

BAR Meeting
April 1, 2009

ISSUE: Addition
APPLICANT: Stephanie Dimond for Peter Erickson
LOCATION: 208 North Fairfax Street
ZONE: RM/Residential

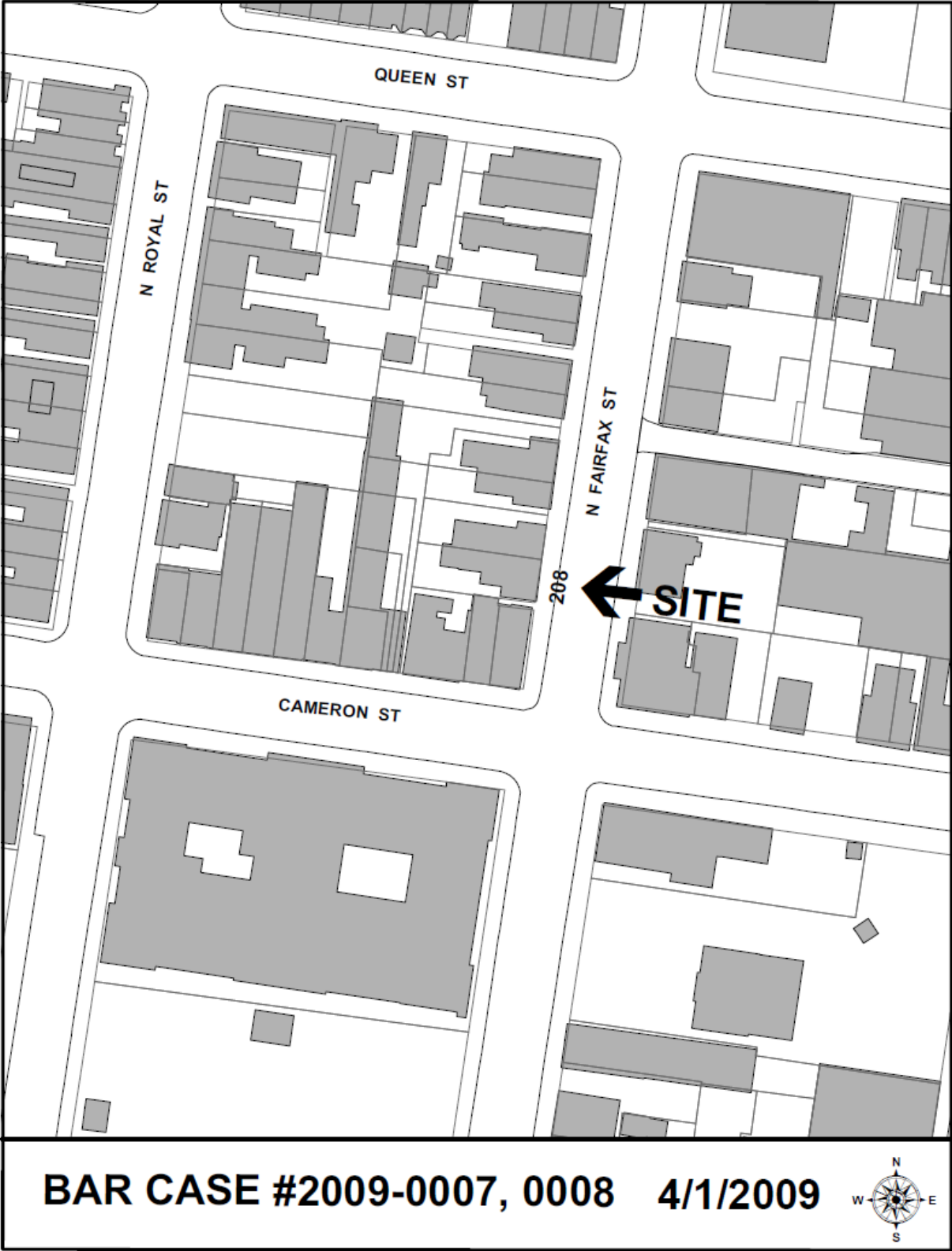
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions:

1. That the following statements appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
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 - B. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
 - C. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
 - D. At least one 18th-century burial could be located on this property. It is illegal to disturb human remains without obtaining appropriate legal authorization. If burials are found during development and need to be moved, the burials will be removed archaeologically, and appropriate legal authorization will be obtained, including a permit from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for the archaeological removal of burials.

****EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.

****BUILDING PERMIT NOTE:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Building and Fire Code Administration (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of

Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.



Note: The Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate, BAR Case #2009-0007, must be approved before this item may be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a two story rear addition at 208 North Fairfax Street.

The addition will have a flounder form with a west sloping roof running perpendicular to the existing rear ell. The footprint of the addition will measure 21 feet wide and 14 feet deep and will measure two stories in height (roughly 18 feet to the cornice). The addition will project 2 feet into the rear yard beyond the existing addition (and roughly 8 feet beyond the rear wall of 210 North Fairfax Street) and an additional 6.5 feet into the side yard. The addition will contain 434 gross square feet of living space.

The east elevation of the addition will contain a single multi-light wood door on the first floor and another multi-light wood door with a metal balcony on the second floor. The existing chimney will be retained and integrated into this elevation of the addition. The upper portion of this elevation will be only slightly visible above the applicant's gate on the public pedestrian service alley to the south.

On the south elevation there will be two multi-light wood doors on first floor and a faux opening with closed wood louvered shutters on the second floor. This portion of the addition will be somewhat visible from the 15 foot utility and pedestrian easement which provides access to the businesses at Norford Court, which is accessed off of Cameron Street.

The west elevation of the addition will be the most visible from Norford Court and will be three bays wide, with multi-light French doors and a multi-light transom centered on the first floor, flanked by double-hung, six-over-six wood windows. On the second floor, there will be three equally spaced double-hung, six-over-six wood windows. The sills on the windows and the header over the French doors will be wood, while the headers above the windows (and the windows and doors on the other elevations of the addition) will be constructed of a header course to match the historic house.

