

Docket Items # 2
BAR CASE # 2010-0149

BAR Meeting
July 7, 2010

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: William Cromley, Applicant
LOCATION: 227 South Fairfax Street
ZONE: RM/ Residential Townhouse Zone

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness, as submitted.

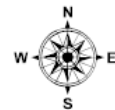
****EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of final approval if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of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



BAR CASE #2010-0149

7/7/2010



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness at 227 South Fairfax Street for alterations to the house and landscape. The proposed alterations include:

House:

- Installation of new, operable wood, two paneled louvered shutters on all the windows. The windows (except for the window which was added on the south elevation) have existing shutter hinges.
- East (front) elevation of main massing: Install two, new gas lanterns flanking the wood entry surround.
- East elevation of new conservatory: Install two, copper electric light fixtures flanking the existing wood French doors.
- East elevation two-story addition: Install a copper light fixture to the left of the side entry door.

Landscape:

- South courtyard: Construct a 3.5' high, painted iron fence with decorative posts. In November 2009, the BAR approved a wood pyramidal picket fence in this location (BAR Case #2009-0245).

II. HISTORY:

This brick dwelling is an example of the evolution of a prominent Alexandria City house. It is believed that the house began as an early 1800s, 1-1/2 story outbuilding. The form of this original structure was absorbed into the two-story extension, as the two central bays of its first floor. The original structural timbers and whitewash on the interior are the only visible surviving features (Period 1).

After the four foot (4') alley along the northern property line was abandoned, it appears that this outbuilding was extended an additional five feet to the North (Period 2). Documentation of this footprint increase is visible in the interior kitchen where there is a small approximately five foot wide, one-bay extension from the original exterior wall. It is most likely during this time period when this building was raised to its full second-story height.

An addition onto the outbuilding's southern elevation is believed to be the third period of construction. Original surviving features in this massing include a box stair and wide plank floors which are indicative of early 1800s construction (Period 3).

The main massing of this house which faces South Fairfax Street was built in the Greek Revival style by George Plain, a prosperous house and sign painter about 1851-53 (Period 4). Surviving exterior and interior details remain, some of which include elongated windows, operable window panels, the entry entablature with its simple, yet stately Doric columns, and the wide denticulated cornice.

After the sale of the home to Mr. John McLean, a wealthy Fish and Oyster Merchant in 1870, it is believed that a two-bay hyphen was added to join the two buildings together and the “outbuilding” was converted into living quarters, as it is documented that Mr. Mclean was listed as having his mother move in with him during this period (the house’s footprint is completed by the 1877 Hopkins Map-Period 5).

In the mid-1970s, a major transformation to the house occurred. The Greek Revival details were stripped from the interior and exterior of the building to make the house more “Federal” in style. This included eliminating the recessed entry and its transom window on the front elevation, adding elaborate trimwork in the interior, erecting a brick wall to enclose the southern courtyard and constructing a new, one-story, family room addition in the interior courtyard (Period 6).

Previous Approvals:

On November 9, 2009, the BAR approved a Certificate of Appropriateness and a Waiver of the Rooftop HVAC Screening Requirement for the rehabilitation of the house and the construction of a new conservatory on the subject property (BAR#2009-0243 & 0245).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

The applicant is requesting the installation of wood, paneled louvered shutters on the subject property. The each set of shutters will be sized to fit the size and shape of the window opening. After a site visit, the current physical evidence of existing shutter hinges on the window frames suggests that historically all of the building’s existing windows had shutters. Since the subject proposal will be replacing missing documented features with appropriately sized operable, wood louvered shutters, the subject proposal is in compliance with the *Design Guidelines*.

New lighting is being proposed on the front and side garden entrances (see drawing on page 7). The *Design Guidelines* stipulate that “the color of the light should be appropriate to the architectural character of the building” and the “materials of the light fixtures should be appropriate to the structure.” The front Greek revival entry will be lit with copper gas lanterns and the new conservatory and side garden entry with electric copper lanterns. The design, materials and locations of these lanterns are appropriate to the architecture of the house and meet the standards outlined in the *Design Guidelines*.

The design of proposed fence is compatible in style and massing to the historic house, and conforms to the *Design Guidelines* for fences. In keeping with the recommendations contained in the *Guidelines*, the fence serves as a distinctive feature of the streetscape “which should be appropriate in materials, design and scale to the period and character of the structure they surround.” The applicant originally gained approval from the Board for the construction of wood 3-1/2 foot high, pyramidal picket fence to enclose the southern courtyard. This fence design was modeled after

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photo documentation of the house during the late 1960s. The current proposal is a 3.5' high, painted iron fence with decorative posts. The applicant is utilizing a local foundry which casts new fence posts from original Greek revival artifacts. Although there is photo documentation of a wood fence, a metal fence would have been a common architectural feature for a high-style Greek revival house and Staff supports this requested change.

