

Docket Item # 3
BAR CASE # 2009-0016

BAR Meeting
July 8, 2009

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Patrick Camus for Ken and Esther Carpi
LOCATION: 117 South Lee Street
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the revised stoop as submitted.

BOARD ACTION APRIL 1, 2009: Approved by a roll call vote as amended, 5-2.

On a motion by Mr. Neale, seconded by Mr. Keleher, the Board voted to approve by roll call vote the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate, the Certificate of Appropriateness, and the waiver of HVAC screening requirement with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant restudy the proposed stoop and return to the Board with a revised design for the stoop.
2. That the applicant should reuse all historic brick on the altered garden wall located at the west (rear) property line.
3. *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.
4. *The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
5. The statements in archaeology conditions above marked with an asterisk "*" 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.

The roll call vote was 5-2.

REASON: The Board generally agreed with the Staff analysis but found that it was acceptable for the addition to extend beyond the plane of the existing historic building. The Board expressed concerns about the proposed front stoop design

and added a condition that the applicant return to the Board with a revised design for the stoop portion of the application.

SPEAKER: Ken Carpi, applicant, spoke in support of the application. John Hynan, representing Historic Alexandria Foundation, expressed concerns regarding the size of the proposed addition, the paint color of the proposed pergola, and the operability of the proposed shutters.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: April 1, 2009: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the addition be stepped in on the north elevation so it is either flush with or slightly inset from the plane of the existing north elevation, and that the addition be reduced proportionately to this width reduction to retain the proportions and design of the proposed classical revival addition.
2. That the applicant should reuse all historic brick on the altered garden wall located at the west (rear) property line.
3. *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.
4. *The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
5. The statements in archaeology conditions above marked with an asterisk "*" 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.

BOARD ACTION MARCH 4, 2009: Deferred for restudy, 4-0.

The Board combined docket item's #9, #10 and #11 for discussion. On a motion by Mr. Keleher, seconded by Mr. Spencer, the Board voted to defer the applications for demolition/encapsulation, addition and alterations, and a waiver of HVAC screening requirement in order for the applicant to further study the design of the rear addition.

The vote on the deferral was 4-0.

REASON: The Board commended the design, yet encouraged further study of the proposed addition. The Board recommended that the Applicant restudy the height of the addition, the shutter and window configuration, and the height of the proposed garden wall on the north property line to reduce the height to 6 feet by the building. The Board agreed with Staff and believed that the historic garden wall adjacent to the alley should be retained and not altered.

SPEAKERS: Ken Carpi, Applicant, testified that he was in partial agreement with the staff

report, and presented his analysis of the house's evolution. He objected to the staff's characterization of the rear porch addition being historic, as some form of it was built in the mid 20th century, but it has had changes. He believed that the added height and width of the new design would be more proportional to the existing house. The applicant represented that they agree to retain the existing historic garden wall along the alley and that they would reduce the height of the wall adjacent to 113-115 South Lee Street. He also represented that it would be acceptable to retain the existing flue though they did not prefer to retain it.

Andrew Saltonstall, owner of the properties 113-115 South Lee Street, next door to the site, expressed that he has no objection to the design as submitted.

Robert Montague, 207 Prince Street, noted that he is supportive of the design and wants the Applicant to retain the existing brick wall. He questioned whether the height of the new addition should be higher than the old.

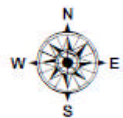
John Hynan, representing Historic Alexandria Foundation, stated that the Foundation agreed with the Staff recommendations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: March 4, 2009: Staff recommends deferral of the application with the following considerations:

1. That the applicant restudy the height and massing of the proposed addition so that it fits within the wall plane of the historic building and is no taller than the portion of the historic house immediately adjacent;
2. That the applicant continue to study the proposed window and shutter scheme;
3. That the applicant eliminate any alterations or demolition to the historic garden wall on the south (alley) elevation and should reuse all historic brick on the altered garden wall located at the west (rear) property line;
4. That the applicant revise the new garden wall on the north property line to be no more than 6' in height from grade by stepping the wall down accordingly with existing grade; and,
5. That the applicant should continue to work with Staff in developing design details as they relate to the shed, addition and other alterations.

****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.



UPDATE:

The application for a revised stoop was deferred prior to the June 17, 2009 hearing due to an issue regarding the proposed encroachment.

