

Docket Item # 10
BAR CASE # 2009-0150

BAR Meeting
October 21, 2009

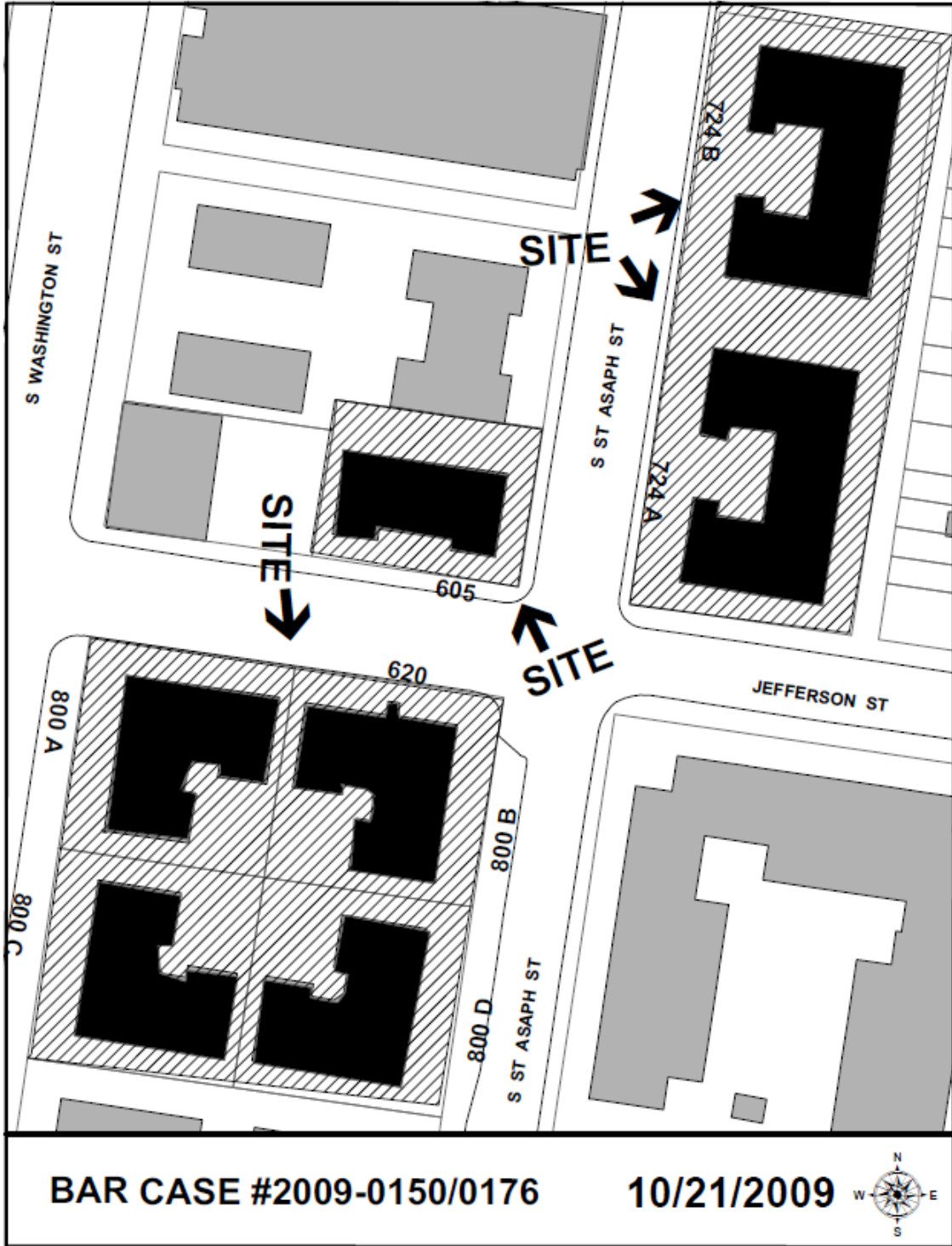
ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Scott Management Inc.
LOCATION: 620 Jefferson Street
ZONE: RCX

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends denial of the application.

BOARD ACTION at the September 9, 2009 Public Hearing: On a motion by Mr. von Senden, seconded by Mr. Keleher, the Board voted to defer the application for restudy, with a 5-0 vote.

****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.



 - SITE

Note: The Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate, BAR Case #2009-0176, must be approved before this item may be considered.

