

Docket Item #2
BAR CASE # 2010-0051

BAR Meeting
April 21, 2010

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Robert and Carol Chambers
LOCATION: 413 Wilkes Street
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the new stoop and railings do not project farther than the existing steps from the front property line.

****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.



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for new limestone steps with a cast iron railing at 413 Wilkes Street. The new steps and railing are designed to have a gradual outward flair. The black railing will have thin pickets and attenuated newel posts with round finials.

The existing planter will be modified slightly to accommodate the new stair.

II. HISTORY:

According to Ethelyn Cox in Historic Alexandria, Street by Street, the house at 413 Wilkes Street, was constructed in ca. 1789. The two and a half story brick house has an attached garage which was approved by the BAR on April 4, 1984 (BAR Case #1984-0046). The Board also approved a small roof at the rear of the garage in 1994 (BAR Case #1994-0077).

III. ANALYSIS:

The existing steps project approximately 5' forward of the existing property line. A four foot projection is typically allowed by City Code for a 66' wide street. The Zoning Office has confirmed that the proposed steps may replace the existing steps in the same location but may not project further into the right of way.

Staff has no objection to the proposed new stoop and railing. The existing, simple cast iron stoop was likely added sometime during the late Victorian era when the Italianate style door surround was installed. However, the existing iron railing appears to have been added to the steps in the mid 20th century and has compromised the integrity of the Victorian period steps. Because the proposed limestone steps and iron railing are stylistically more appropriate to this Federal style townhouse than the altered Victorian replacements, Staff recommends approval of the application, provided that the new stoop and railings do not project farther into the right-of-way than the existing steps.

STAFF:

Stephanie Sample, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Administration:

- C-1 Additions and Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the 2006 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-2 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.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

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.]. A copy is also attached for the applicant's convenience. (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)
- R6. 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)

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>

VI. IMAGES



Figure 1. Site photos.

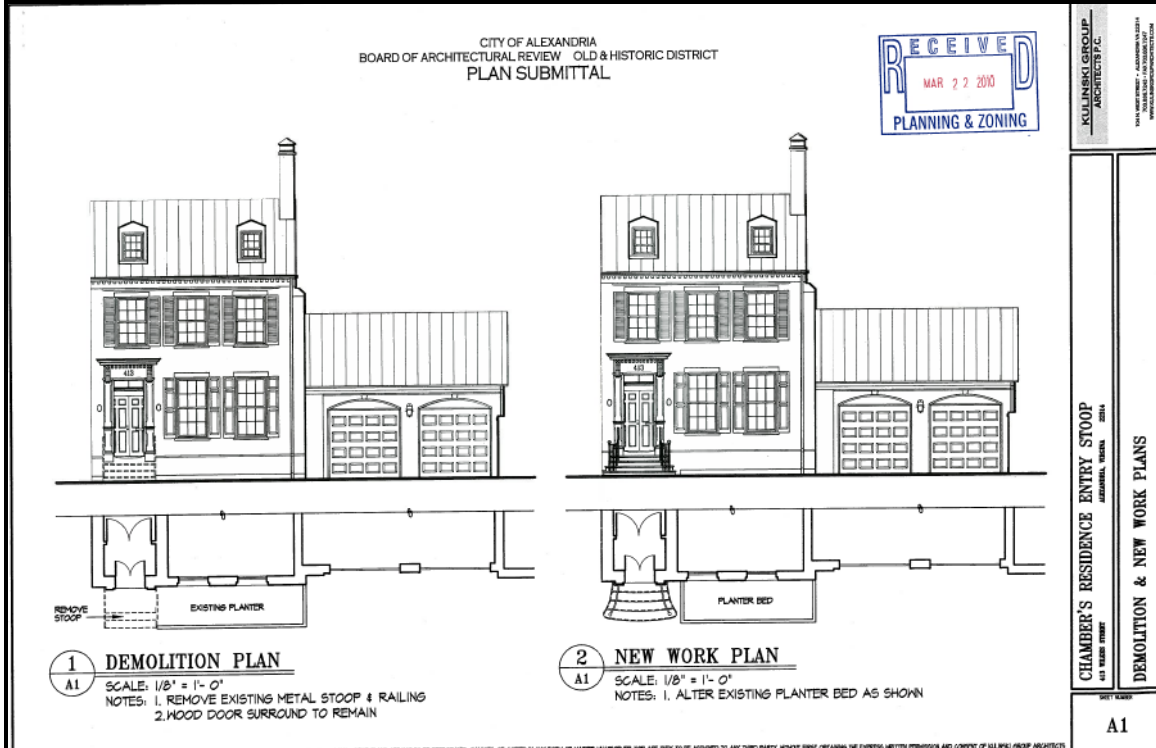


Figure 2. Existing and proposed elevations.