The north elevation of the addition, on the north property line, will be constructed of brick and will have no openings. The existing north wall of the one story addition will be retained and incorporated into the construction of this elevation of the new addition. For the westernmost 2 feet of the north elevation the addition will be inset slightly (2 inches) in order to keep this portion of the addition entirely on the applicant's property (the existing one story addition is located 2 inches over the property line).

The addition will be constructed of historic brick which will match the brick on the historic house to the extent possible. The roof will be constructed of a grey standing seam metal painted to match the existing roof. The gutters will be half round metal gutters. All of the wood portions of the addition – the doors, windows and trim – will be painted white. The new windows and doors will be manufactured by Loewen with simulated divided lights, interior spacer bars and 3/4 inch muntins.

II. HISTORY:

208 North Fairfax Street, together with 210 North Fairfax Street, is a two-and-a-half-story brick townhouse constructed by William Duvall sometime between 1784 when he purchased the land from William Ramsay, and 1793, when he sold the houses to William Downman of Prince William County for 400 pounds. The townhouses are notable examples of 18th century brick townhouses in Alexandria. Both are flounder houses turned at a ninety degree angle to the usual street orientation of other flounder buildings found in Alexandria, and were constructed with their roofs shedding toward the street. To the knowledge of Staff, there are only five 18th century flounder houses with this street orientation existing in the historic district - one example is in the 200 block of North Pitt Street and the other two are paired houses in the 200 block of South Royal Street.

Further, Staff notes that this pair of brick houses shares remarkably similar detailing of the belt course and water table with a number of other 18th century brick houses in the historic district. So distinctive is the similarity that Staff is of the opinion that the same hand designed these houses, which Staff has dubbed "Designer X". Extant examples include 521 and 601 Duke Street, the Dr. Craik house on Prince Street, and another at 219 South Lee Street. Colross, relocated early in the 20th century from the 500 block of North Henry Street to Princeton, NJ, is also an example of this distinctive house design.

In mid-February, Staff visited the site with the project architect and inspected both the exterior and interior of the subject property and determined that the house as it exists today was likely constructed in five phases (see Figure 2 showing phases of construction). With the exception of the existing one story rear addition, the house was completed by 1877, when it is shown with its existing layout on the 1877 Hopkins City Atlas of Alexandria. Staff believes that the house was constructed in the following phases:

- Phase I:* The original flounder house was constructed between 1784 and 1793 on the front property line at a ninety degree angle, with the roof shedding toward the street.
- Phase II:* The two story section behind the flounder was added with a shed roof – together the front and rear form a gable type roof.
- Phase III/IV:* The rear ell was added along with an entrance bay on the south side of the front flounder.
- Phase V:* A frame kitchen at the rear of the house was removed and the existing one story brick addition was constructed. At the same time, the dormer on the east slope of the main roof was constructed (Building Permit #19234, 3/5/1963).

On April 5, 2006, the Board approved alterations to the existing rear one story addition but denied a request to reconfigure the front stairs and add a proposed new door surround (BAR Case # 2006-0058 and 2006-0059). A building permit was approved for the project, although the exterior portions of that project were never undertaken. The interior alterations - the kitchen relocation from the rear addition to the 1st floor of the rear ell and the addition of a 2nd floor bathroom - are still underway.

In 1997, the Board approved a rear addition at the adjacent townhouse, 210 North Fairfax. That project, involved the demolition of the roof of the ell and portions of the ell's north façade, along with the encapsulation of the rear wall of the ell (BAR Case #1997-0015 & 0016, April 2, 1997).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed addition complies with the RM requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

In the opinion of Staff, the proposed addition at 208 North Fairfax Street is designed with a traditional form using materials found throughout the historic districts, as recommended in the *Design Guidelines* for residential additions. Also, in keeping with the *Guidelines*, the addition "echo[s] the design elements of the existing structure" yet with its north-south orientation stands out as "clearly distinguishable from the original structure".

When the application was first submitted in January, the addition had a gable roof form which Staff believed created too much additional mass at the rear of the house. The applicant subsequently revised the plans, and the addition now has a flounder form which results in a lower cornice line on the west elevation, where it will be visible from the pedestrian easement at Norford Court. The flounder form of the addition also has historic precedent as it is a mirror image of the c. 1790s flounder fronting North Fairfax Street.

Staff also prefers the applicant's approach to the rear addition, making it a separate and distinct volume which minimally impacts the rear ell, unlike the addition at 210 North Fairfax Street which required the removal of significantly more historic fabric (raising the roof and north wall of the rear ell and continuing the ell form) and enlarged the historic ell. Staff also supports the applicant's proposal to use historic brick on the new addition.

While single-glazed, true-divided-light wood windows are preferable, the *Design Guidelines* and the Board generally allow for double-insulated, simulated-divided-light wood windows and doors on new construction or in areas with limited visibility, both of which apply in this case. Therefore, Staff finds that the proposed windows and doors are appropriate. Staff also does not object to the false window, which the *Guidelines* note "... provide visual relief of the apparent mass of the side elevation of an addition."

Because access to the rear yard is limited to the shared pedestrian service alley, the applicant is reminded that access to the alley must be maintained during construction.

Staff notes the conditions of Alexandria Archaeology and recommends that they be included as a condition of approval.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions:

1. That the following statements appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
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V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Administration:

- C-1 All exterior walls within 5 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides of the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance. Openings in exterior walls between 3 and 5 feet shall not exceed 25% of the area of the entire wall surface (This shall include bay windows). Openings shall not be permitted in exterior walls within 3 feet of an interior lot line.
- C-2 Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Enforcement that will outline the steps that will taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-3 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-4 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-5 Additions and Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the 2006 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Additions and 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-7 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-8 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-9 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

- F1. An approved grading plan may be required at the time of building permit application. Insufficient information has been provided to make that determination at this time.

