

Docket Item # 12 & 13  
BAR CASE # 2010-0331 & 0339

BAR Meeting  
December 1, 2010

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate &  
Certificate of Appropriateness (Addition & Alterations)

**APPLICANT:** Ted and Sandra Sullivan

**LOCATION:** 910 South Fairfax Street

**ZONE:** RM/Residential

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approve the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition:

That the dormers are clad in HardiPlank horizontal lap siding.

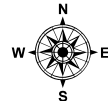
\*Note: The applicants and their design team are in support of the proposed condition.

\*\*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 #2010-0331/0339**



**Note:** Staff coupled the reports for BAR #2010-0331 (Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate) and BAR #2010-0339 (Certificate of Appropriateness) for clarity and brevity. This item requires a roll call vote.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish and a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a third floor addition with dormers at 910 South Fairfax Street.

Demolition

The area of demolition consists of the entire rear roof slope on the existing gable roof (approximately 190 square feet) and approximately 50 square feet on the front elevation to accommodate two, single gabled dormers. The total area of demolition is approximately 240 square feet.

Addition and Alterations

The applicant proposes to install a shed roof dormer on the rear elevation and two new gabled dormers on the front elevation. These new dormers will require that the overall ridge height is extended approximately 6 inches higher (see North Elevation drawing on page 11.) The walls of the front gable dormers will be clad in HardiShingle painted to match the color of the existing roof and sheathed in a slate colored architectural grade asphalt shingle roof. The rear shed dormer will also be clad in HardiShingle painted to match the front dormer roof and sheathed with a standing seam metal roof. A Velux, 30 x 30 VCM skylight will be installed on the shed dormer's roof slope. As a result of the proposed height increase, the chimney must also be raised.

On the front elevation, the two gable dormers will each contain a 6/6 double hung window. An inswing multi-light casement will also be provided on the rear shed dormer and on the third floor of the side (north) elevation to provide egress. These true-divided light wood windows will be manufactured by Kolbe & Kolbe with double-insulated glass and 5/8 inch muntins.

**II. HISTORY:**

The end unit townhouse at 910 South Fairfax Street was constructed as part of the Yates Garden subdivision in ca. 1960. It is a three bay, two-and-one-half story brick townhouse in a row of six townhouses with alternately projecting and set back facades. The front (west) elevation is distinguished from its neighbors primarily by its paired window configuration on the second level. The construction of these rowhouses was approved by the Board on March 12, 1953.

The property is very visible not only from South Fairfax Street, but also from both Green and South Lee Streets as well as a cul-de-sac street, Potomac Court, which cuts into the middle of the block near Jones Point Park.

*Previous Approvals:*

The Board unanimously denied approval of a rear addition on June 21, 1995 (BAR Case #95-87). The applicant subsequently appealed the decision to City Council which overturned the Board on September 16, 1995 and approved the construction of the rear addition.

The Board approved revisions to previously approved rear addition and the construction of a fence along north property line on July 17, 1996 (BAR Case # 96-0135.)

**III. ANALYSIS:**

Staff has no objection to the proposed demolition.

Permit to Demolish

In considering a Permit to Demolish, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, §10-105(B):

- (1) Is the building or structure of such architectural or historical interest that its moving, removing, capsulating or razing would be to the detriment of the public interest?
- (2) Is the building or structure of such interest that it could be made into a historic house?
- (3) Is the building or structure of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty?
- (4) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway?
- (5) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the city?
- (6) Would retention of the building or structure promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in American culture and heritage, and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live?

In the opinion of Staff, while this mid-20<sup>th</sup> century townhouse is a successful background building and compatible with nearby historic structures, it is without individual historical interest or uncommon architectural merit and none of the criteria for demolition and encapsulation are met and the Permit to Demolish should be granted.

Addition

The proposed addition complies with the RM zone as defined in the City's Zoning Ordinance.

The construction of additions on any building within a historic district must be evaluated not only for its impact on the building to which it is being attached, but also for its effect on the historic district's scale and character.

Staff had a preliminary meeting with the applicant and the applicant's architect prior to the submission of the proposal. At this meeting, the applicant's proposal included a very large front dormer to provide additional headroom for a new attic bedroom. Staff suggested it would be more appropriate to push the mass of the third floor addition to the rear, where it would be only minimally visible to the public and install two more traditional front gabled dormers. The Staff proposed changes are reflected in the current submission.

