

Docket Item # 8
BAR CASE # 2009-0287

BAR Meeting
December 16, 2009

ISSUE: Alterations to previously approved plans
APPLICANT: Williams Cromley for 601 S. Washington Street, LLC
LOCATION: 601 South Washington Street
ZONE: CL / Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends 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 BAR approval 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.



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for after-the-fact approval of alterations to previously approved plans. Specifically, the applicant is requesting approval to retain two metal doors on the rear elevation of the two-story brick commercial building located at 601 South Washington Street.

II. HISTORY:

The building at 601 South Washington Street was originally two buildings, 601 and 603 South Washington Street. At least a portion of the Italianate style buildings may date from before 1877. They long served as a grocery and residence, and, prior to the change to office in 2005, functioned as an antique shop. Over the years, the buildings have undergone a variety of alterations, most significantly in 1964, when the storefront windows were added and the buildings were combined into a single commercial building.

On October 20, 2004, the Board approved as submitted the applications for demolition and alterations as part of a project to convert the building from retail to office use (BAR Case #s 2005-0221 & 0222). In 2005, the Board approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for after-the-fact alterations to the previously approved plans for changes made during construction and renovation (BAR Case # 2005-0294). During an inspection for a Certificate of Occupancy, BAR Staff at the time noted several changes had been made that differed from the approved plans, thereby requiring the applicant to return to the Board for the 2005 hearing.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

When the applicant returned to the Board for after-the-fact approval of alterations to previously approved plans, the Board approved all of the after-the-fact alterations with the condition that “the metal rear doors be replaced along with the existing hardware so that they were more compatible with the existing structure with the replacements to be approved by Staff.” At the time, Staff approved a temporary Certificate of Occupancy, pending replacement of the doors to meet the condition of BAR approval. Because the Board had specified that the metal rear doors be replaced as a condition of the approval, Staff has been unable to approve a final Certificate of Occupancy.

In the original approval from 2004, the applicant specified that the doors were to be four-panel wood doors. However, during the course of construction, the applicant chose to keep the existing metal door at the first floor and to install a solid flush metal door at the second story (top of the new fire escape). In the current submission, the applicant explained that metal doors were installed due to Code requirements. However, this has since been reviewed with Code Administration and metal doors are not required.

In the 2005 BAR report, Staff generally supported the after-the-fact alterations to previously approved plans, including the use of metal doors on the rear elevation. However, as noted in the conditions of approval of that application, the Board specifically stated that the flush metal doors should be replaced with something more

appropriate. Staff again supports the use of metal doors on the rear elevation of a commercial building. The *Design Guidelines* note that “exterior flush or paneled metal doors may be appropriate in certain limited circumstances for 20th-century retail, commercial and industrial buildings.” While this is not a 20th-century building, Staff notes that it has been significantly altered over the years, particularly on the rear elevation. In addition, the visual impact of the metal fire escape is much greater than that of the two metal doors. In summary, Staff recommends approval of the application allowing the applicant to retain the existing flush metal doors on the rear elevation.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends 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 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the 2006 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-2 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.