In summary, City Code Section 8-1-22(d) requires that a grading plan be submitted to and approved by T&ES prior to the issuance of building permits for improvements involving:

- the construction of a new home;
- construction of an addition to an existing home where either
 - the addition exceeds the area of the existing building footprint by 100% or more;
 - or
 - the construction of the addition results in less that 50% of the existing first floor exterior walls, in their entirety, remaining;
- changes to existing grade elevation of 1-foot or greater;
- changes to existing drainage patterns;
- land disturbance of 2,500 square feet or greater.

Questions regarding the processing of grading plans should be directed to the T&ES Site Plan Coordinator at (703) 838-4318. Memorandum to Industry No. 02-08 was issued on April 28, 2008 and can be viewed online via the following link.

<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/info/gradingPlanRequirements.pdf>

- R1. The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 8-1-22 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. [Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (T&ES)
- R2. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R3. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R4. No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (T&ES)
- R5. An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R5. Compliance with the provisions of Article XIII of the City's zoning ordinance for stormwater quality control is required for any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)

Historic Alexandria:

- R-1 Table pending documentation of age and condition of wall abutting 20th century addition (February 5, 2009).

- R-2 If the BAR requires that an easement be placed on the encapsulated rear wall, the Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission should be the holder of the easement (March 24, 2009).

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 This property is situated in the early historic core of the town and has potential to yield significant archaeological resources that could provide insight into life in 18th-century Alexandria. According to Ethelyn Cox in *Historic Alexandria, Virginia, Street by Street*, the house on the lot was built by William Duvall between 1784 and 1793. However, it is possible that there were structures present even earlier. Henry Salkeld, a mariner, purchased the southern half of the block bounded by Cameron, Fairfax, Royal and Queen streets in 1749 and may have lived there until his death in 1755. The lot at 208 N. Fairfax is situated within Salkeld's 1749 parcel, but it is not known if Salkeld built any structures on the development property. In addition, at the time of Salkeld's death, a diary entry of a Mrs. Brown, who came to Alexandria with Braddock's troops, suggests that he may have been buried on his property, but the exact location is not known. Thus, although the locations of structures and graves on Salkeld's land are unknown, the lot at 208 N. Fairfax has the potential to yield significant archaeological resources that could provide insight into daily life in the early town, and it is also possible for at least one burial to be present.
- R-1 Ground disturbing activities shall be monitored by City archaeologists. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that an inspection/monitoring schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
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- R-5 The statements in archaeology conditions R-1 through R-4 shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.

