

Docket Item # 4  
BAR CASE # 2007-0052

BAR Meeting  
September 17, 2008

**ISSUE:** Alterations, Replacement Exterior Rear Stair

**APPLICANT:** Craig Lemeszewsky

**LOCATION:** 1212 King Street

**ZONE:** KR/King Street Urban Retail

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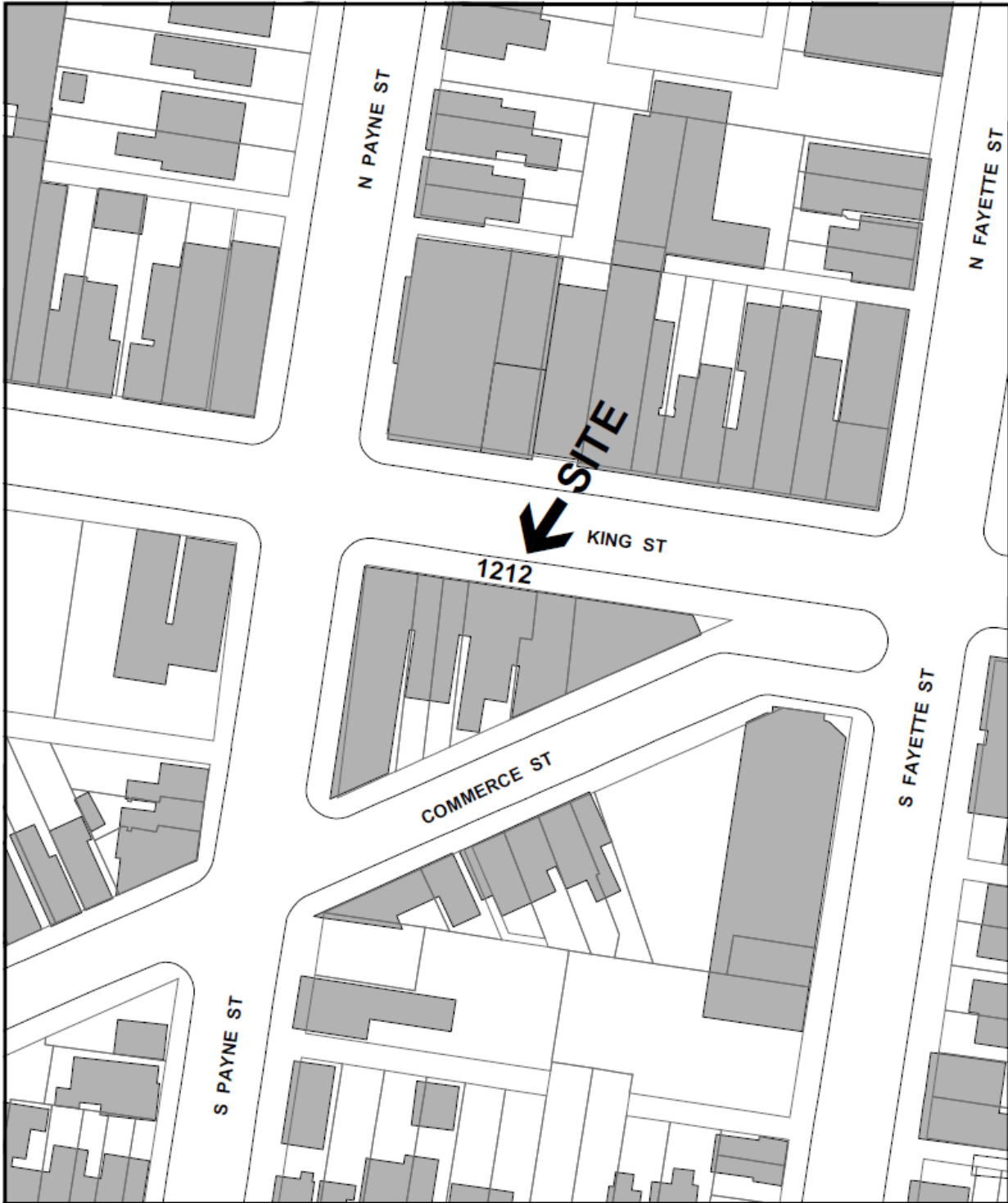
**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the application.

**BOARD ACTION, APRIL 4, 2007:** On a motion by Dr. Fitzgerald, seconded by Mr. Smeallie, the Board voted to defer the application. The vote was 4-0.

