

Docket Item # 7
BAR CASE #2010-0279

BAR Meeting
October 20, 2010

ISSUE: Alterations (Window Replacement and Stoop Reconstruction)

APPLICANT: John and Mirella Belshe

LOCATION: 600 South Royal Street

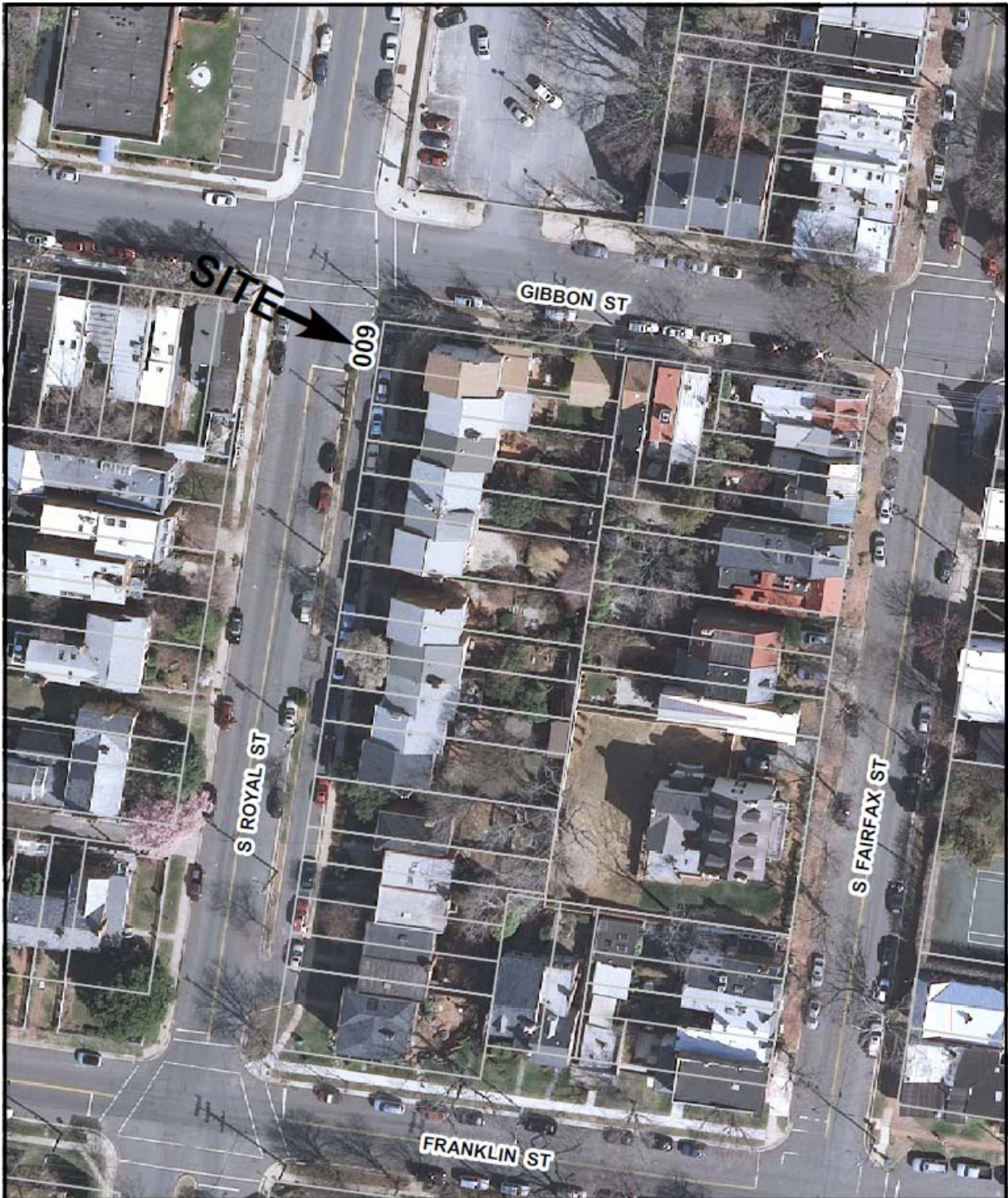
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

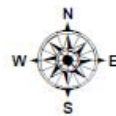
1. That the applicant submit detailed plans of the stoop and walkway design for Staff approval prior to approval of a building permit; and
2. That replacement windows be painted wood rather than the proposed Andersen Woodwright windows, with final approval of specifications to be made by staff in accordance with the proposed Alexandria Replacement Window Policy.

****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 #2010-0279



I. ISSUE

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations at 600 South Royal Street. The proposed alterations include:

- Repair and reconstruction of the existing brick stoop and walkway with a combination of brick and flagstone slabs. The existing metal railing will be reused.
- Replace all existing windows (11) on second and third stories with Andersen Woodwright, “PermaShield” windows. The existing windows are true divided light, single-glazed wood windows. The proposed windows are simulated divided light, double-glazed windows manufactured with a low-maintenance extruded vinyl application.