The proposed alterations are modest in massing, scale and design, while maintaining original historic fabric and are complementary to, without competing with, the architectural style of the existing historic house as recommended in the *Design Guidelines*.

STAFF:

Michele Oaks, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning and Zoning

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.

- C-3 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.

Transportation and Environmental Services (T & ES)

No comments received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

No comments received.

VI. IMAGES:

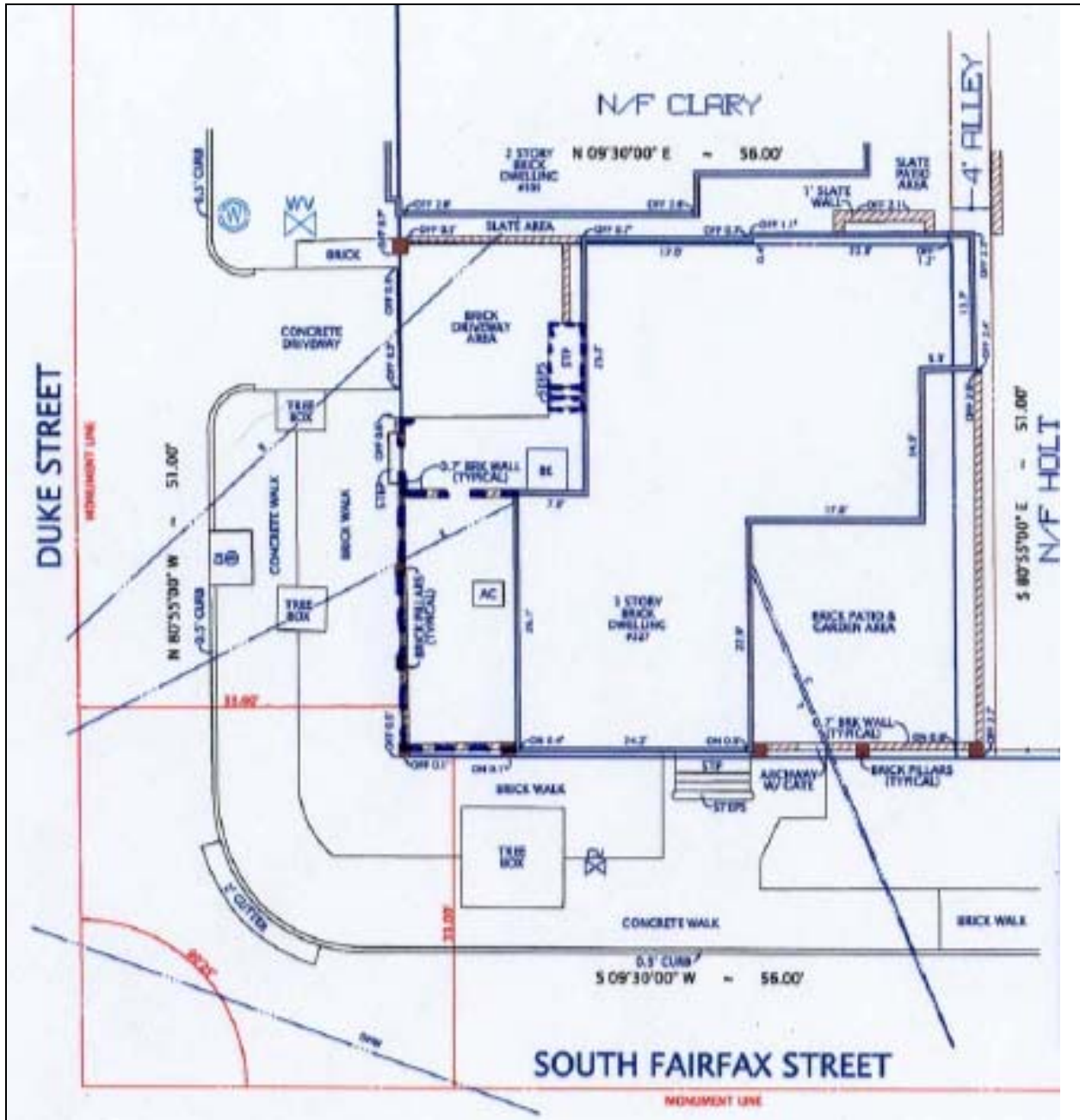


Figure 1: Plat



Figure 2: Proposed Front Elevation

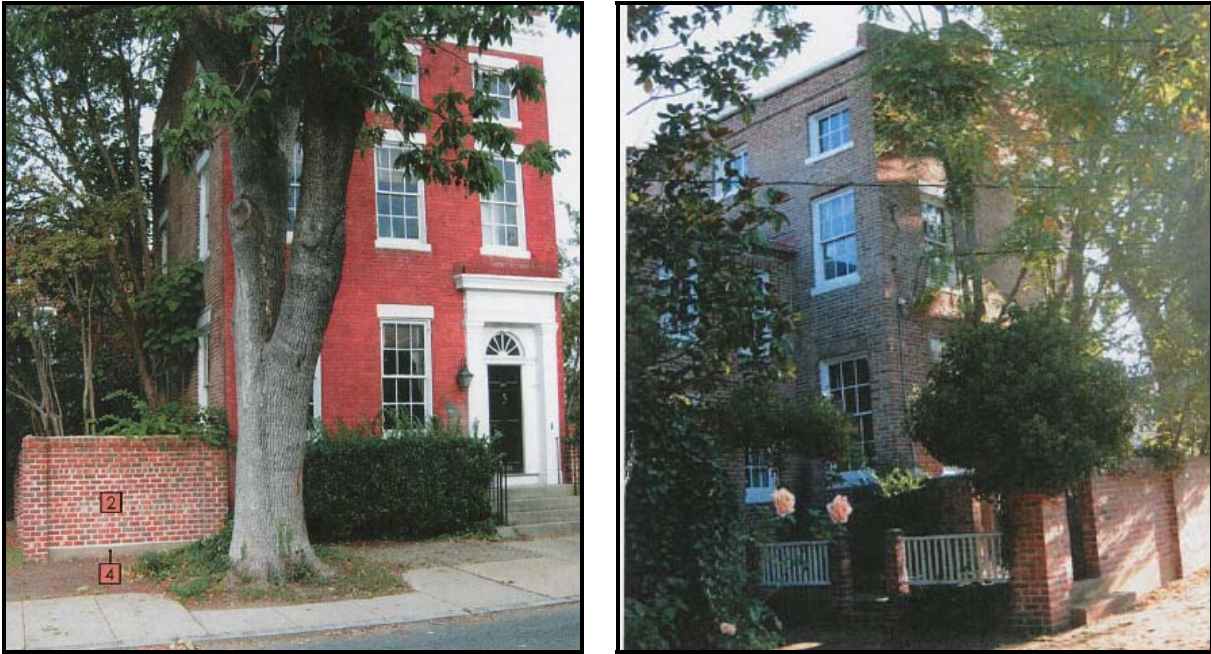


Figure 3: Existing Conditions prior to BAR2009-0243-0245 Approvals

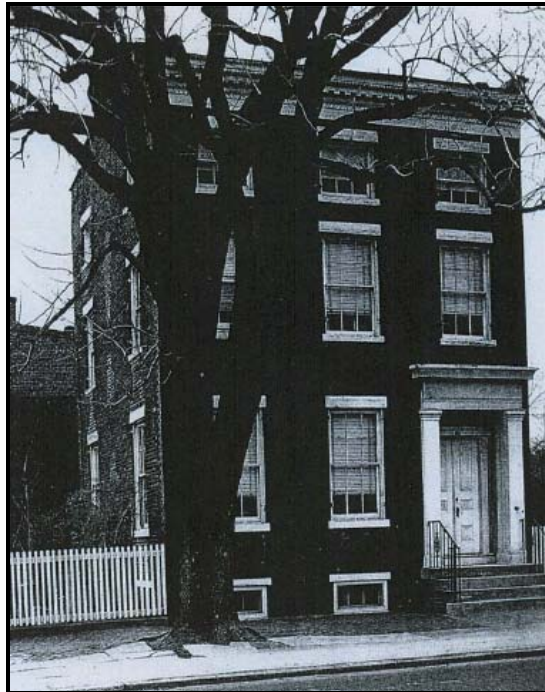