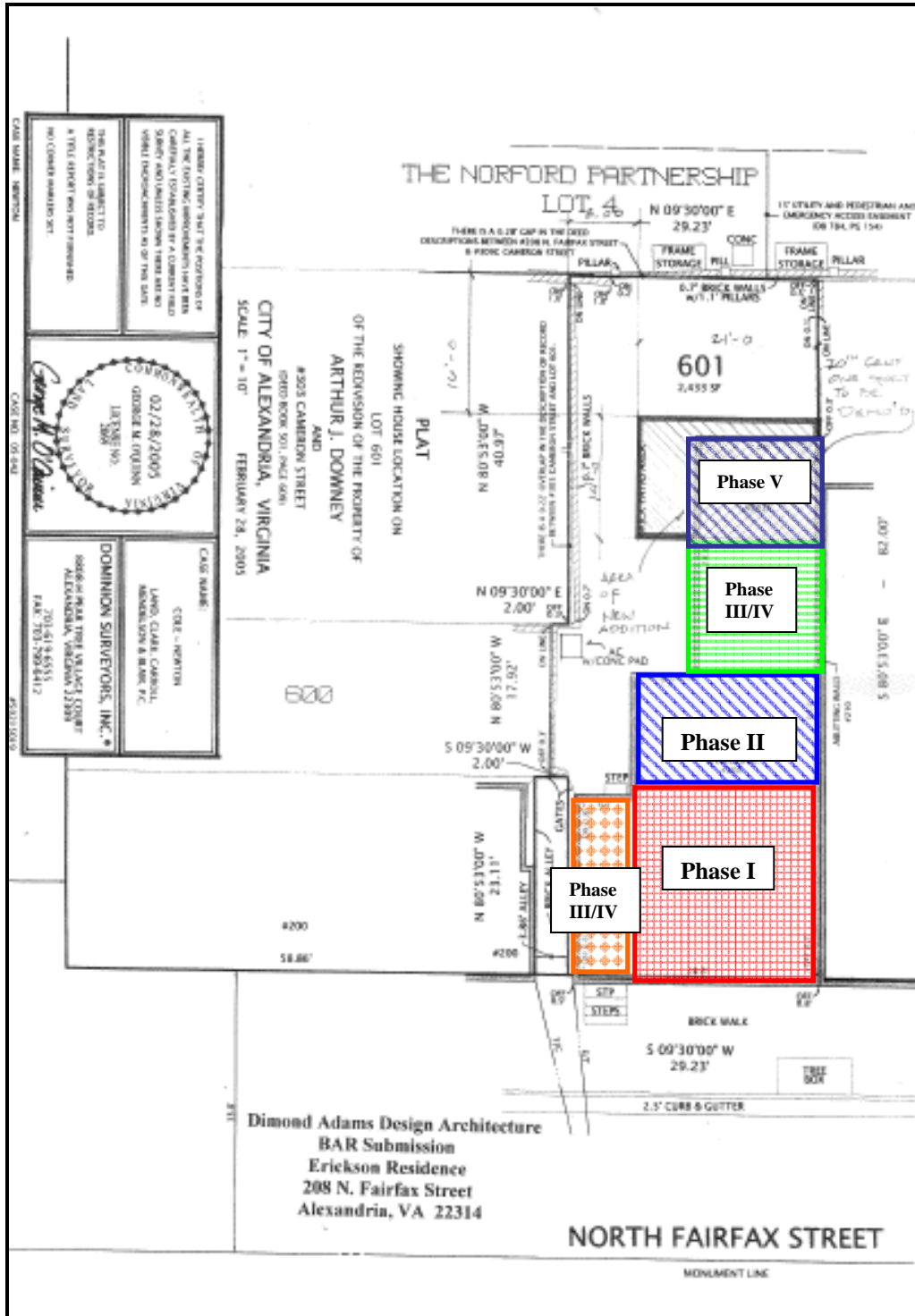


Figure 2: Plat showing phases of construction

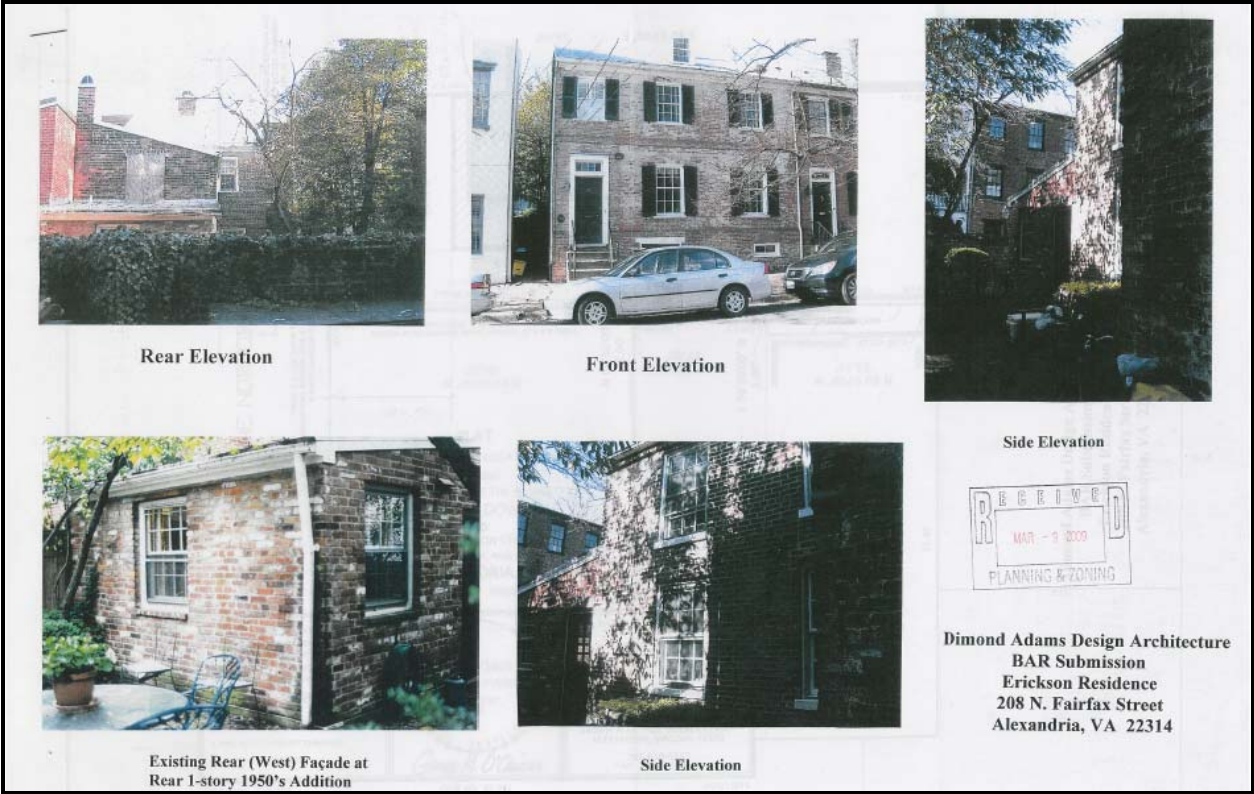


Figure 3: Existing site photos



Figure 4: Photo showing front/side of 208 North Fairfax Street



Figure 5: Photo showing flounder side of 210 North Fairfax Steet



Figure 6: Photo of rear from pedestrian easement



Figure 7: View of 210 North Fairfax Street from pedestrian easement



Figure 8: View from North Fairfax Street looking down alley next to 208 North Fairfax Street