II. HISTORY

The end unit townhouse at 600 South Royal Street was constructed as part of the Yates Garden subdivision circa **1960**. It is a two bay, three story painted brick townhouse with Colonial Revival detailing in a row of six townhouses with alternately projecting and set back facades.

In 2003, the Board approved the demolition of a one story rear addition (BAR Case #2003-0154, 7/16/03). The BAR reapproved demolition of the one story addition (BAR Case #2005-0090) and approved a new three-story rear addition and rear dormer (BAR Case #2005-0091).

III. ANALYSIS

The proposed alterations comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements. The proposed replacement of the existing HVAC unit is not visible from the public right-of-way and therefore not within the Board’s purview.

Stoop and Walkway Alterations

The *Design Guidelines* state that “stoops....should be appropriate to the historic style of the structure...” and “should be made of materials which are sympathetic to the building materials generally found in the historic districts.” As the applicant has noted, the Board has approved similar stoop and walkway designs at 601½ and 610 South Royal Street. Although Staff was unable to locate approvals, the townhouses at 606 and 624 also have a similar stoop and walkway design. The use of flagstone and brick is a slightly higher quality design than the existing brick walk but is appropriate for a mid-century Colonial Revival townhouse. The reuse of the existing metal railing retains historic fabric and promotes the City’s green building initiative which encourages the reuse of materials.

The applicant submitted a photograph of a similar bluestone and brick walkway, as an example of the design of the proposed walkway and steps, but has not provided detailed construction drawings, pending approval by the Board. However, these drawings will be required by Code Administration for building permit review. Staff recommends that these be reviewed by BAR Staff prior to approval of the building permit to insure compatibility with the surrounding Colonial Revival architectural character.

Window Replacement

The *Design Guidelines* recommend that: “...replacement windows should be appropriate to the historic period of the architectural style of the building”. The *Guidelines* state that single-glazed,

true divided light windows with interior storm sash are the preferred replacement window type. The *Guidelines* continue by saying other acceptable window types are “double-glazed true divided light wood windows....”

In this particular case, Staff finds the use of double glazed replacement windows to be appropriate, as double-glazed windows were commonly available when this house was constructed in the mid-20th century. Staff actually prefers, and the Board routinely approves, modern simulated divided light windows, rather than true divided light sash, when they are in a multi-light pattern because they can be manufactured with thinner, more historically accurate muntins. However, Staff does not support the use of Andersen Woodwright windows with a “Permashield” coating. The Woodwright window has an extruded vinyl coating, according to research performed by Staff. The applicant has noted, and Staff has confirmed, that the BAR approved Woodwright windows for the property at 608 South Royal Street (BAR Case #2006-00017) in 2006. In that case, Staff recommended denial, citing inconsistency with the *Design Guidelines*. The Board, however, found them to be appropriate.

Since that time, Staff and the Board have worked to create a clear and consistent window policy, which Staff is currently preparing for the Board’s review and approval. Although not yet adopted, the policy recommends wood as the only appropriate replacement material for a building of this age.

The policy also states that the Board may evaluate alternate window materials on a case-by-case basis. Staff does not find that there is an extenuating circumstance or unique condition that would merit approval of a product other than wood for a typical Yates Garden townhouse. In fact, Staff cautions that approving such a material would set an awkward precedent as the Board anticipates adopting a new window policy in the near term. Therefore, Staff recommends denial of the proposed Woodwright windows but approval in concept of replacement simulated divided light, double-glazed, painted wood windows, with final approval of specifications to be made by staff. Replacement wood windows must meet the criteria of the Alexandria Window Performance Specifications.

STAFF

Catherine Miliaras, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Zoning

1. Zoning will require submission of a house location survey highlighting proposed HVAC unit(s) and front stoop, steps and apron prior to BAR hearing.
2. Tree to be removed must be located on private property, not in public r-o-w.
3. Proposed replacement windows comply with zoning.

Code Administration

- C-1 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully detail the construction, as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-2 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 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.

Transportation and Environmental Services

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 5-6-224 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.]. (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 5-6-224 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) 746-4064. 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>

CITY CODE REQUIREMENTS

- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99).
- C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line.
- C-3 Roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation & Environmental Services. (Sec.8-1-22)
- C-4 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3)
- C-5 Pay sanitary sewer tap fee prior to release of Grading Plan. (Sec. 5-6-25)
- C-6 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61)

V. IMAGES



Figure 1. Front (west) elevation of 600 South Royal Street.



Figure 2. Rear (east) and side (north) elevation.



Figure 3. Example of similar stoop and walkway that applicant proposes.