

Docket Item # 8
BAR CASE #2009-0104

BAR Meeting
June 17, 2009

ISSUE: Alterations

APPLICANT: Stephanie Dimond for Douglas and Grace Marie Turner

LOCATION: 415 Wolfe Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application.

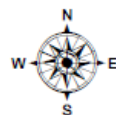
****EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that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



BAR CASE #2009-0104

6/17/2009



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the erection of a garden structure/gazebo, resembling a temple-folly at 415 Wolfe Street.

The garden structure is located within the east side garden, towards South Royal Street. The temple-folly -garden structure is composed of 6 stamped concrete base columns, in a natural finish and a powder-coated, black formed steel dome. The precast concrete columns have a stone appearance and are in sections, with rectangular bases and round twisted shafts, capped with modified Corinthian caps. The metal dome rests on engraved sections on each of the columns. Bench sections occur between 5 of the columns, with the benches also made of precast concrete, which lock together at each column. The overall height of the structure is 12 feet 8 inches, with the dome being 4 feet to the peak. The outside diameter is 9 feet 1 inch. Each of the columns is 8 feet 1 inch in height.

The structure is located at the end of a brick path, within a landscaped formal garden. The structure is visible from both South Royal and Wolfe Streets. The structure is not permanently affixed to the ground by any structural systems, and may be disassembled and relocated.

II. HISTORY:

415 Wolfe Street is a freestanding residential, two-story brick flounder center hall plan townhouse whose nucleus dates from ca.1788 according to Ethelyn Cox in *Alexandria Street by Street* (p.199). The east wing and loggia were largely re-worked by Ward Brown in ca. 1930.

Since the current owners purchased the property, the Board has reviewed and approved several alterations to the house and its setting, including, a new addition, new enlarged front porch, skylights, and fencing ((BAR Case #2005-0023, 3/2/05), and a new garden shed and brick wall (BAR Case # 2007-0117, 9/5/07). The approved garden shed was not built.

III. ANALYSIS:

The roof of the proposed structure is at least 80% open and meets the intent of Section 7-202 (A) (arbors and trellis' permitted forward of the building line). The proposed gazebo complies with Zoning Ordinance requirements with the condition that the roof must remain open.

As the history section details, the applicants have been before the Board several times for approvals for 415 Wolfe Street. When they were considering erecting the proposed garden structure/gazebo, their agent contacted the City to see if any approvals were necessary. Because they indicated the temple was not permanently affixed structurally and had an open roof of at least 80%, they were told no approvals were necessary. The issue of visibility from public rights-of-way was not discussed by the agent or the City, which led to the structure being erected prior to review and approval by the Board. As discussed in the issue section, the garden structure is clearly visible from both South Royal Street and Wolfe Street.

In regards to accessory structures, the Design Guidelines state that "free-standing accessory

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structures such as garages, pool and patio structures, garden and yard structures which may include storage sheds, greenhouses, and gazebos, guest cottages, and similar structures that are visible from a public right-of-way require the approval of a certificate of appropriateness by the Boards of Architectural Review...Historically, outbuildings have been an integral part of residential and commercial properties in the historic districts...Today, accessory structures or outbuildings serve decorative as well as functional needs. Free-standing accessory structures should complement, not compete with, the architecture of the main building. The materials of accessory structures should follow the historic usage of materials. For example, accessory structures were often constructed of simpler materials than the main buildings. The materials of accessory structures should not detract from the material of the main building.”

The Board commonly reviews and approves requests for such items as garages, arbors, and trellises. The garden structure/gazebo proposed resembles a temple-folly gazebo that is often used in high-style, formal landscaped gardens. In terms of similar structures reviewed and approved by the Board, Staff would note that a “Greek Temple” gazebo garden structure at 607 Cameron Street was approved by the Board on December 1, 2004 (BAR Case #2004-0247). This structure, which is visible from Cameron and North St. Asaph Streets, was described in the staff report as a “garden folly that compliments the house and garden.” In respect to the current proposal, Staff believes that this temple folly garden structure is quite similar in terms of context and visibility as the one approved on Cameron Street.

While Staff regrets the structure was erected prior to approval by the Board due to a misunderstanding of the required process, the garden structure itself merits approval by the Board. In Staff’s opinion, the decorative garden structure, while somewhat high-style, meets the requirements of the Design Guidelines and is appropriate while complementing the series of approved changes the owners’ have made to the historic house and the formal landscape garden. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the garden structure as submitted.

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:

- C-1 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-2 New construction must comply with the 2006 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully details the construction.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

There is low potential for significant archaeological resources to be disturbed by this project. No archaeological action is required.



Figure 2. View from parking area to the north.



Figure 3. View from owner's house looking east towards South Royal Street.