VI. IMAGES

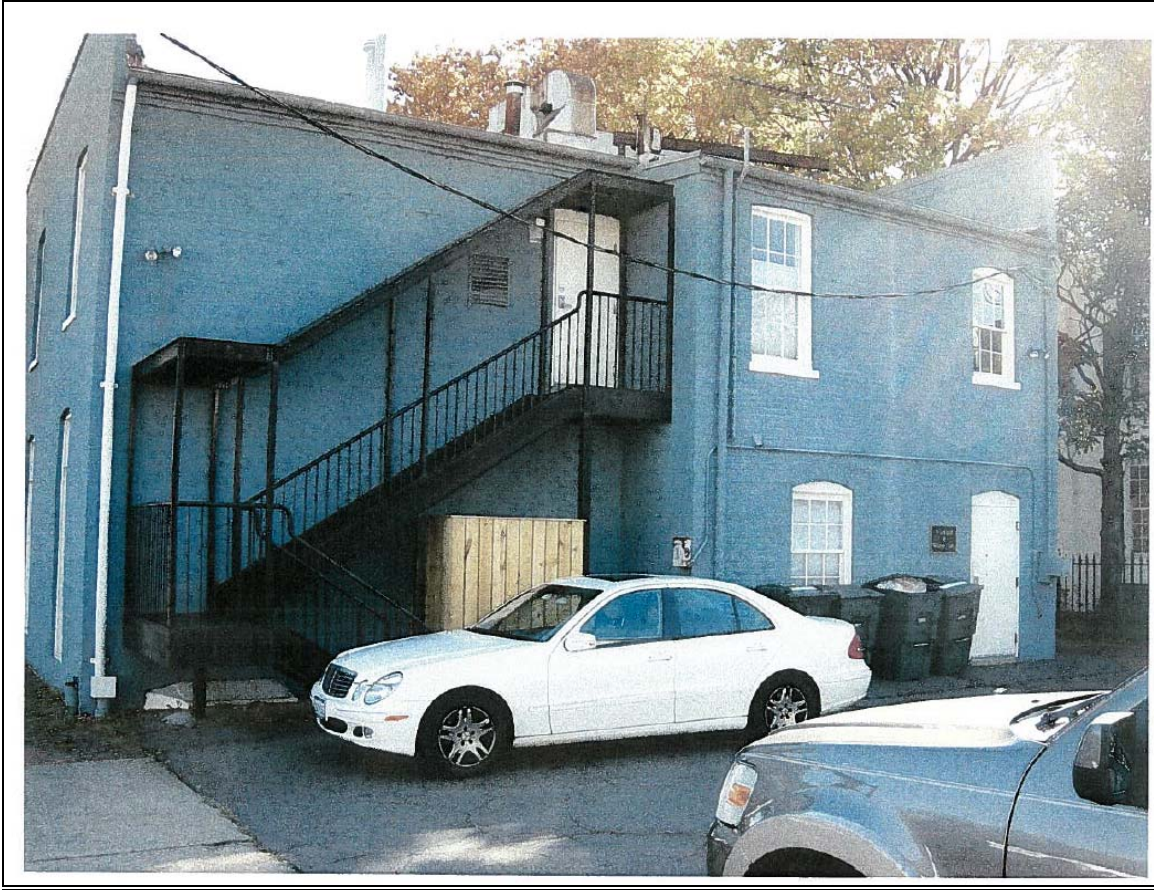


Figure 1. Existing rear (west) elevation showing the two flush metal doors.

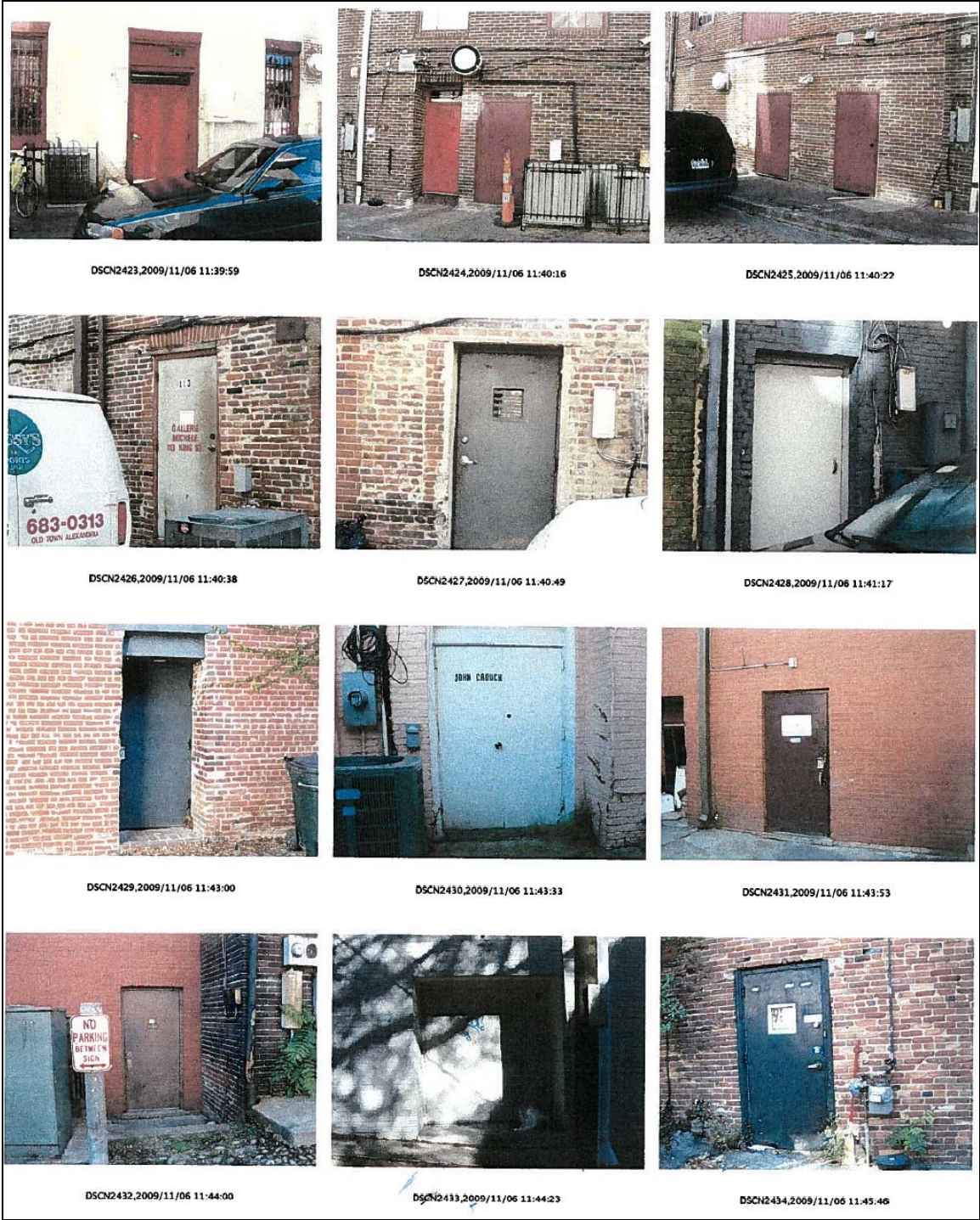


Figure 2. Photograph's submitted by applicant showing examples of flush metal doors on commercial buildings on Washington Street and King Street.



Figure 3. Photograph's submitted by applicant showing additional examples of flush metal doors on commercial buildings on Washington Street and King Street.