**REASON:** The Board agreed with the staff analysis, and encouraged the applicant to provide complete and accurate drawings for the new stair and the covering. The Board also encouraged the applicant to meet with the adjacent property owners to discuss their concerns of attachment to their building and other issues with the stair.

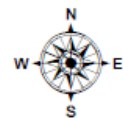
**SPEAKERS:** Leona Lemeszewsky, applicant, spoke in support  
Scott Struniak, project contractor, spoke in support  
Charles Deitchman, 1210 King Street, voiced concerns

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION, APRIL 4, 2007:** Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy.



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**9/17/2008**



UPDATE: Since the April 4, 2007 Board meeting, the applicant has met with Staff numerous times to discuss revisions to the design of the replacement exterior egress stairs to the commercial building at 1212 King Street. The applicant has provided improved drawings showing the proposed covered replacement stairs. The stairs that were installed at the time of the Board hearing in 2007 were temporary stairs to allow for access to the upper floors for interior work. The applicant has also met with Code officials to ensure compliance with Code requirements.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for replacement of rear exterior egress stairs with a new two story wood stair, with a standing seam metal cover at the commercial building at 1212 King Street. The stairway provides fire egress from the interior of the building as required by Code. Due to the use of the upper floor spaces, this exterior egress stair must be covered.

The temporary wood stair currently installed at the rear of the property will be replaced with a new covered stair. The wood stairway is in two sections. The first level leads up from the rear of the property adjacent to Commerce Street; access to the second level is across a new wood deck on top of a flat roofed one story addition to the main structure. Both sections of stairway are constructed of pressure treated wood with wood handrails and pickets. The applicant has indicated to Staff that the wood elements of the new stair will be stained.

In order to protect the stairway from the weather, per Code requirements, the applicant proposes to cover both sections of the stairway with a new standing seam metal roof supported by box steel posts. A similar covered stair was constructed in the 1000 block of King Street.

From Commerce Street, the rear of 1212 King Street is visually accessible. The replacement stair to the upper floors will be visible above the existing fencing.

**II. HISTORY:**

1212 King Street is a three-story brick structure that was constructed mid-19th century, according to Ethelyn Cox's Historic Alexandria, Virginia: Street by Street. From Sanborn maps, it appears that a rear addition was constructed around 1921.

According to building permit records, a second floor rear porch was enclosed in 1947 (Permit # 4059), a rear addition was constructed in 1935 (Permit # unclear), and in 1967 windows at the storefront were replaced (Permit # 24094).

In 2006, the Board approved replacement windows and door with the proviso that the window openings, which had been altered without Board approval, be returned to their original size, and also approved a new HVAC unit and screening (BAR Case #2006-0051, 4/5/06).

**III. ANALYSIS:**

The proposed covered stairway complies with the Zoning Ordinance.

During the initial review of this application, the applicant expressed that the stair is a modern replacement of a formerly existing wood stair in approximately the same location. The applicant has supplied photographs of the former stairway.

While the new stair will be different from what existed, Staff understands the requirements for this egress stair and believes the applicant has provided clearer drawings showing how this stair will be constructed. The applicant has attempted to design an egress stair that is appropriate to this historic commercial building and sensitive to the views of the residential buildings across Commerce Street. Staff also acknowledges the requirement for the stair to have a covering per Code requirements. The proposed standing seam metal covering is acceptable and appropriate and similar to other stairs found along the rear elevations of building fronting upper King Street.

Therefore, Staff supports the application.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application.

## **V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

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

### Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The three windows on the second floor landing shall have a minimum of 3/4 of an hour assembly rating.
- C-1 The proposed use is a change in use group classification; a new Certificate of Occupancy is required (USBC 116.1).
- C-2 Prior to the application for new Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall submit a building permit for a change of use. Drawings prepared by a licensed architect or professional engineer shall accompany the permit application. These plans shall show existing conditions, construction type data, and a plot plan. In addition, these plans shall show proposed conditions and provide data by the design professional which details how the proposed use will comply with the current edition of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code for the new use in the area of structural strength, means of egress, passive and active fire protection, heating and ventilating systems, handicapped accessibility and plumbing facilities.
- C-3 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 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).
- C-5 A Construction permit will be required for the proposed project.
- C-6 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

### Historic Alexandria:

No comment.

**VI. IMAGES:**