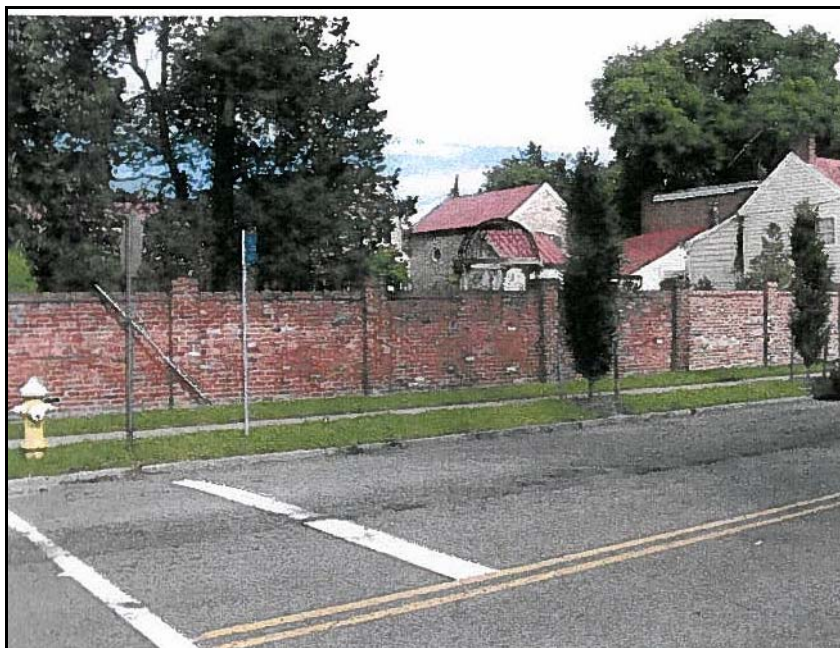


Figure 4. View from South Royal Street.



Figure 5. View from Wolfe Street.

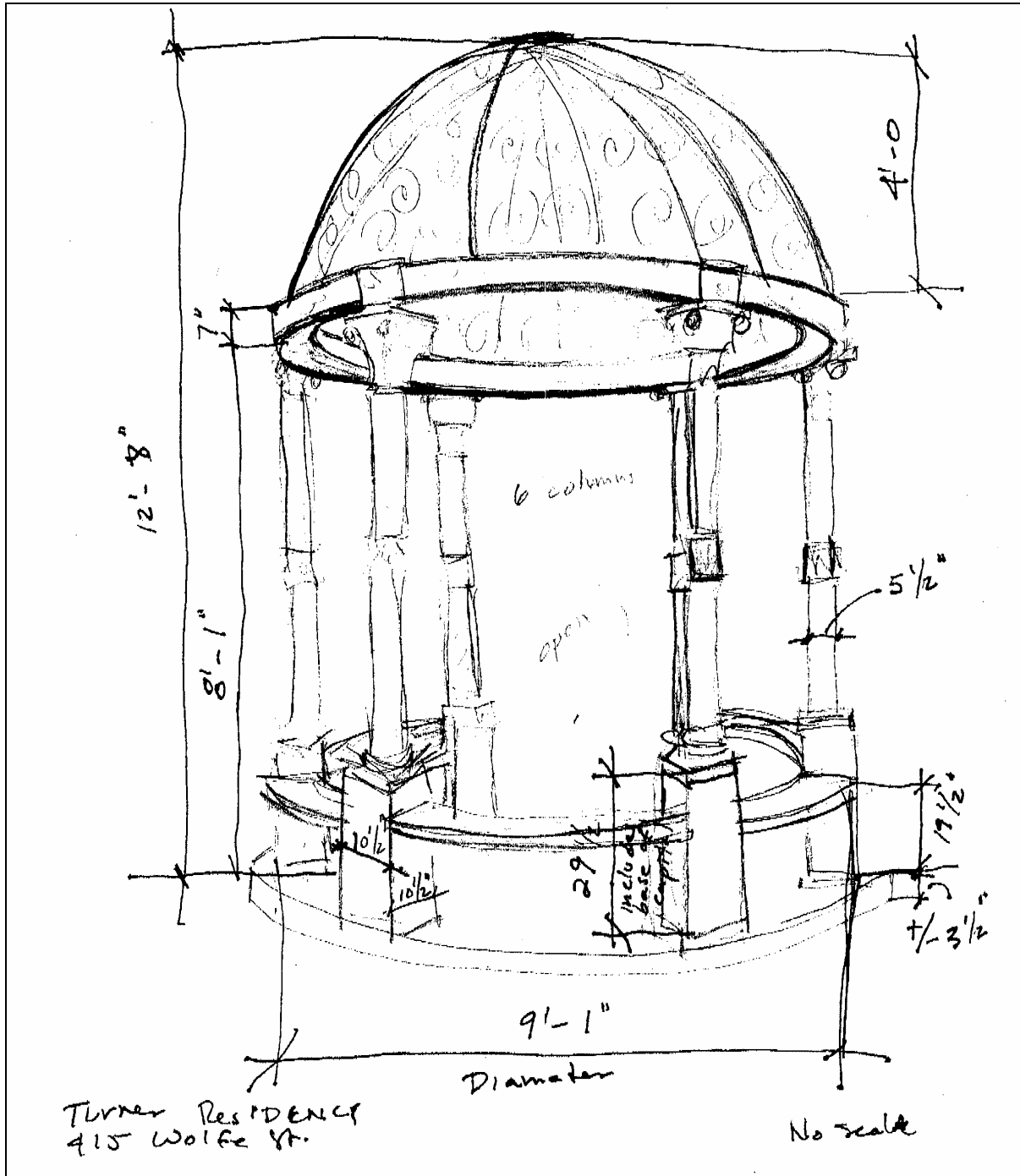


Figure 6. Drawing and details of garden structure/gazebo.