At the April 1, 2009 hearing, the Board voted to approve a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate, a Waiver of the Rooftop HVAC Screening Requirement, and a Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition and alterations, with the condition that the applicant restudy the stoop design and return to the Board for final approval.

The applicant has since submitted a revised and simplified design for the stoop.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the stoop at 117 South Lee Street. The Board has already approved a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate, a Waiver of the Rooftop HVAC Screening Requirement, and a Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition and alterations except for a new stoop design.

The applicant is proposing to remove the existing side-oriented front stoop. The proposed stoop will project 4 feet from the face of the building and will encroach 3 feet into the public right-of-way. The revised stoop will be sandstone instead of limestone which was proposed in earlier submissions. The applicant has simplified the proposed stoop by reducing the width of the treads: 5.5 feet instead of 7.25 feet. The applicant has added a newel at the base of the iron railing, curving outward at the bottom tread.

II. HISTORY:

The dwelling at 117 South Lee Street is a two-story, three-bay frame townhouse which City real estate records dates to 1902, though Staff and historical maps date it to the late 19th century. The G.M. Hopkins *City Atlas of Alexandria* depicts a building, similar in configuration to the existing dwelling but without a rear ell, at this location in 1877. The building appears on the *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* from 1891 (the first year which covers this area). Only the main block is depicted on the 1891 map. The two-story brick rear ell first appears on the *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* from 1896. A one-story frame addition attached to the rear ell first appears on the *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* from 1896 but does not appear in 1902. A two-story rear porch addition (attached to the rear ell) was constructed by 1941 and continued to appear in 1958, according to *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* from those years.

In 2001, the Board approved an after-the-fact application for a waiver of the rooftop HVAC screening requirement (BAR Case # 2001-0084). In 1958, the Board approved a “spraycrete” application to the exterior.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed stoop complies with Zoning Ordinance regulations. Due to the width of the public right-of-way on South Lee Street, according to the City Code, a stoop may encroach 3 feet at this location.

The existing side-loading front stoop, made of brick and concrete, does not appear to be historic. The revised stoop is consistent with the *Design Guidelines* which state that “stoops, steps and railings should be made of materials which are sympathetic to the building materials generally found in the historic districts” and “should be appropriate and compatible with the historic architecture of the building.” Staff found the proposed limestone stoop in the previous submissions to be appropriate; however the Board found that the stoop design should be further studied. The revised design has been simplified and includes elements typical of Victorian stoops, such as the use of sandstone and a pronounced railing with newel posts. The reduction in the width of the treads and encroachment onto the sidewalk further simplifies the design and makes the stoop more appropriately scaled to the building. The revised design is appropriate and consistent with the *Design Guidelines*.

Staff continues to note the previous comments from Code Administration, Alexandria Archaeology and Transportation and Environmental Services.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- 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 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Additions and Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-7 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-8 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-9 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-10 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

- C-11 Structural calculations are required to verify the ability of the existing roof to support the additional weight of the A/C unit.
- C-12 Guardrail structural design and construction must comply with USBC.
- C-13 Where appliances are located $\leq 10'$ from a roof edge or open side with a drop $\geq 24"$, guards shall be provided (USBC 2801.1)

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

Archaeology Finding

1. Tax records indicate that houses were present on this street face by 1810. The 1877 Hopkins insurance map shows a structure on the lot at 117 S. Lee. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into activities in 19th-century Alexandria.

Archaeology Recommendations

*1. 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.

*2. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

3. The statements in archaeology conditions above marked with an asterisk "*" 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.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

FINDINGS

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 than 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>

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 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)

