Docket Item # 3 BAR CASE #2008-0167

BAR Meeting October 15, 2008

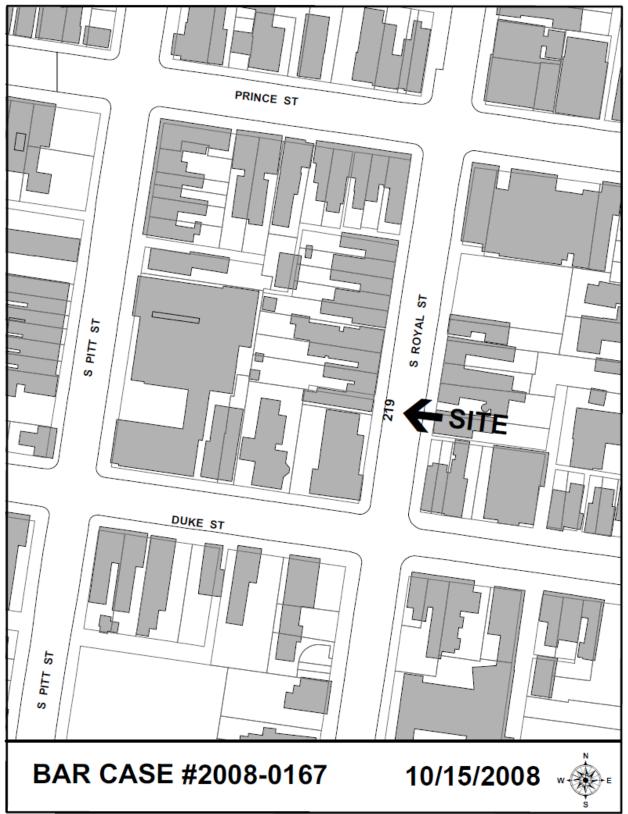
**ISSUE:** Alterations

**APPLICANT:** John Huling

**LOCATION:** 219 South Royal Street

**ZONE:** RM/Townhouse zone

<u>STAFF RECOMMENDATION</u>: Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the exterior vent be painted to match the already-painted masonry wall and that additional shrubbery be planted as necessary.



#### I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to install a vent through an exterior wall at 219 South Royal Street.

The applicant proposes to install the vent through an exterior masonry wall to accommodate a gas fireplace. The applicant notes that the gas fireplace replaces an original fireplace which has already been removed as it was deemed unsafe and unsalvageable.

The exterior vent will be located about three feet from the ground on the south wall. The proposed vent will measure approximately 12"x12" and will extend about 4" from the existing wall plane. The applicant notes that it can be painted to match the exterior of the building. The unit will be more than partially screened by an evergreen bush on the neighbor's property. The applicant notes that additional shrubbery can be planted to fully screen the vent.

## II. HISTORY:

The following history is based on map research and a previous site inspection by Staff and as well as information from an April 2006 report prepared by Ruth Lincoln Kaye, provided by the applicant for previous BAR cases. The evolution of the house is not entirely clear. Historical records, including land and personal property taxes and water company records, conclusively indicate that a frame house was extant on the lot by 1857. The 1877 Hopkins Atlas shows a frame house with a narrower rear ell in this location. A significant jump in the value of the house between 1889 and 1890 suggests that major improvements were made to the house in this year. Clearly, the front brick portion dates to this improvement. However, it is not clear whether the front portion is the earlier frame structure re-faced in brick with an updated Victorian exterior or an entirely new masonry structure. The 1891 Sanborn map depicts the front in brick and rear in frame. It also shows a somewhat different footprint from the 1877 Hopkins Atlas and 1885 Sanborn map, with a front and rear portion of equal width, much like the present footprint. Physical details, such as interior moldings and finishes, suggest that the back frame portion of the house incorporates elements dating to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. However, the construction techniques of this section corroborate a late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century date of construction. Further frame additions, apparently including the narrower rearmost section were added in 1902. A building permit dated July 18, 1966, requests approval to apply aluminum siding over the wood clapboard siding on the rear section of the house (Permit #23217).

In January of 2007, the Board approved a Permit to Demolish and Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations and a rear addition (BAR # 2006-0277 and BAR # 2006-0278).

## III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed vent alteration complies with the Zoning Ordinance requirements.

Regarding chimneys and flues, the most applicable section of the *Design Guidelines*, the *Guidelines* recommend that components of chimneys and flues, including exterior vents, should be located in visually inconspicuous areas. In addition such flues and vents should be painted to

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match the existing material. In this circumstance, Staff finds that the location of the proposed vent is minimally visible from the public right-of-way. In addition, the painting of the metal vent to match the existing painted masonry, as well as the planting of additional shrubbery as needed, will make the vent nearly undetectable from South Royal Street. Staff has no objection to the installation of this exterior vent.

While the proposed vent will require a small amount of demolition of historic fabric, Staff finds that the amount of historic fabric in minimal and will not compromise the integrity of the building.

**IV. <u>STAFF RECOMMENDATION</u>**: Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the exterior vent be painted to match the already-painted masonry wall and that additional shrubbery be planted as necessary.

## V. 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 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-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 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-5 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.
- C- 6 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.

## Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

# VI. <u>IMAGES</u>



Figure 1. View of south wall of 219 South Royal Street showing approximate location of proposed vent.



Figure 2. Detail of proposed location from South Royal Street.

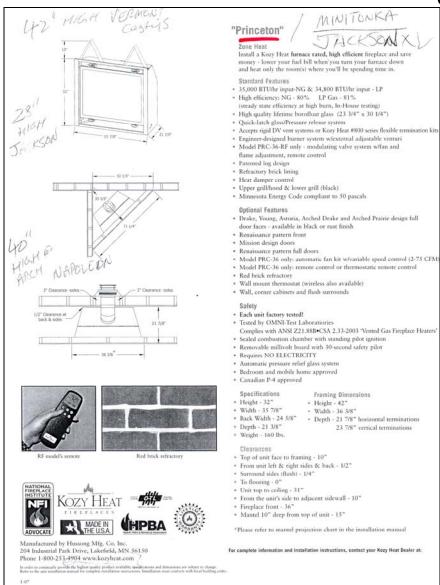


Figure 3. Specifications of proposed vent for gas fireplace.