UPDATE:

This case was presented to the Board at their September 9, 2009 Public Hearing. At this hearing, the Board generally agreed with the Staff analysis that found it inappropriate to remove the building's historic brick masonry fabric in order to install through-the-wall HVAC units. The Board deferred the item in order for the applicant to research alternative HVAC replacement options that would not damage the historic building such as placing the units on the roof and/or on the ground level.

The applicant's transmittal letter dated September 23, 2009 and attached photo documentation provides the additional information requested by the Board. In the letter, the applicant reports that installing the HVAC units on the roof would cost an additional \$500,000, and states that the roof would have to be reinforced and additional electric baseboard heat installed. In exploring the possibility of locating the HVAC units on the ground, the applicant reports an additional cost of \$600,000, the need to install ventilation equipment in each apartment, and challenges in locating and screening ground mounted HVAC units would be required.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of through-the-wall HVAC units at the Monticello-Lee Apartment complex located on parts of three City blocks along Jefferson Street, South Washington Street, and South Saint Asaph Street. The complex consists of seven buildings located at 800A, 800B, 800C and 800D South Washington Street, at 605 Jefferson Street, and 724A and 724B South Saint Asaph Street. For the purpose of installation, the proposed wall units will require that a 16-3/4 inch tall by 27 inch wide hole be cut into the historic brick wall of all 325 apartment units. The wall units will be mounted in a vertical column on each façade and will extend 9/16 of an inch from the exterior wall of the building. The units will be centered on each apartment window with the top of the unit being approximately 6 to 12 inches below the bottom of the window sill. The applicant has indicated the intention of painting the exterior grills to match the masonry. The total area of proposed demolition for all 325 units is approximately 1,054 square feet.

II. HISTORY:

The main Monticello Lee Apartment complex of four buildings was designed by Evan Conner for the Atlantic Development Company and was constructed in late 1939 and early 1940. The garden style apartment buildings are three stories in height and constructed of brick, with variations in the design of the buildings on each of the three contiguous sites. The buildings have undergone minimal exterior alterations in their seventy year history.

The Monticello-Lee Apartments are among a number of garden apartment complexes constructed in Alexandria at the north and south ends of Washington Street from the late 1930s through approximately 1950. Each of these garden-style apartment developments utilized Colonial Revival detailing, had large setbacks and open space, and are emblematic of garden-style apartments built in this period throughout the Washington, D.C. region.

The only prior BAR case for this property was heard before the Old and Historic Board on March 20th of 1996, at which time the Board approved replacement of 752 non-original windows in the 800 South Washington Street buildings.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

According to the *Design Guidelines*, “Through-the-wall air conditioning units are discouraged because of their adverse visual impact as well as the loss of historic building material that results from their installation.” The Monticello Lee Apartment complex currently has window AC units that can either be repaired or replaced upon failure without any impact on the historic building. It is the opinion of Staff that due to ever-progressive HVAC technology it is inappropriate to remove historic fabric and compromise the historic integrity of the buildings in order to install new HVAC units that will eventually lose relevancy. Some properties in the historic district, such as the building at 815 King Street, have in recent years had their through the wall units removed with the installation of new mechanical systems. Removing the through the wall units at 815 King Street enabled restoration of the original brick wall, filling the void with brick that very closely approximates but does not exactly or seamlessly match the original brick and will always be obviously discernable. This example highlights the reasons Staff believes that the subject proposal is not considered a reversible change as brickwork and mortar can never be re-constructed without the repair being visually incompatible.

Additionally, the Monticello-Lee Apartment complex spans one block of South Washington Street which is part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and thus subject to the Washington Street Design Guidelines which state that, “construction shall be compatible with and similar to traditional building character particularly mass, scale, design, and style, found on Washington Street on commercial or residential building of historic architectural merit.” Through-the-wall HVAC units are neither compatible with nor similar to traditional building character. It is for the above reasons Staff recommends that the Board deny this application.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends denial of the application.

STAFF:

Meredith Kizer, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Stephen Milone, Division Chief, Land Use Services, Planning & Zoning

V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Administration:

- C-1 Installation of the mechanical units must comply with the current edition of the Mechanical Code.
- C-2 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the 2006 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 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-4 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.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

VI. IMAGES

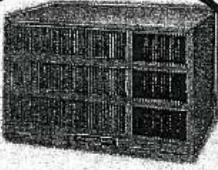


Figure 1. Photograph of building from S. Washington St.