VI. IMAGES

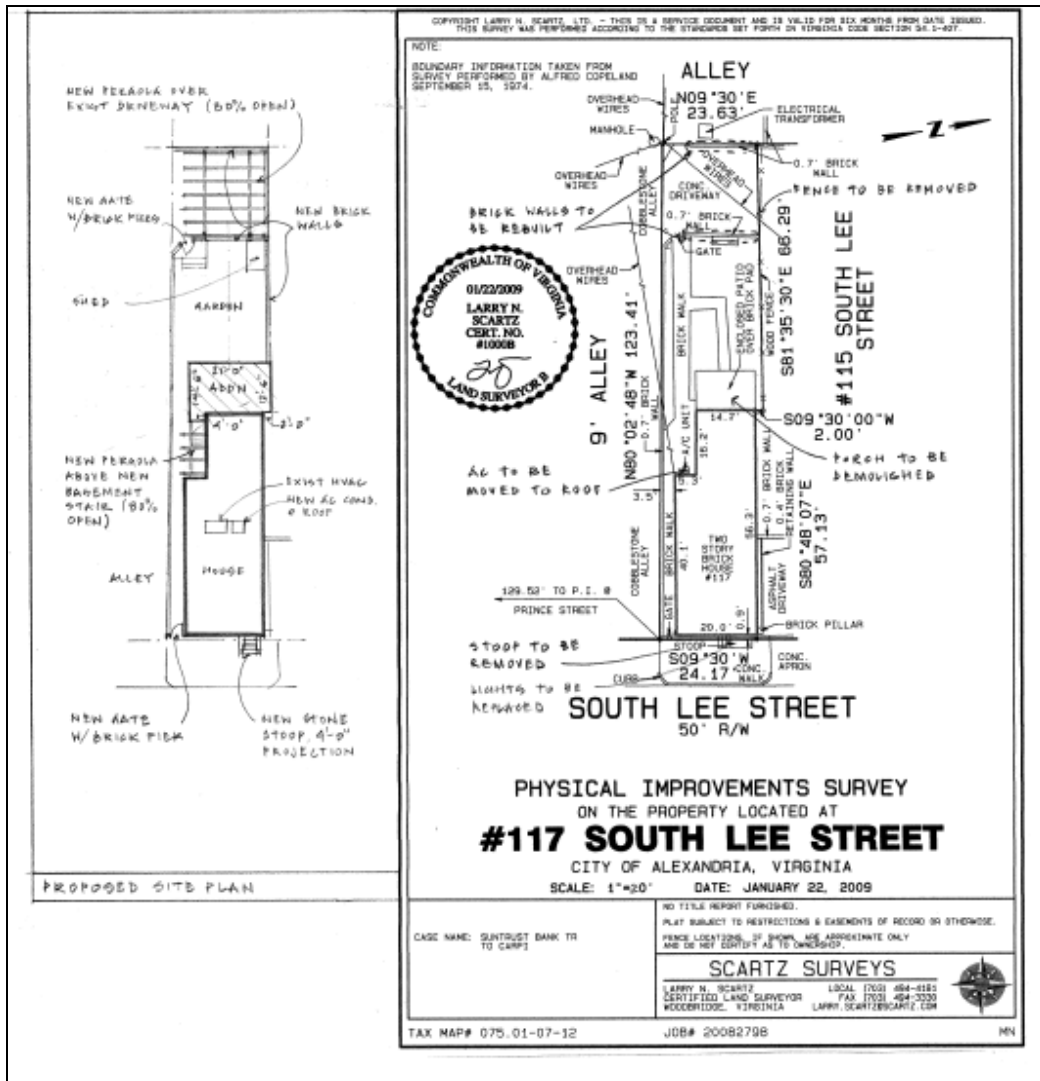


Figure 1. Site plan with approved addition and alterations (Note: revised stoop projects four feet from building face but will encroach three feet into the public right-of-way).



Figure 2. Front (east) and side (south) elevations, 117 South Lee Street.

