

Docket Item # 3  
BAR CASE #2010-0318

BAR Meeting  
December 1, 2010

**ISSUE:** Alterations (Light Installation)  
**APPLICANT:** Military Officers Association  
**LOCATION:** 201 North Washington Street  
**ZONE:** OCM(50)/Commercial

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that BAR Staff approve the final location of the light fixtures in the field.

**\*\*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 four light fixtures at 201 North Washington Street. The lights will flank the building's two entrances on Washington Street to illuminate the entrances to the building. A public streetlight used to illuminate the entrances to the building but it has since been removed.

The light fixtures will be manufactured by Hanover in the Jamestown style. They will measure 33 inches high and 13 ½ inches wide. The fixtures will have translucent glass to obscure the energy efficient light bulb and they will have a dark bronze or black finish.

## **II. HISTORY**

The four story brick Colonial Revival style office building at 201 North Washington Street was designed by Vosbeck & Vosbeck and constructed in 1964. The Board has approved a number of applications for signage on this building over the years, including signage for the current owner in March, 6 1996 (BAR Case #1996-0035). In 2003, the organization's name changed to the Military Officers Association and the BAR approved new signage for the building. The applicant appealed a portion of that approval to Council to allow for a colored – not a bronze – logo, which Council approved.

On June 17, 1998 the Board also approved the installation of the existing sandwich muntin fiberglass windows for the upper floors (BAR Case #1998-0085).

## **III. ANALYSIS**

The proposed alterations comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

The *Design Guidelines* recommend that light fixtures be sympathetic to the style and scale of the building, while not distracting from the architectural character of the building. 201 North Washington Street, while not architecturally significant, fronts on the George Washington Memorial Parkway and is across the street from one of Alexandria's most significant buildings, Christ Church. Therefore, it is particularly important that any alterations to the building be appropriate. In the opinion of Staff, the proposed light fixture is stylistically appropriate for this Colonial Revival commercial office building and meets the recommendations contained in the *Guidelines*, but the proposed installation height seems out of scale with the size of the fixtures and the height of the entry doors. Staff recommends approval of the light fixtures, provided that they are lowered so that they are adjacent to the transom above the entrance doors, not significantly higher as shown on the attached photo.

As the Board is aware, Staff can administratively approve the replacement of an existing light fixture with a historically appropriate light fixture under Zoning Ordinance Sec. 10-209. However, where no light fixture exists, the applicant must spend additional time and money to obtain BAR approval for a new light fixture. Since the Board's adoption of the roof materials policy and windows policy on October 20, 2010, Staff has begun to work on the development of an additional policy to incorporate some of the small, but common, alterations in the historic districts, including the installation of new light fixtures. Staff is hopeful that a policy can be adopted which sets clear guidelines for both Staff and the public parameters for the installation of new light fixtures. As

with the other policies, the goal of this next policy is to help clarify and streamline the Certificate of Appropriateness and Administrative Approval process.

**STAFF**

Stephanie Sample, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning

Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

IV. IMAGES



Figure 1: Photo of 201 North Washington Street showing proposed location of light fixtures.

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Figure 2: Manufacturer specifications.