Figure 2. Photograph of building with existing HVAC units.

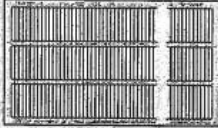
WallMaster | 27" Sleeve Exterior Grilles



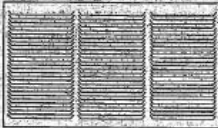
WSC Sleeve Standard Grille - Ships with sleeve

IMPORTANT:
 Operating the air conditioner with incorrect rear grille or without Baffle Adapter Kit (on 19 3/4" deep sleeve) will recirculate discharge air and cause compressor overload to trip.

CORRECT Vertical Louvers

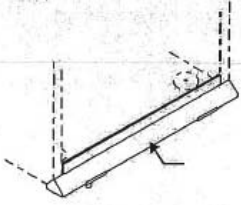


INCORRECT Horizontal Louvers



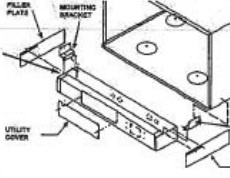
DK / Drain Kit

Installed at the back of the unit and allows for attachment to permanent condensate disposal system, if disposal is necessary or desired.



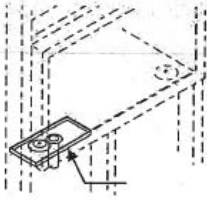
SB / Sub Base

Used as a base for the unit when it is desired to place the cord and receptacle within the installation, or simply as a base for the unit when mounted low in the wall.



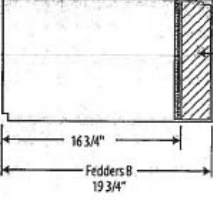
IDK / Internal Drain Kit

New construction applications where a condensate drain system has been built into the wall interior.



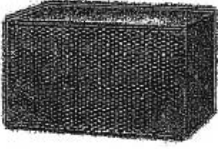
BAK / Baffle Adapter Kit

Necessary when installing in a sleeve deeper than 16 3/4" deep, such as Fedders B sleeve (19 3/4" deep).

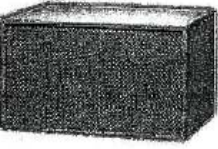


16 3/4"
 Fedders B 19 3/4"

Uni-Fit. | 26" Sleeve Exterior Grilles



USC Sleeve Standard Grille



Sleeve shown with Replacement Grille

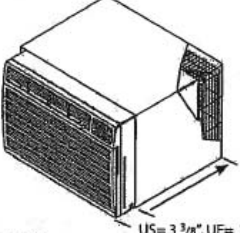
STANDARD GRILLE - Ships with USC sleeve
 Expanded aluminum grille designed for use with USC sleeve.

REPLACEMENT GRILLE - Ships with US/UE chassis
 High-tech plastic for use on existing sleeves without any grille.

IMPORTANT:
 When installing into an existing sleeve, consult Installation Section of your Installation/Operation Manual to determine whether or not the grille needs to be replaced and/or a baffle adapter should be used.

WallMaster. | Uni-Fit. Sleeve/Chassis Dimensions

Model	Height	Width	Depth	Depth with Front	Minimum Extension Into Room	Minimum Extension Outside	Thru-the-wall Finished Hole		
							Height	Width	Max. Depth
WALLMASTER									
WSC Sleeve	15 3/4"	27"	16 3/4"	23"	7 1/2"	9/16"	17 1/4"	27 1/4"	15 5/16"
Chassis	15 3/4"	26 1/2"	21"	22"	-	-	-	-	-
UNI-FIT									
USC Sleeve	15 1/2"	25 7/8"	16 3/4"	20 1/2"	-	1/2"	15 3/4"	26 1/8"	16 1/4"
US Chassis	14 3/8"	24"	-	20 1/8"	3 3/4"	-	-	-	-
UE Chassis	14 3/8"	24 5/8"	-	19 5/8"	3 1/2"	-	-	-	-



US = 3 3/8", UE = 2 7/8"

IMPORTANT:
 US chassis w/front fully installed into USC sleeve extends into room 3 3/8". UE chassis w/front fully installed into USC sleeve extends into room 2 7/8".

IMPORTANT: Sleeves are sold and shipped separately to accommodate new construction and replacement requirements

Figure 1. Proposed HVAC Units.

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