Figure 9: View toward rear from alley next to 208 North Fairfax Street

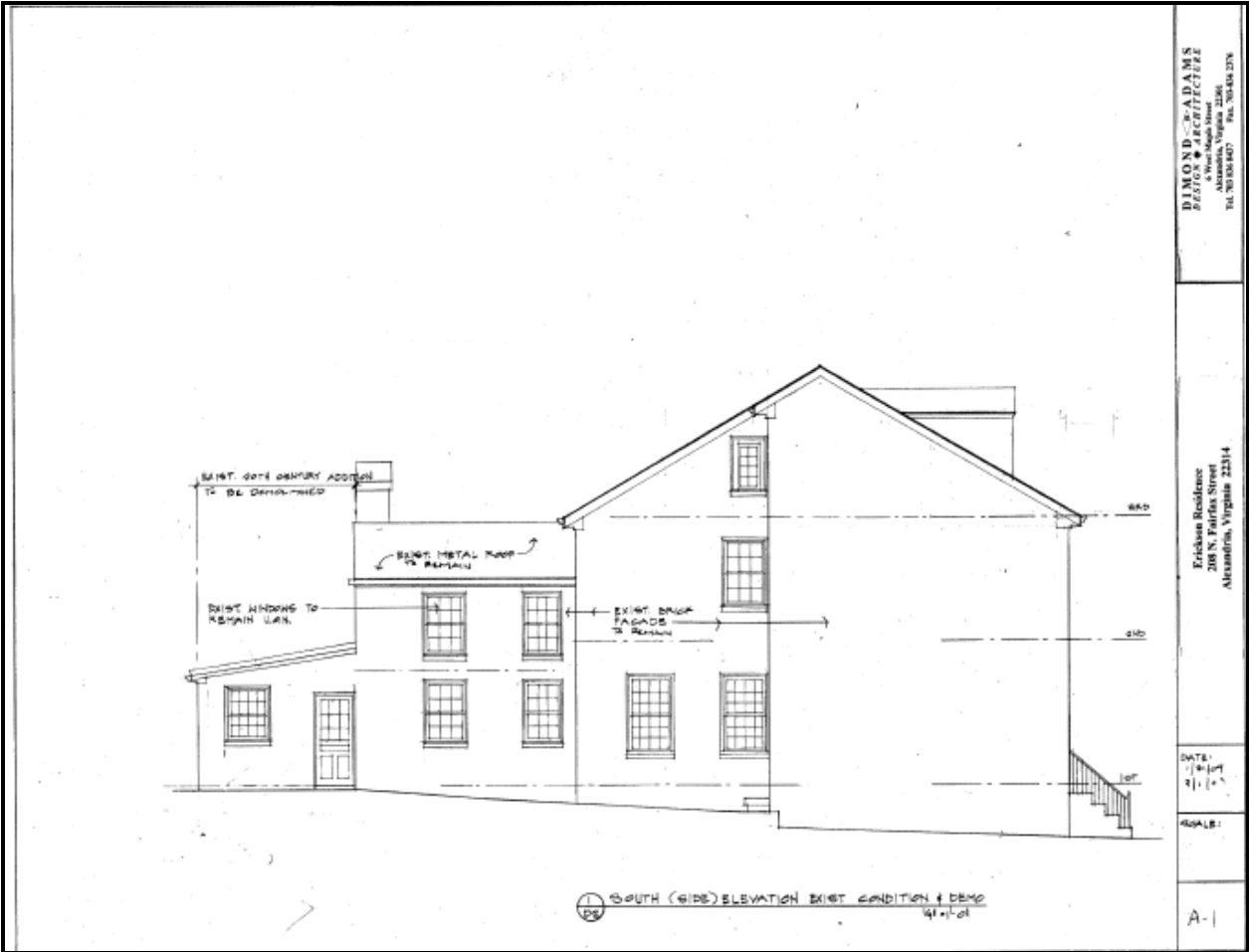


Figure 10: Existing south elevation

