

Docket Item # 4
BAR CASE #2010-0295

BAR Meeting
November 3, 2010

ISSUE: Alterations (HVAC Screening)
APPLICANT: Betty and Wesley Foster by Robert Bentley Adams & Associates
LOCATION: 207 South Fairfax Street
ZONE: RM / Residential

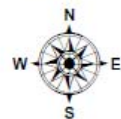
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

****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 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.



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I. ISSUE

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of an HVAC screening wall on the existing rear addition at 207 South Fairfax Street. The applicant is relocating two existing rooftop units. The proposed wall will be recessed from the rear elevation and located on a one-story portion of the addition. The wall will be of frame and stucco construction with a painted metal cap. The existing rear addition is also stucco. The screening will be visible from South Royal Street and the Armory Tot Lot.

The applicant also proposes to replace the existing columns and floor on the rear addition with new wood columns and flooring.

II. HISTORY

According to Ethelyn Cox in *Historic Alexandria, Street by Street*, the house at 207 South Fairfax Street was in existence as of **1787** when John Kempff occupied the house. In May **1866**, the single house was converted into two residences (207 and 209 South Fairfax Street). A rear ell appears on the 1877 G.M. Hopkins map. In **1987**, the Board approved the existing rear addition. Staff has recently completed administrative approvals for replacement windows on the rear addition, and replacement of window sash and repointing on the main block of the house.

III. ANALYSIS

The proposed alterations are in compliance with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

The *Design Guidelines* state that “HVAC equipment should be located in a visually inconspicuous area of a building” and “HVAC equipment which must be located in...a visually prominent area of a building should be screened.” Whenever HVAC units are screened, consideration must be made to adequately screen the units in a way that neither the units nor the screening are visually obtrusive. In this case, the HVAC screening wall is located in a very inconspicuous location and while visible from the Armory Tot Lot and South Royal Street, will not be readily discernible by most people. The choice of stucco, rather than the typical wood fence screening, complements the existing rear addition and allows the screening wall to further recede from view.

The proposed replacement of the porch columns and floor with wood columns and floor are considered historically appropriate, in-kind replacements and as demonstrated by the photo in figure #3, are not visible from a public way and do not require BAR approval.

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Structural calculations are required to verify the ability of the existing roof to support the additional weight of the A/C unit.

- C-2 Where appliances are located $\leq 10'$ from a roof edge or open side with a drop $\geq 24"$, guards shall be provided (USBC 2801.1)

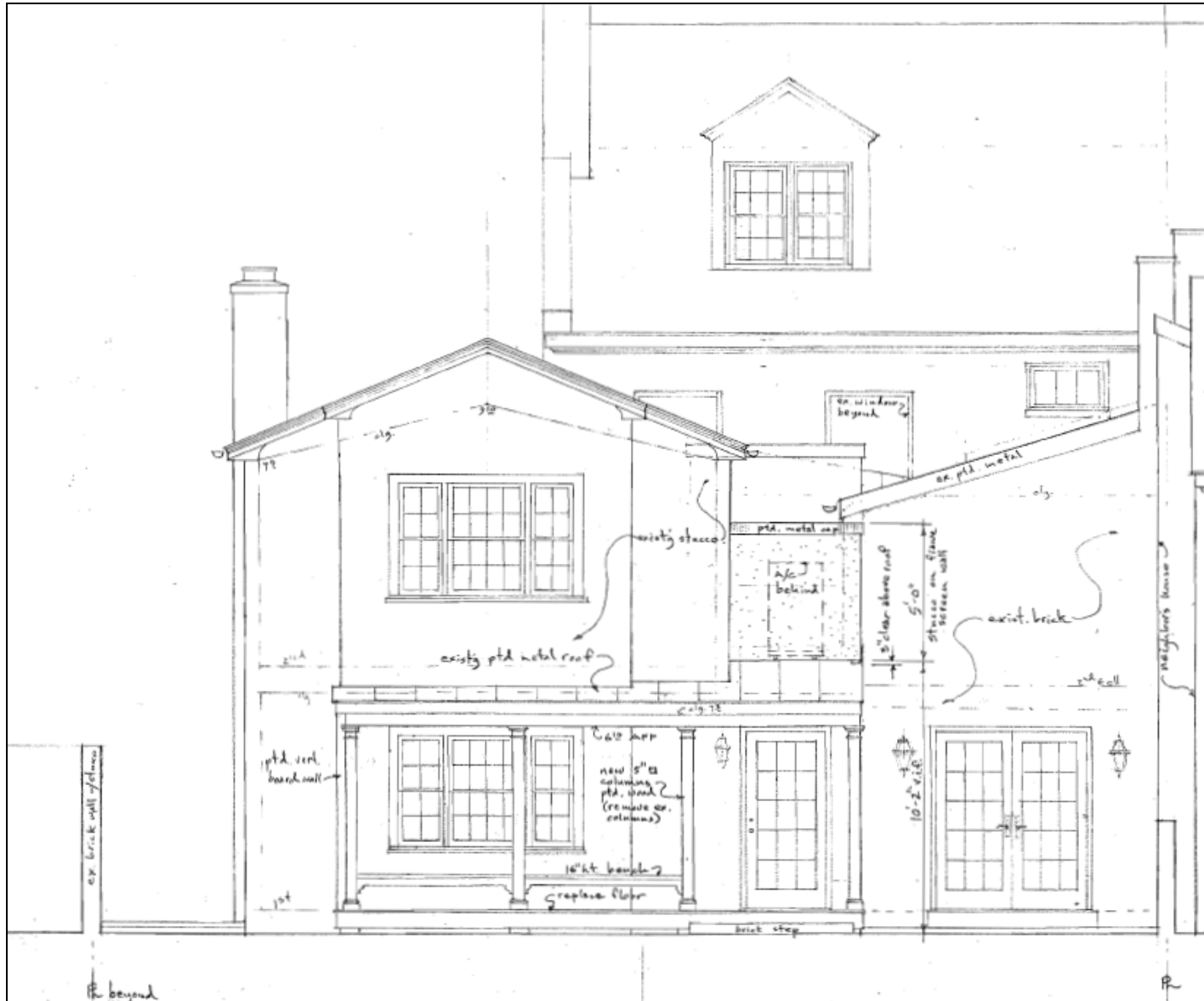


Figure 2. Rear (west) elevation showing location of screen wall.



Figure 3. Photos showing existing conditions, location of proposed rooftop mechanical equipment screen wall, view from South Royal Street, and existing HVAC units. The photo in the lower left shows that the first floor porch columns are not visible from South Royal Street or the park.