Figure 4: c1967 Photo of Front Façade with wood fence

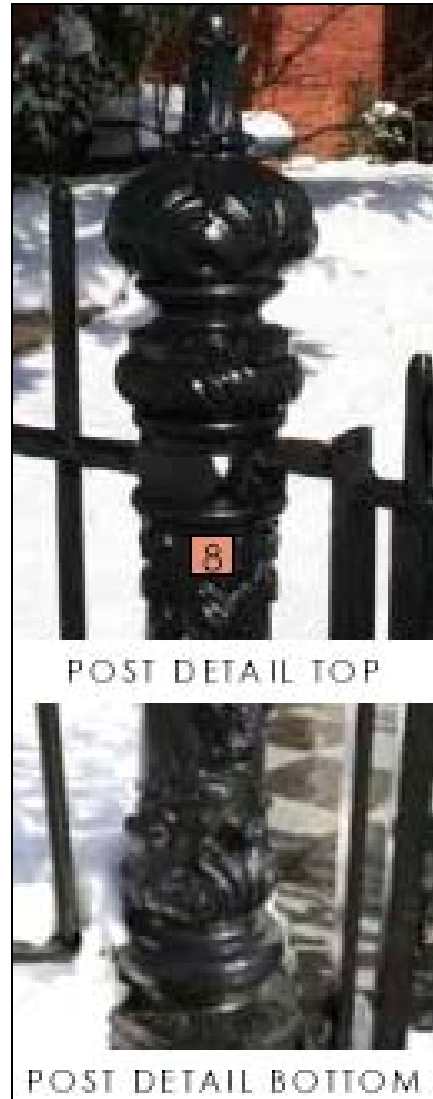
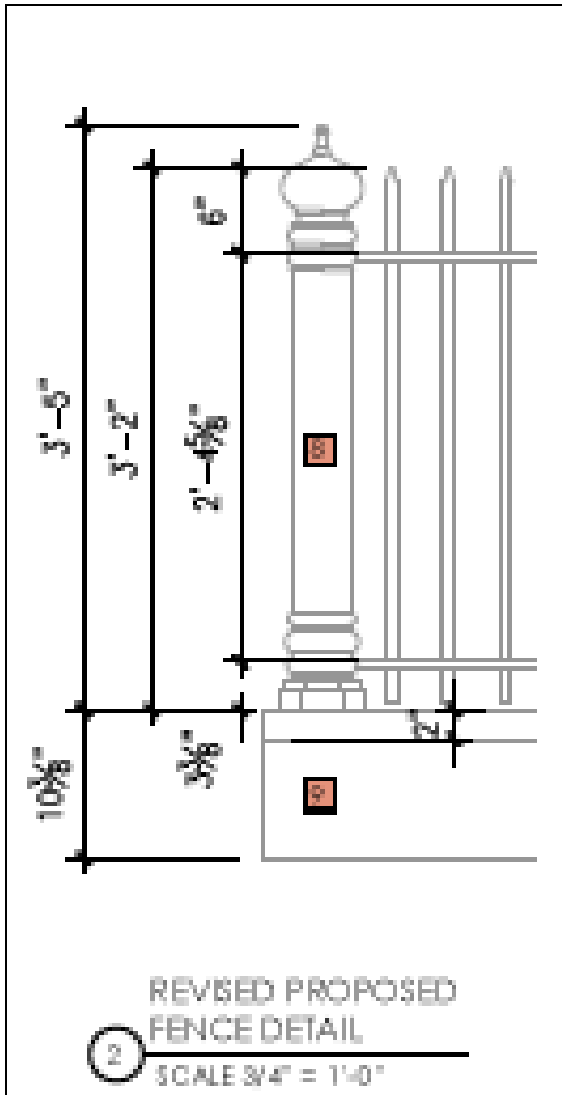


Figure 5: Proposed Fence Detail

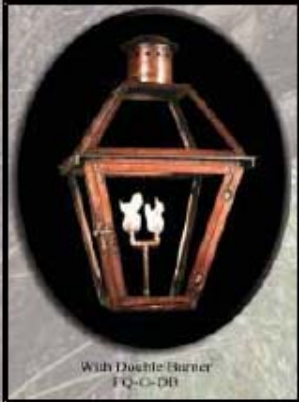
French Quarter Lanterns

The original open-flame "French Quarter" Lantern is our most popular fixture. This lantern can be "dressed up" or "dressed down" to compliment many architectural styles. These hand-crafted, hand-riveted copper lanterns can make even the finest buildings, homes or courtyards sparkle a little brighter.


All French Quarter Lanterns are available with natural Gas, propane gas or electric lighting sources.

Standard sizes: 14", 18", 24", 27", 30", 36"
Custom sizes available.


FIXTURE TYPE 1




With Double Burner
FQ-C-DB




With Mustache Bracket
FQ-G-MB




With Royal Street Bracket
& Natural Mica
FQ-E-RSD-MC



With Reverse Mustache
FQ-G-RMB



With Country French Bracket
FQ-G-CFB



With Circle Mustache &
London Top Finish
FQ-C-CMB-TF

Williamsburg Lanterns


The Williamsburg Lantern is available in a multitude of shapes and sizes to accurately address a variety of applications, such as narrow areas on either side of a door, stairways, hallways and alleyways.

Most Williamsburg Lanterns are available in natural gas, propane gas or electric lighting sources.


Standard sizes: 10", 12", 14", 16", 18", 22"
Custom sizes available.

FIXTURE TYPE 2


FIXTURE TYPE 3



Flush Mount
SHOWN WITH 2 BURNERS
WM-G-TM



With Standard Bracket
WM-G-BM



With Standard Bracket
WM-G-BM

BEVOLO
GAS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTS
SINCE 1941

521 CORNHILL & 318 ROYAL ST.
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130
0049 527-9481 GasLanterns@Bevolo.com

Figure 6: Proposed Light Fixtures