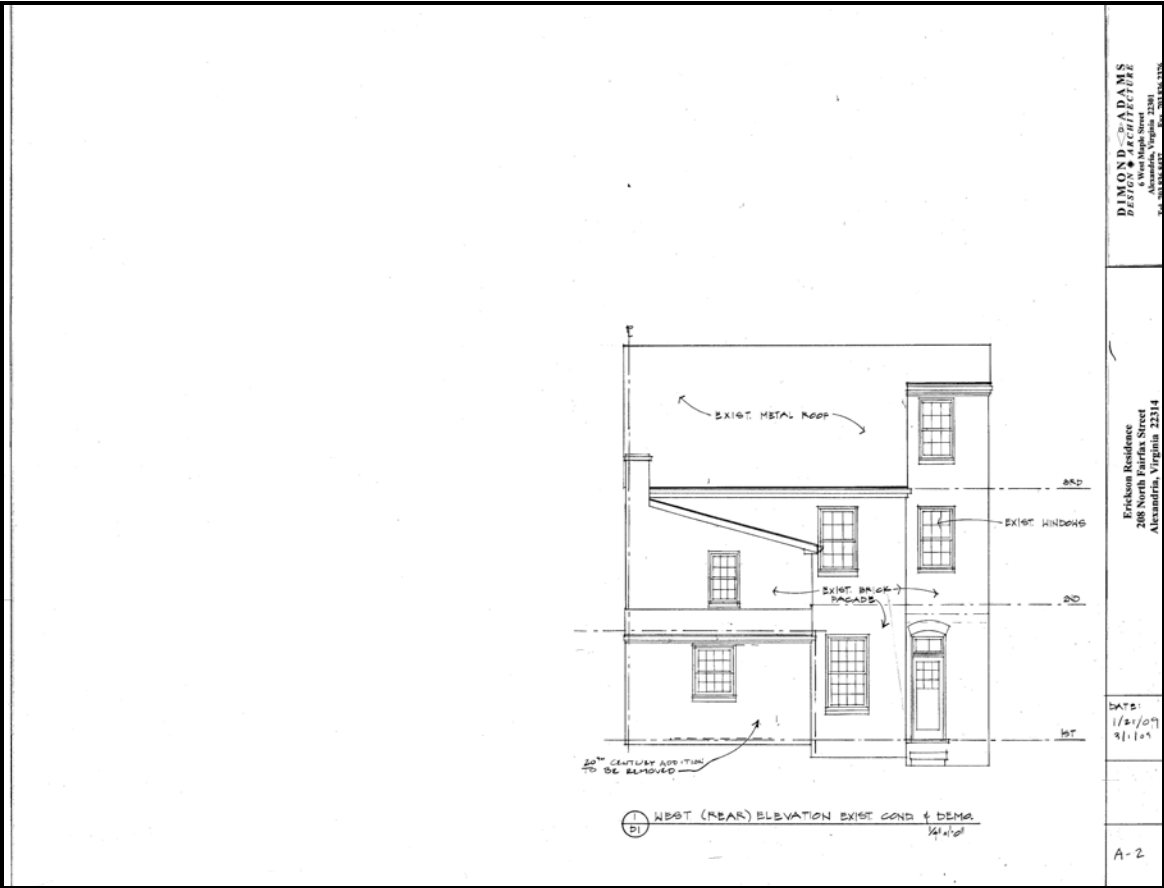


Figure 11: Existing rear elevation

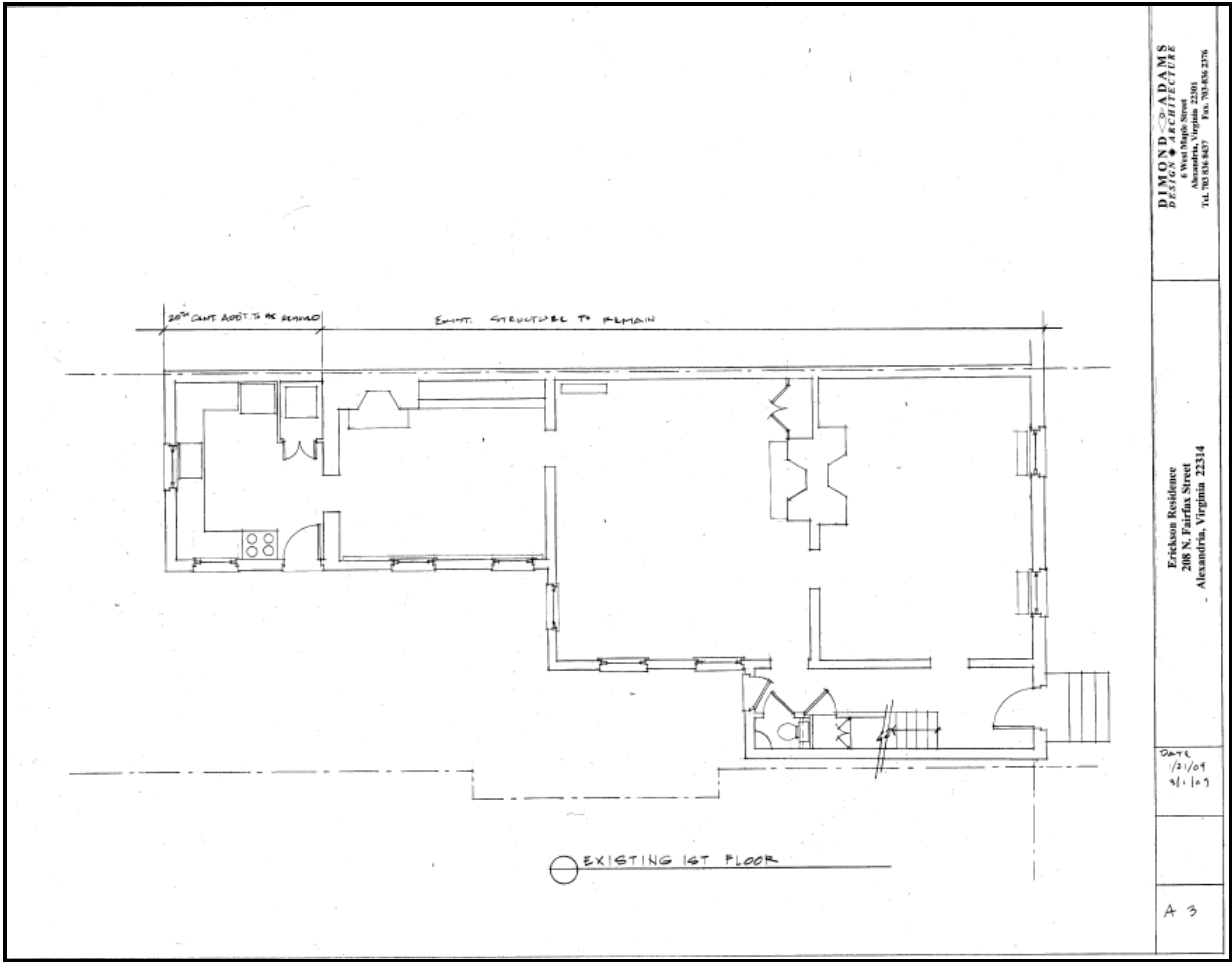


Figure 14: Existing first floor

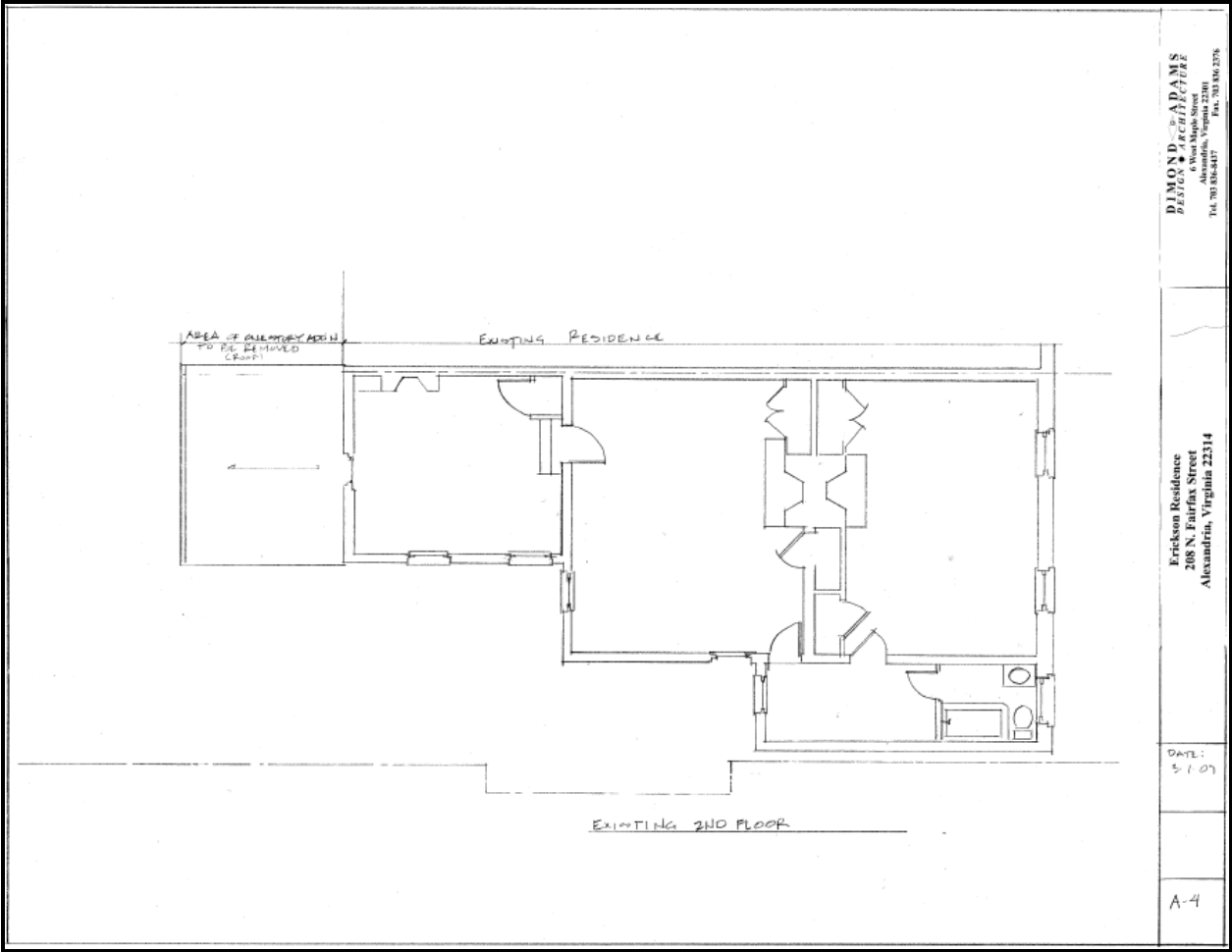