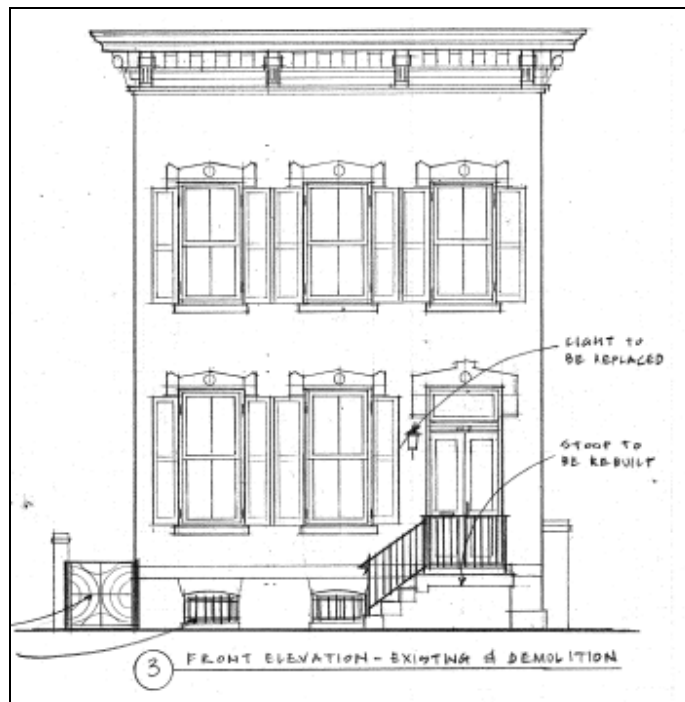


Figure 3. Existing front elevation with side-entry stoop.

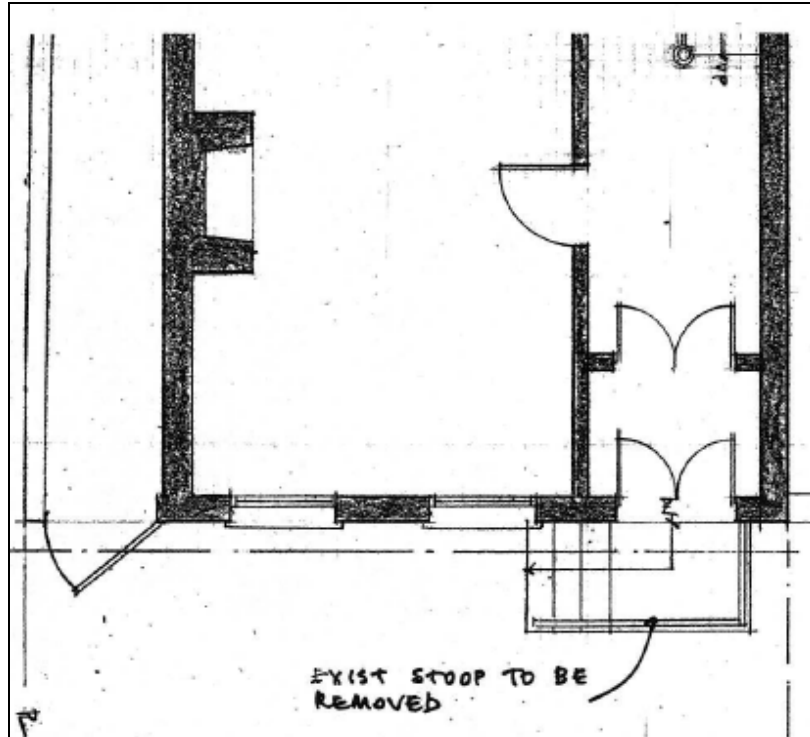


Figure 4. Plan, existing stoop.

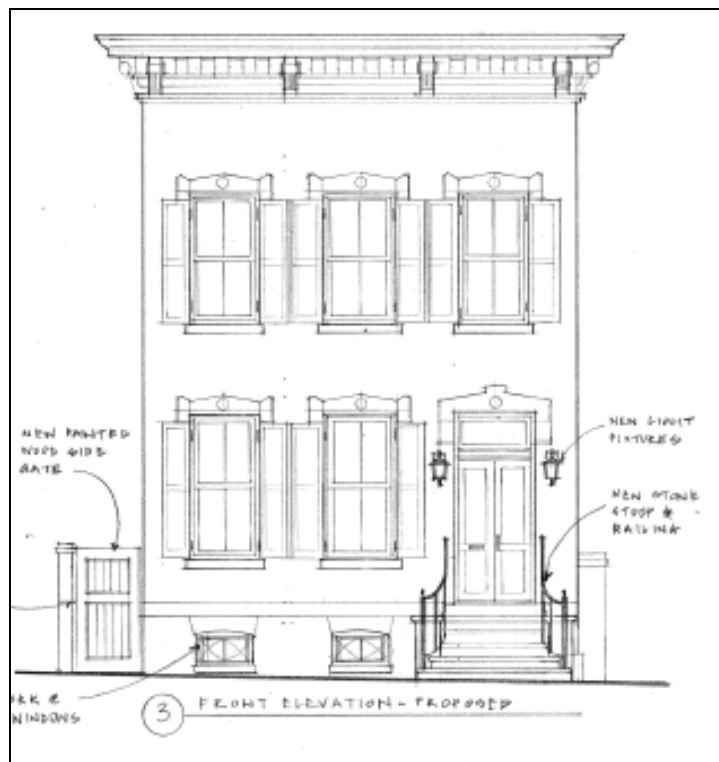


Figure 5. Initial proposal for a new stoop.