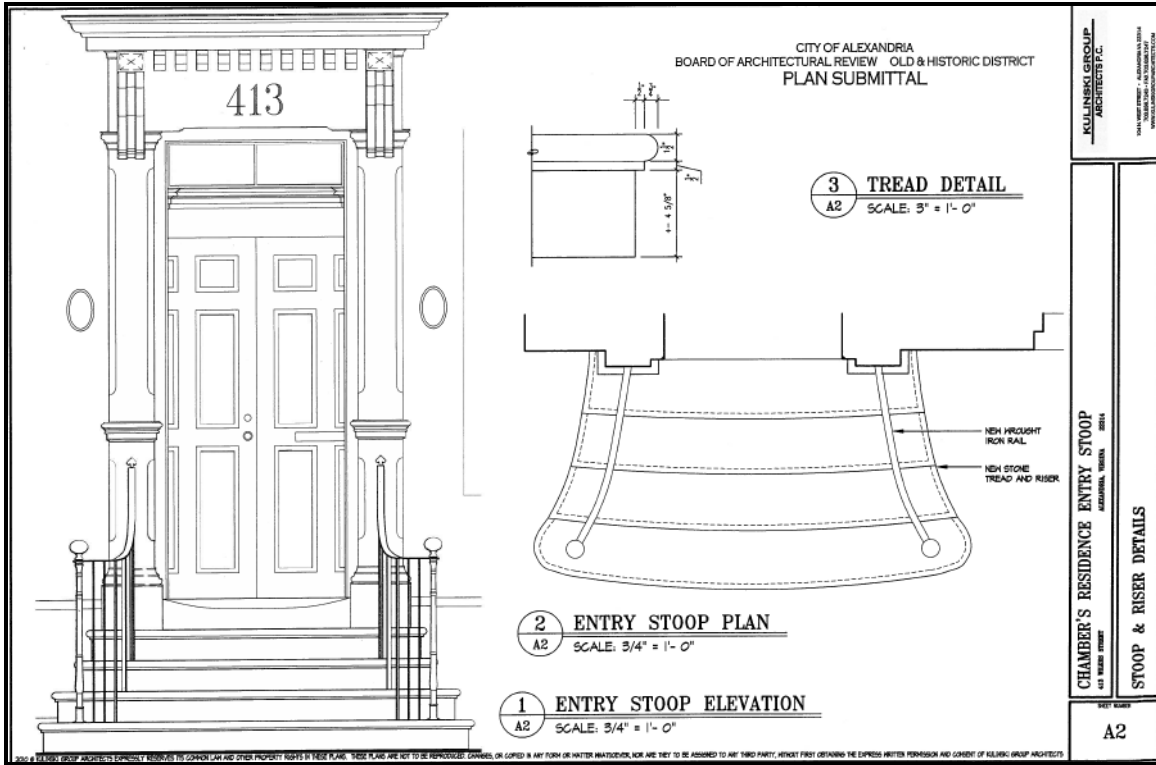


Figure 3. Stoop detail.

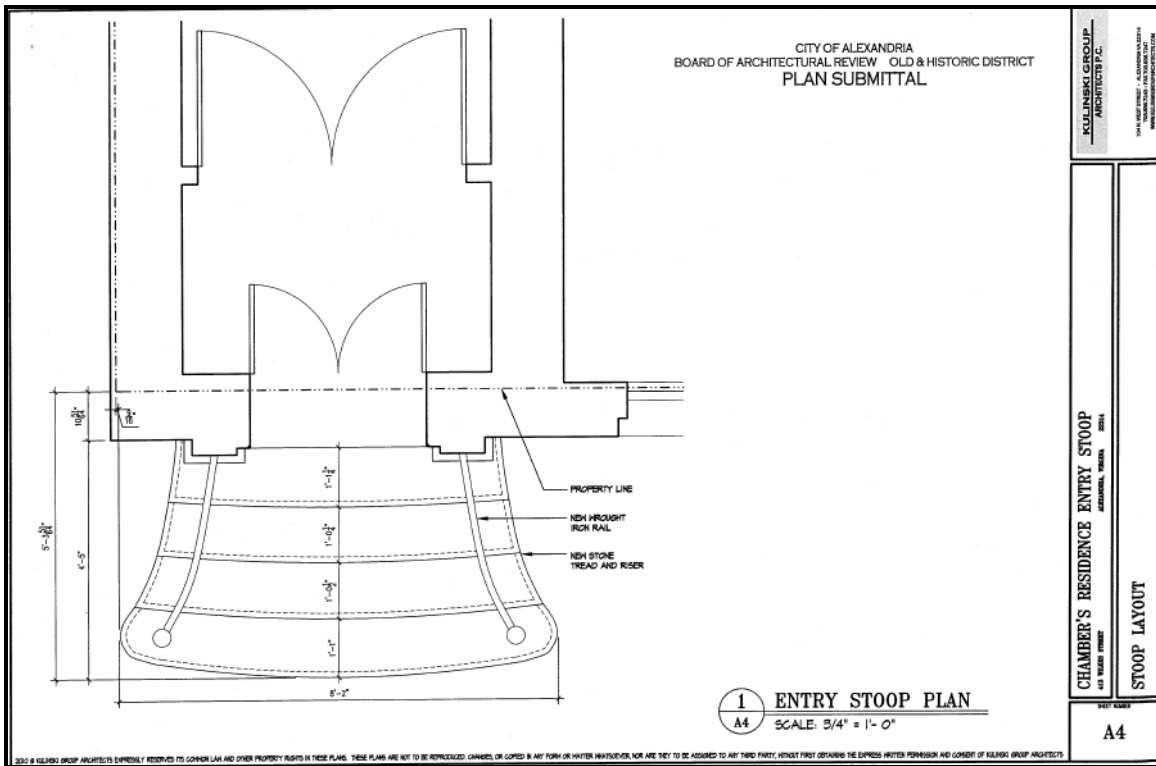


Figure 4. Stoop plan.