Figure 15: Existing second floor

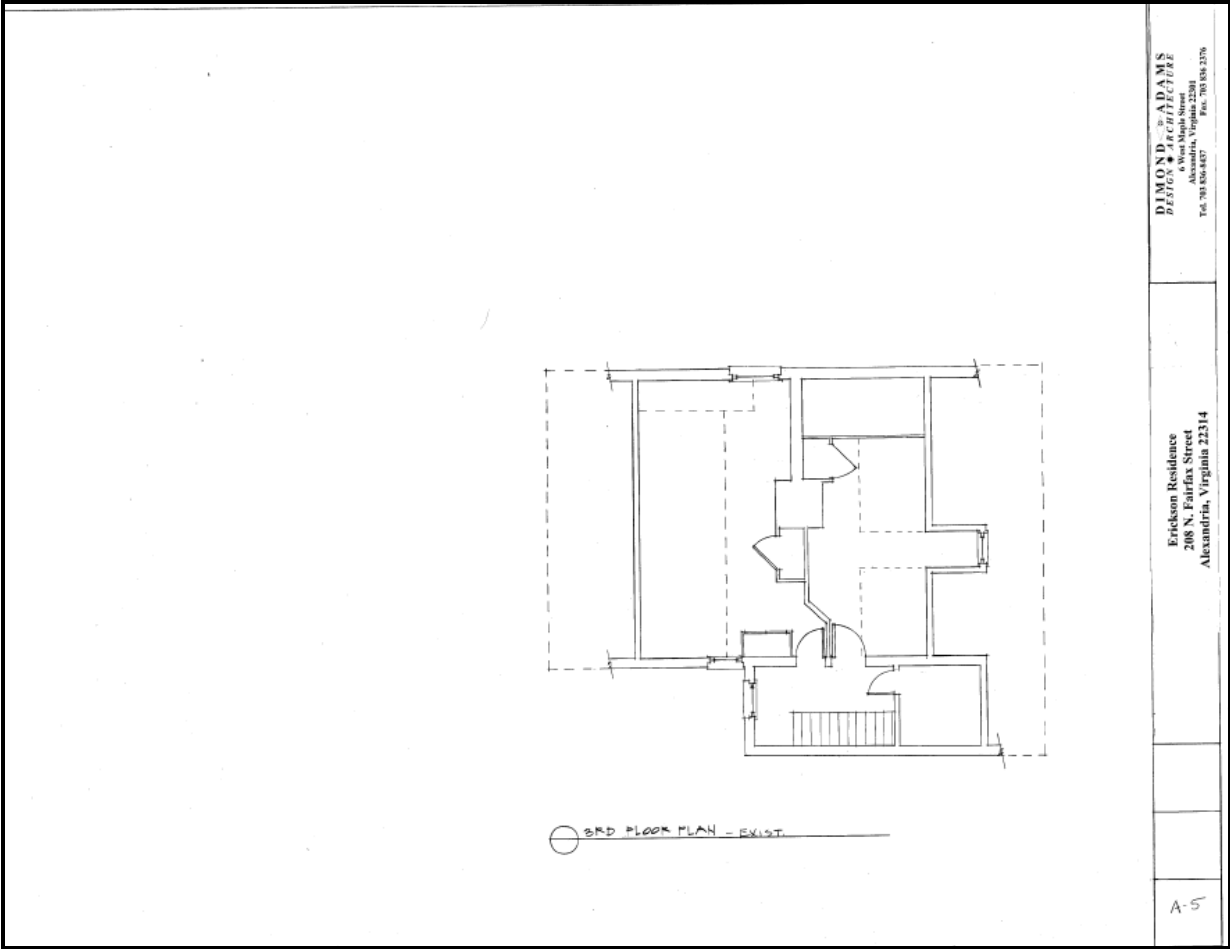


Figure 16: Existing and proposed third floor (no proposed changes)