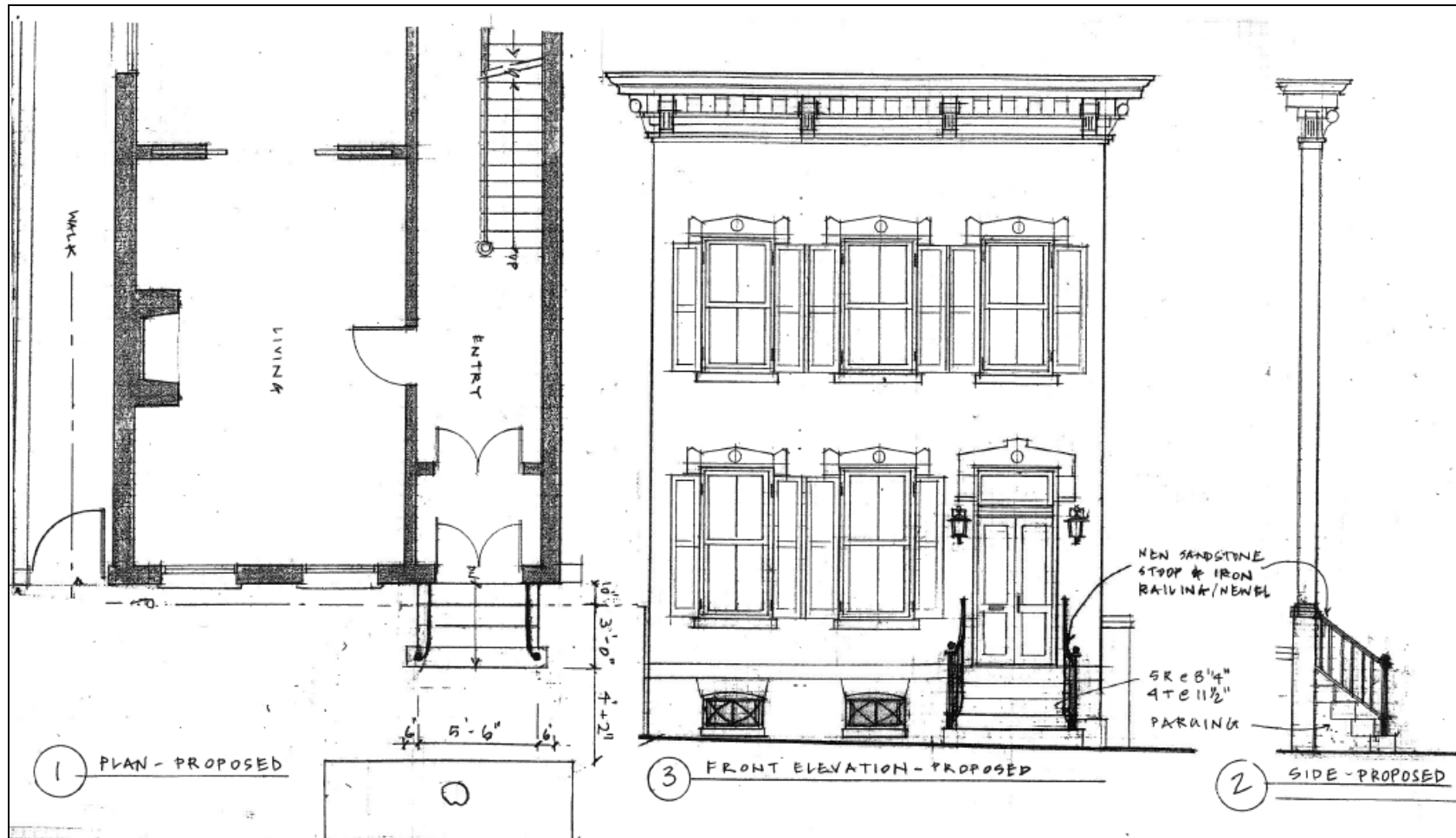


Figure 6. Proposed revised front stoop, plan and elevation.