The *Design Guidelines* encourage "respectful additions" which "make use of the design vocabulary of the existing...structure" and supports additions that "reflect the building massing along the blockface." It is also recommended that the form of the additions "express the prevailing shape of the residential building." The *Guidelines* further explain that the "predominant building materials for residential buildings in the historic districts are wood and brick." (*Design Guidelines, Additions - Page 6 & 7*). It is the opinion of Staff, that the design of the addition is compatible in style and massing to the historic townhouses, and conforms to the *Design Guidelines* for additions. The proposed dormers are consistent with the architectural vocabulary found throughout the neighborhood and compatible with the townhouse's Colonial Revival style. Staff does recommend, however, that the cladding material on the walls of the dormers be changed to a horizontal cement-fiber siding instead of the proposed HardiShingle siding to replicate the horizontal wall cladding typical of the Colonial Revival style. Staff has discussed this material change with the applicants and they support the modification to the design. Furthermore, Staff has no objection to a modest height increase (6") and conversion of the attic into a habitable third floor, the extension of the gable roof, and the construction of the new dormers, as these alterations are minor in scale and massing. As a result, 910 South Fairfax Street will continue to be compatible with its adjacent townhouses, all of which continue to be modest, background buildings. Staff believes that this project successfully demonstrates how a subtle addition can be implemented into a streetscape without impacting the integrity of the Yates Garden community.

Staff believes that the proposed addition conforms to the *Design Guidelines* for residential additions. The addition is compatible in style, material and fenestration with the existing brick townhouse as well as the surrounding Yates Garden development. Staff recommends approval of both the Permit to Demolish and the Certificate of Appropriateness for the third floor addition at 910 South Fairfax Street, as submitted.

**STAFF:**

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

#### **IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

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

##### Code Administration:

F1- Need elevation of finished first floor to determine whether basement is a story above grade. This will determine the number of stories (3 or 4) for the building.

F2- Applicant will have to provide an engineering analysis of existing foundation/bearing wall's ability to carry the additional load of the addition. This information can accompany the permit drawings/calculations

C1- New egress window shall comply with section R310 of the 2006 USBC

R1- Show use and ceiling height of new space

##### Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

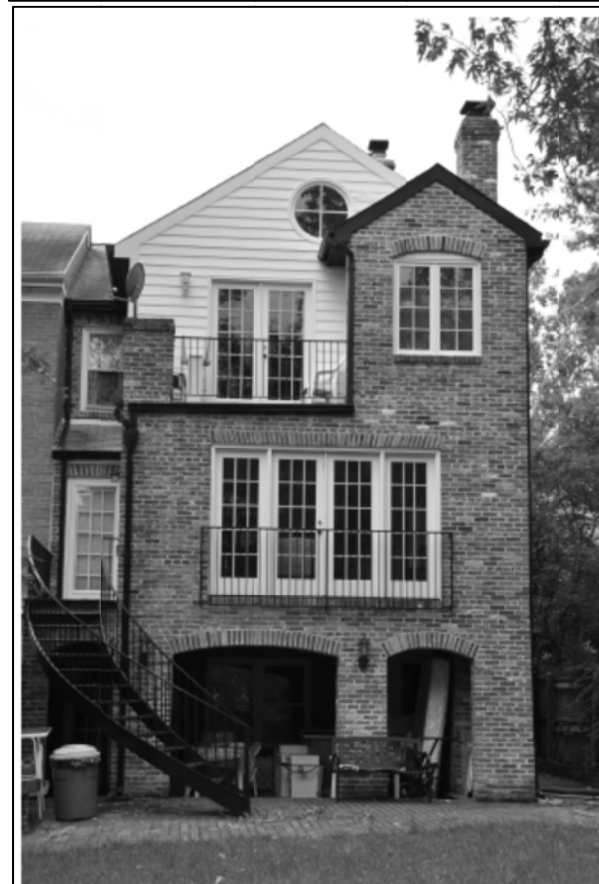
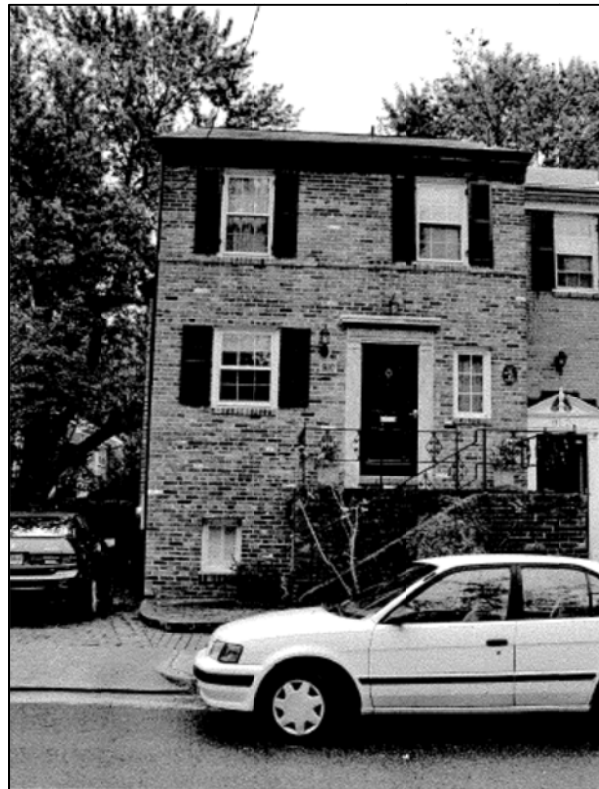
##### Alexandria Archaeology:

No comments received.

##### Transportation and Environmental Services:

No comments received.

**V. IMAGES**



**Figure 1: Existing Front and Rear Elevations**





Figure 2: Existing West/Front Elevation



Figure 3: Proposed West/Front Elevation

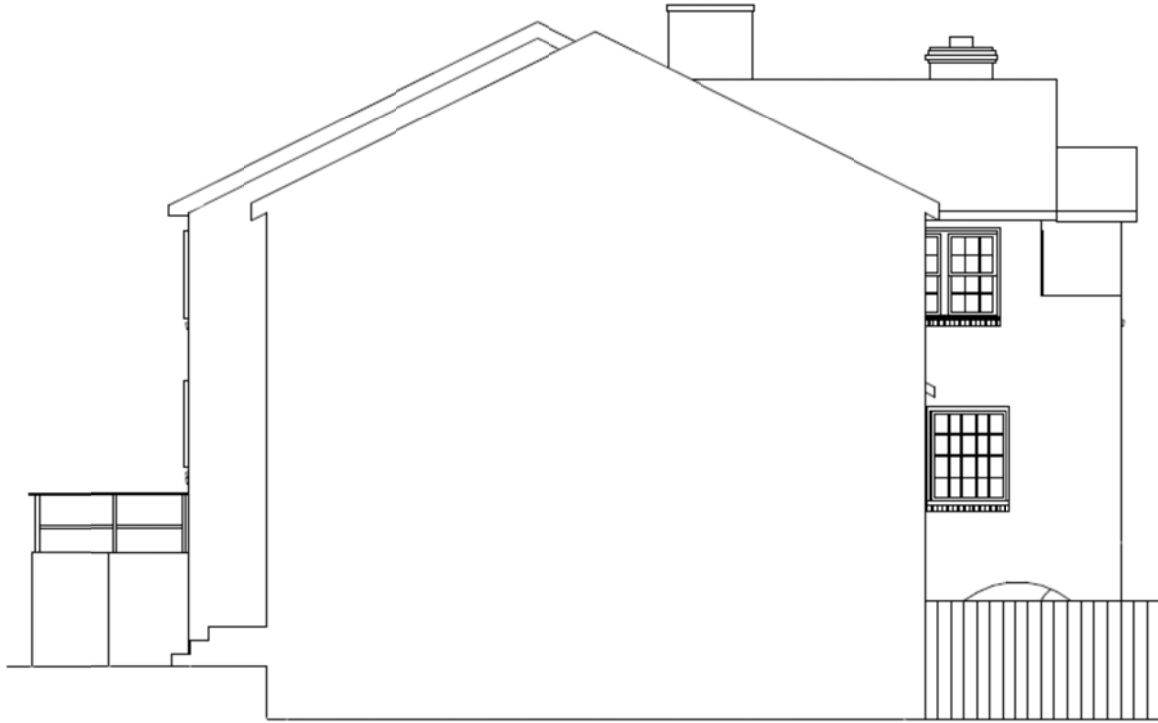




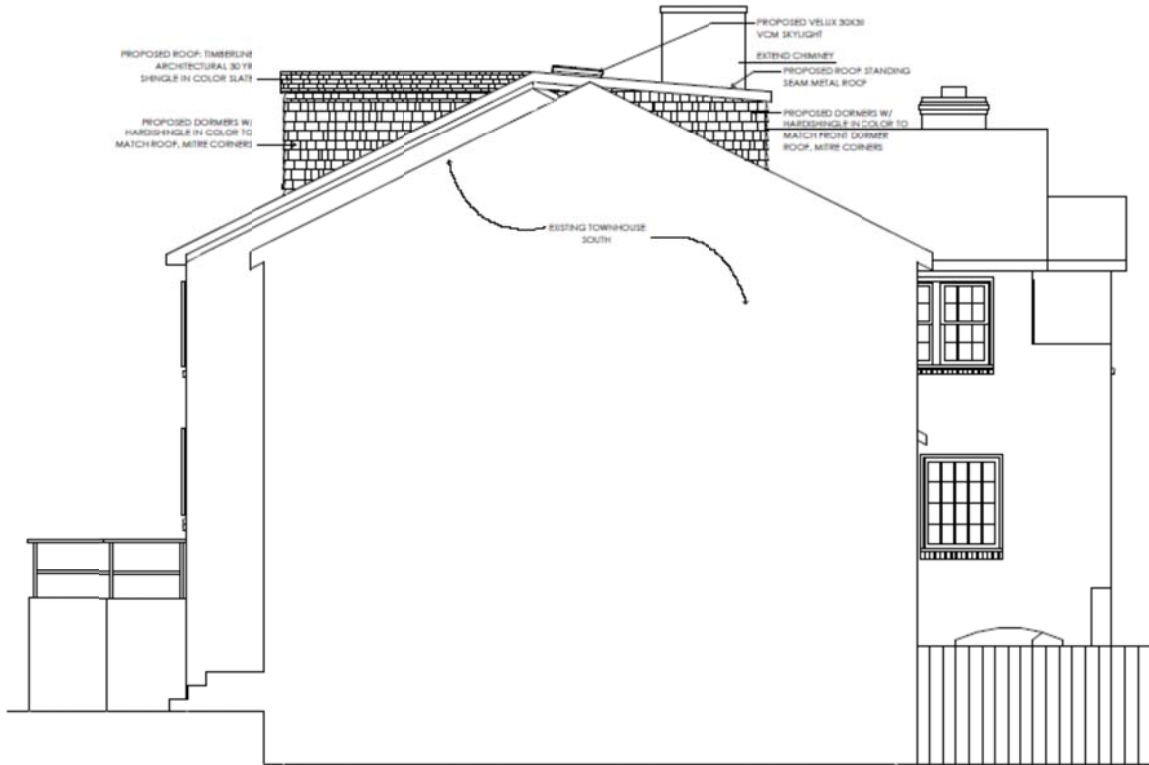
Figure 4: Existing East/Rear Elevation



Figure 5: Proposed East/Rear Elevation



**Figure 6: Existing South/Side Elevation**



**Figure 