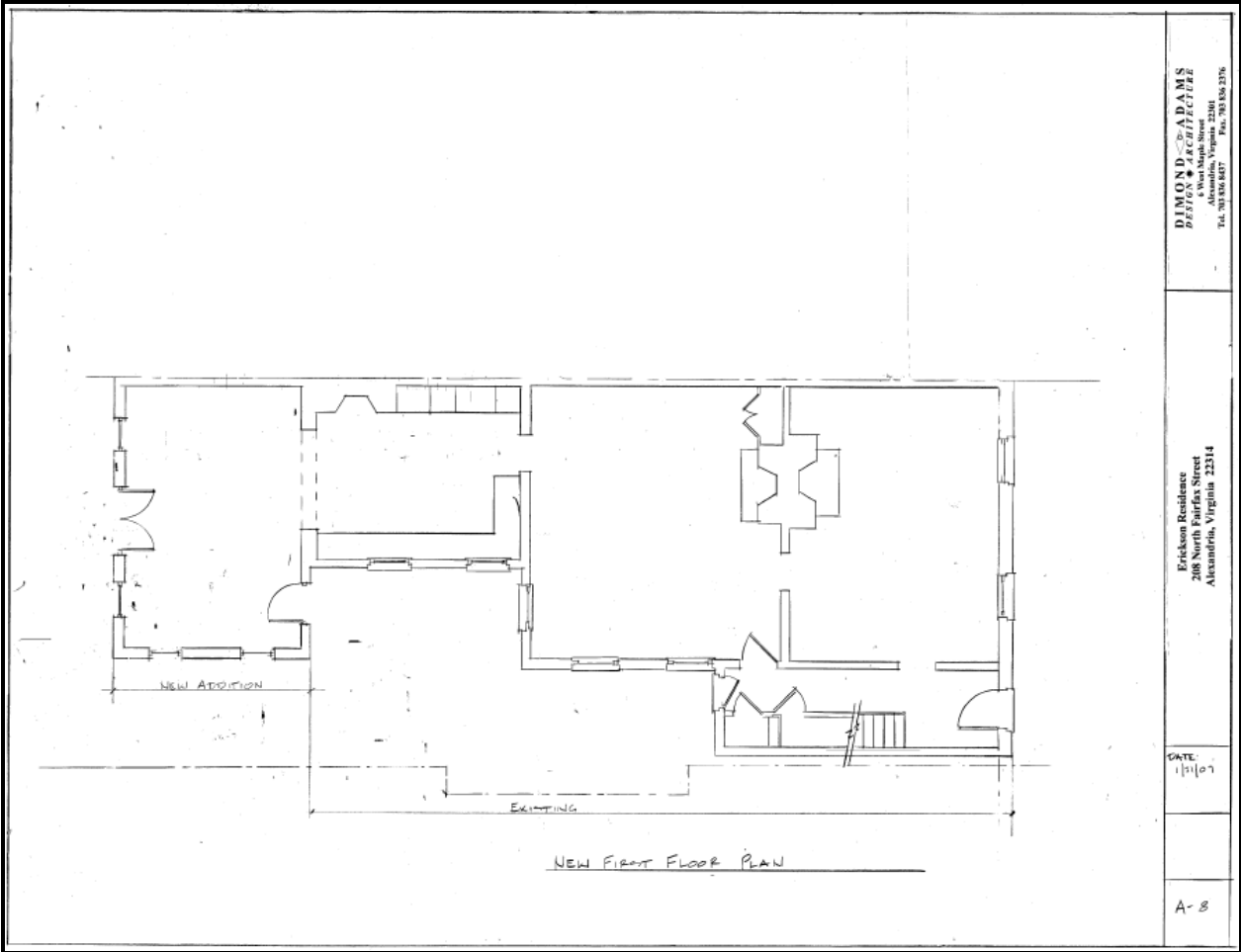


Figure 17: Proposed first floor

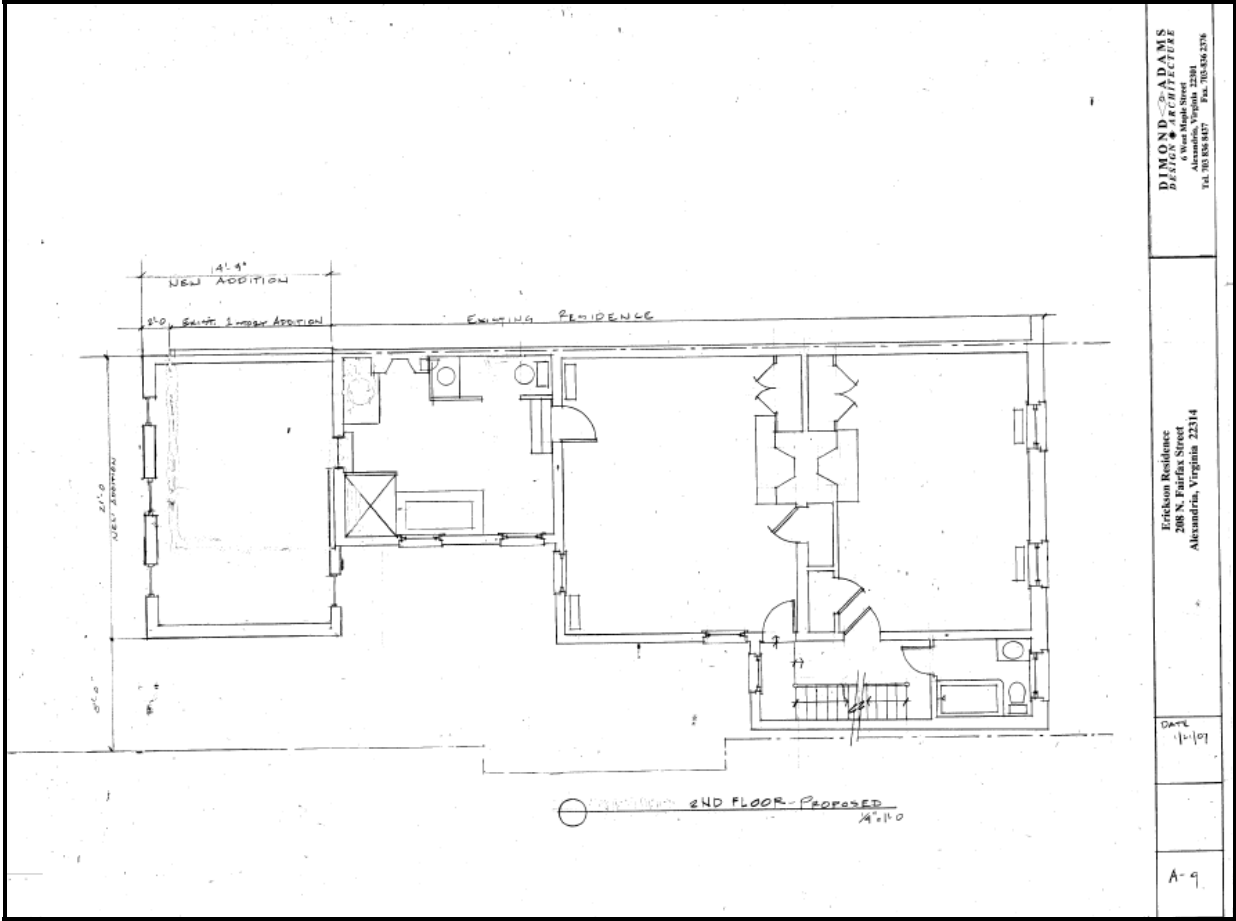


Figure 18: Proposed second floor