

Docket Item # 6
BAR CASE # 2009-0260

BAR Meeting
December 2, 2009

ISSUE: After-the-fact Alterations

APPLICANT: James E. Cucinelli

LOCATION: 402 Jefferson Street

ZONE: RM / Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends after-the-fact approval of the application as submitted.

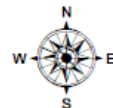
****EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 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, 703-746-4200 for further information.



BAR CASE #2009-0260

12/2/2009



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for after-the-fact alterations at 402 Jefferson Street for the infill of the opening under the brick front stoop. Prior to this alteration, the brick stoop had a square opening as part of the stoop design, allowing light and air into a stairwell that leads to the basement door that is directly below the main front door of the residence. The previous owner had installed an HVAC unit in front of the opening. The applicant filled in this opening without consulting Staff. The brick used for the infill came from the brick rear patio, according to the applicant.

II. HISTORY:

402 Jefferson Street is a two-story brick interior rowhouse that was constructed in 1941 as part of the Yates Garden subdivision in a Colonial Revival design vocabulary. Yates Garden was developed by Edward Carr beginning in 1939. However, complete build out of the subdivision was not completed until the early 1960s.

Staff could not locate any prior approvals by the Board.

III. ANALYSIS:

The alterations comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

The applicant brought to Staff's attention that the infill of the existing stoop was done without BAR approval. Staff had been working with the applicant regarding administrative approvals for other items as part of a comprehensive renovation project that included relocating the HVAC unit to the rear yard.

The *Design Guidelines* note that "stoops, steps and railings should be appropriate to the historic style of the structure." Furthermore, the *Guidelines* state that "stoops...should not hide, obscure or cause the removal of historic architectural details." While the applicant has made a very visible alteration to the front stoop, Staff does not find the alteration to necessarily be inappropriate. While many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century townhouses often had an opening under brick stoops, Staff notes that in a windshield survey of stoops in Yates Garden, no other examples of units with an opening in the stoop were identified. In addition, the adjacent property at 404 Jefferson, a mirror of 402 Jefferson, does not have an open stoop, though it does have an HVAC unit vent cut into the stoop. It is possible that the original stoop was fully enclosed and that the opening was a later alteration to contain an HVAC unit.

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted. Staff also notes that a Notice of Violation has been issued to the property owner for a class three civil violation for undertaking work that required a Certificate of Appropriateness per Sec. 10-103(A) without the appropriate approvals and will be required to pay the associated fine per Sec. 11-207(C)(3).

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

STAFF:

Catherine Miliaras, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Stephen Milone, Division Chief, Land Use Services

V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Administration:

C-1 After the fact construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully details the construction.

VI. IMAGES



Figure 1. Front (north) elevation, 402 Jefferson Street, showing opening in stoop.



Figure 2. Stoop with after-the-fact alterations.