be allowed to replace the first and second floor windows with appropriate all wood, single glaze, true-divided light replacement windows that exactly mimic the glazing pattern of the original windows that were removed and exhibit a multi-light vertical muntin divided upper sash and a single light lower sash, with specification sheets to be submitted and approved by Staff prior to purchase and installation;
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V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

F-1 The applicant shall obtain a sign permit for the proposed sign and/or wall lettering.

C-2 Projecting, hanging signs must comply with USBC [H103-H107, H112] for type of materials, maximum projection, vertical clearance below all parts of the sign, and additional loads.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

No comment.

VI. IMAGES



Figure 1. Portion of Rear elevation of 712 (left) and 710 (right). Proposed porch to be similar to porch at 710 N. Washington.

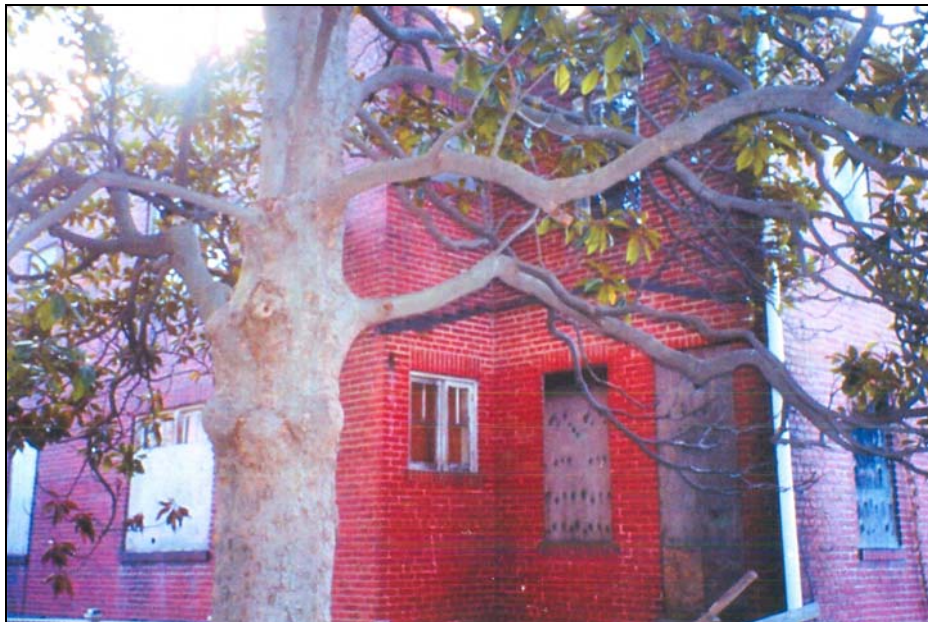


Figure 2. Location of proposed porch at northwest corner of 712 N. Washington Street.

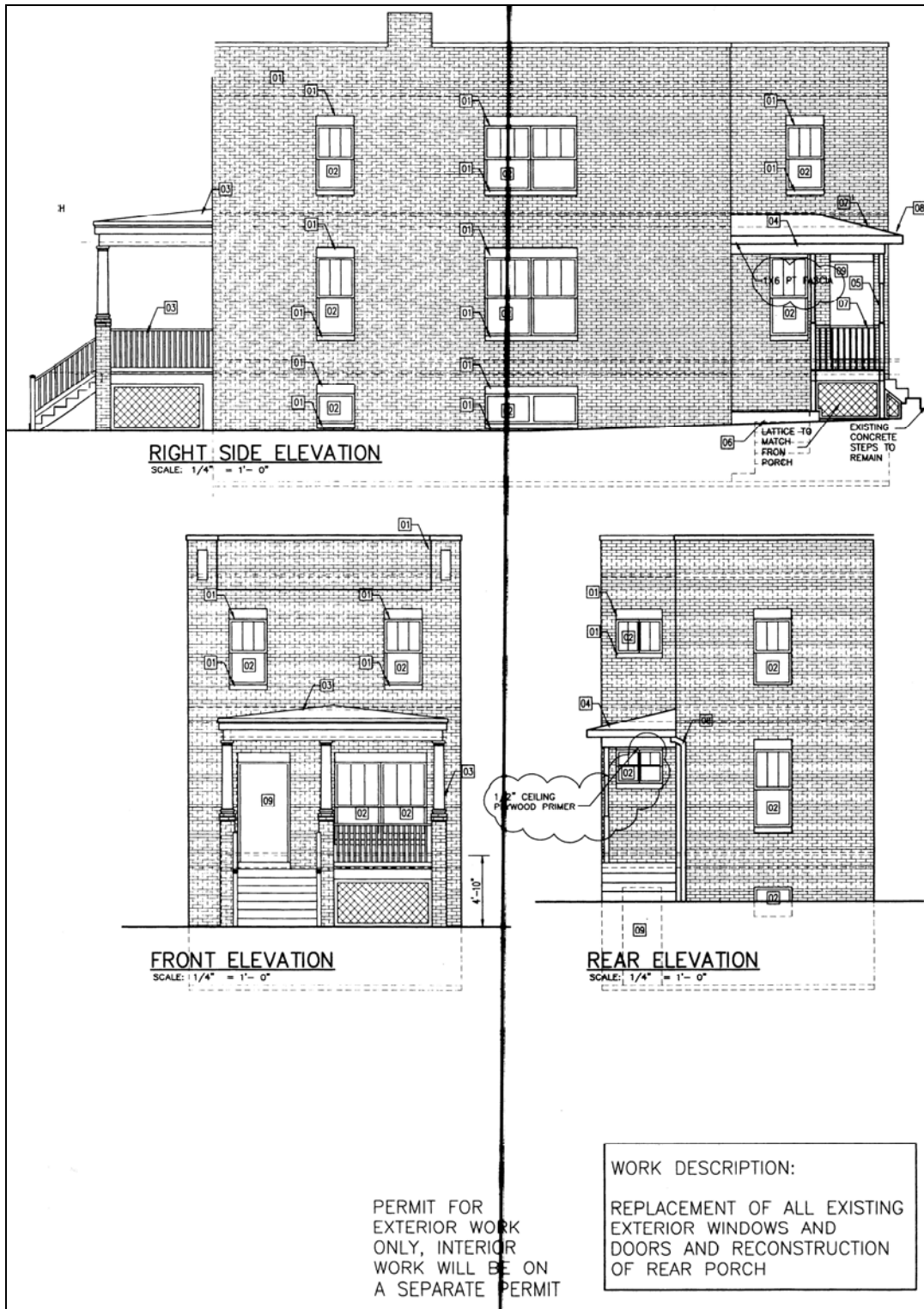


Figure 3: Elevations of proposed work.