7: Proposed South/Side Elevation**



Figure 8: Existing North/Side Elevation

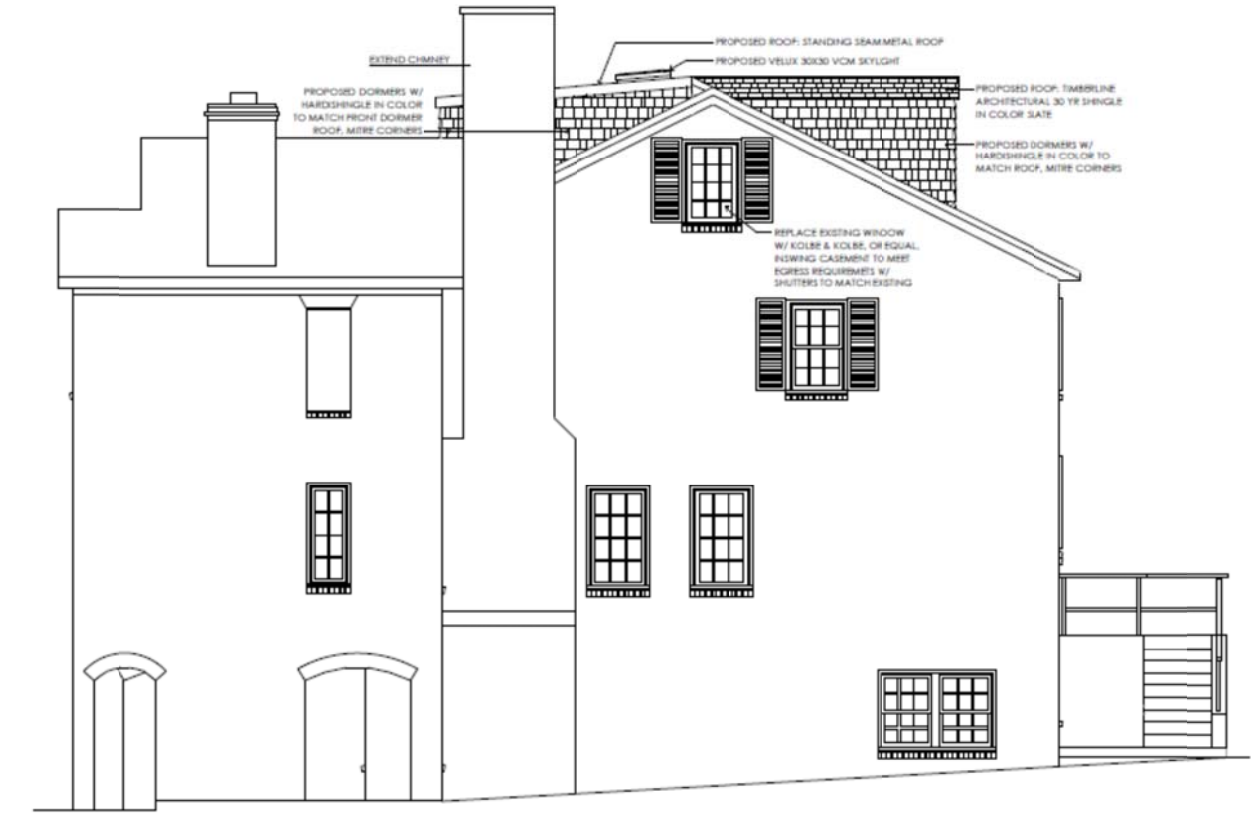
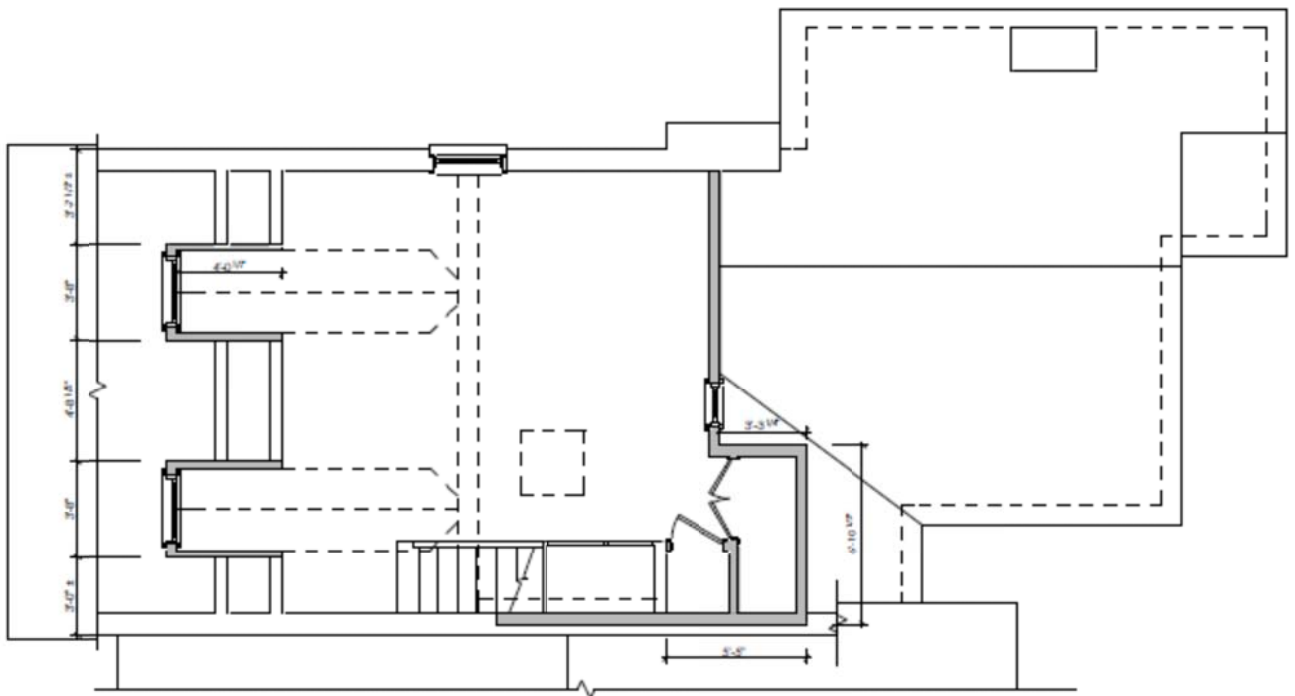


Figure 9: Proposed North/Side Elevation



**Figure 10: Proposed Floor Plan**