

\*\*\*\*\*DRAFT MINUTES\*\*\*\*\*

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review  
Old & Historic Alexandria District

**Wednesday, May 5, 2010**

7:30pm, City Council Chambers, City Hall  
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: Tom Hulfish, Chairman  
Oscar Fitzgerald  
Arthur Keleher  
Wayne Neale  
John von Senden  
Peter Smeallie  
James Spencer

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Hulfish.

1. Consideration of the minutes of the public hearing of April 21, 2010.

BOARD ACTION: Approved as submitted 7-0

On a motion by John von Senden, seconded by James Spencer the minutes were approved 7-0.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

BOARD ACTION: The Board removed item #3 for discussion and moved it to the end of the docket, as the applicant was not yet present. Items #2 & 4 were approved, as submitted, on the Consent Calendar, 7-0.

**2. CASE BAR2010-0063**

Request for approval of signage at **821 King St**, zoned KR King Street Retail.

APPLICANT: Bittersweet Cafe

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as submitted on the Consent Calendar 7-0**

**4. CASE BAR2010-0081**

Request for approval of a sign at **400 and 414 N Washington St**, zoned CD Commercial

APPLICANT: Professional Insurance Agents

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as submitted on the Consent Calendar 7-0**

**END CONSENT CALENDAR**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **3. CASE BAR2010-0064**

Request for approval of signage at **727 N Washington St**, zoned CDX Commercial.

APPLICANT: RedPeg Marketing

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended 7-0**

## **SPEAKERS**

Rob Blumel, SBT Springfield sign company, represented the owner.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mr. Smealie asked whether the individual letters could be pin mounted, rather than mounting them on a metal background.

Mr. Blumel said that he could do this, exactly as had previously been done on the west elevation.

On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Mr. Spencer, the application was approved as amended by a vote of 7-0.

## **REASON**

The Board generally agreed with the rationale in the staff report but preferred that the sign match the appearance of the existing sign on the west elevation.

### **5. CASE BAR2010-0049**

Request for approval of demolition/encapsulation at **812 S Lee St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Suzanne Duda.

BOARD ACTION: **Approved by roll call vote 6-1**

The Board combined item #5 with Item #6 for discussion.

### **6. CASE BAR2010-0050**

Request for approval of addition/alterations at **812 S Lee St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Suzanne Duda.

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended by roll call vote 6-1**

## **SPEAKERS**

Rob Blumel, SBT Springfield sign company, represented the owner.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mr. Neale said that the rake moulding, window shapes and siding on the dormer needed restudy, that he did not like the brick soldier course below the frieze or the rowlock on the window lintels.

Mr. Smealie believed that the house would fit very well with the Colonial Revival houses in Yates Gardens.

Mr. von Senden liked the soldier course and believed the dormer was quite similar to the house on the right but agreed the siding on the face of the dormer may be difficult to construct. He moved to approve the project as submitted but without siding on the face of the dormer. Mr. Keleher seconded the motion.

The application was approved, as amended, by a roll call vote of 6-1, with Mr. Neale in opposition.

### **REASON**

The Board agreed with the analysis in the staff report.

### **7. CASE BAR2010-0061**

Request for approval of demolition/encapsulation at **907 S St Asaph St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: George & Karen Zent

BOARD ACTION: **Approved by roll call vote 5-2**

The Board combined item #7 with Item #8 for discussion.

### **8. CASE BAR2010-0062**

Request for approval of addition/alterations at **907 S St Asaph St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: George & Karen Zent

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended by roll call vote 5-2**

### **SPEAKERS**

Mr. Zent, the applicant, presented the request for a sunroom addition on the rear.

Mr. Hynan, representing the HAF, spoke in opposition to the proposal, noting that only materials available when the original house was constructed should be used on the addition. He said artificial materials, such as Hardipanel, are not sympathetic to historic structures. He said the windows should be single glazed, true divided lite, painted wood.

### **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mr. von Senden said he had a concern with the 21" setback on the north side, believing it to be a potential trash and moisture trap. He noted that the drawings were difficult to read.

Mr. Zent explained that the 21" setback is present to access a basement window well and garden hose outlet.

Mr. Neale had no objection to the setback after Mr. Zent's explanation of its purpose.

Mr. Spencer said that it would be difficult to detail the joints of 4'x8' sheets of Hardipanel. He recommended 1x8 clapboard siding instead.

Mr. Neale made a motion to approve the application as submitted, but with smooth, 1x8 Hardiplank clapboard siding and with staff to review the design details of the trim prior to approval of a building permit. Mr. Keleher seconded the motion.

The application was approved, as amended, by a roll call vote of 5-2 with Mr. von Senden and Mr. Spencer opposed.

## **REASON**

The Board generally agreed with the analysis in the staff report.

## **END DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **9. OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Administrative Approval of Signs program update:**

Ms. Sample presented a review of the Administrative Approval sign program over the past six months and recommended future expansion of that program to include building directory signs, restaurant menu boards, some additional colors for registered logos, and the use of additional synthetic materials. Material samples were provided for review.

Mr. Cox noted that this program goes hand-in-hand with enforcement and that it is much easier to gain the cooperation of applicants if a reasonable number of signs can be approved administratively. Staff has noted a reduction in the number and complexity of the signs when the applicant discovers they can avoid going to a BAR hearing.

Mr. Fitzgerald said he was perfectly comfortable with synthetic sign materials when you can't tell the difference. He was concerned that the signs would become too standardized but staff noted that the MDO plywood signs with vinyl letters had become ubiquitous and were flat and unimaginative. High Density Urethane allowed much more depth and flexibility.

Rob Blumel, SBT Springfield sign company, said that many of their signs were made from a soy based plastic and that they could be carved digitally.

Mr. von Senden asked about fire resistance properties of HDU and PVC plastic and asked whether they contained any post-consumer recycling content.

Mr. Smeallie said that he had no problem with additional colors but said the quantity of the signs was important and that the materials used may depend on the context.

Mr. Keller said that the contemporary metric for determining appropriateness seems to have moved from “It’s gotta be wood” to “Its gotta look good.”

Chairman Hulfish commented that the quality of wood is not what it once was and that perhaps wood should only be required on our museum buildings. Mr. Spencer agreed.

The Board asked Staff to return in June with a draft amendment to the existing sign program for their consideration. Mr. Smeallie said he would like to walk the District with Staff in the next few weeks to discuss materials and context.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

The Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:35 pm.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS**

**The following items have been administratively approved by BAR Staff:**

#### **CASE BAR2010-0078**

Request for approval of alterations at **1202 S Washington St**, zoned RC Residential.

APPLICANT: Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Transportation By T-Mobile Northeast LLC

#### **CASE BAR2010-0087**

Request for approval of porch repair at **1306 Michigan Ave**, zoned RB Residential.

APPLICANT: Catherine Moore

#### **CASE BAR2010-0089**

Request for approval of fence replacement at **1311 Prince St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Mark Higgins

#### **CASE BAR2010-0090**

Request for approval of roof replacement at **724 S Alfred St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Matt Robinson

#### **CASE BAR2010-0091**

Request for approval of window replacement at **1017 King St**, zoned KR King Street Retail.

APPLICANT: George Viteri

#### **CASE BAR2010-0099**

Request for approval of fence replacement at **717 Potomac St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Joseph Piccolo