

Docket Item #s1 & 2
BAR CASE # 2011-0006 &
2011-0007

BAR Meeting
February 2, 2011

ISSUE: Permit to Demolish and Alterations (new entrance and dormer)

APPLICANT: Ancona & Associates, Inc. for Joel Rhoades

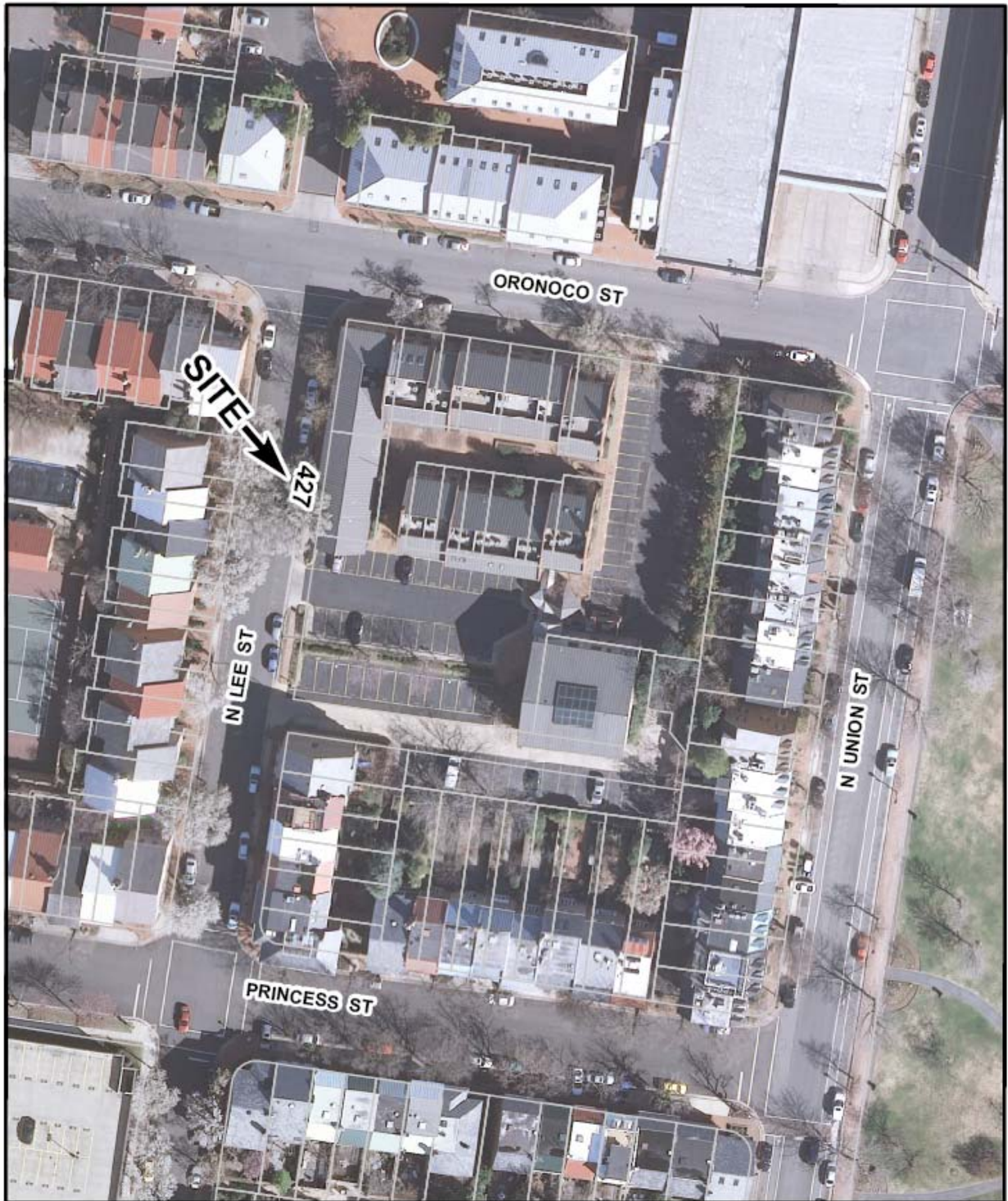
LOCATION: 427 North Lee Street

ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish and the Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations with the condition that the applicant work with Staff to find a darker material for the new North Lee Street entrance so that it will be more compatible with the existing dark aluminum windows and doors on the building.

****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 siding or roofing over 100 square feet, windows and 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 #2011-0006
#2011-0007



Note: Staff coupled the reports for BAR #2011-0006 (Permit to Demolish) and BAR #2011-0007 (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 installation of a rooftop dormer associated with the construction of an elevator, as well as a new entrance at 427 North Lee Street.

Permit to Demolish

A 6'-7.5" by 9'-2.5" portion of the east slope of the gable roof will be demolished in order to construct a dormer to provide adequate ventilation for the hoistway associated with the new elevator being installed in the building. The total area of demolition is approximately 61 square feet.

Rooftop dormer

The proposed new rooftop shed dormer will have a low 2:12 slope roof and will measure 7'-3.5' wide by 2'-7.5" high. There will be a 1' horizontal vent on the face of the dormer. The dormer will match the existing roof in both material and color.

Alterations

Alterations to the building consist of changing the existing fixed aluminum storefront window system on the west elevation to a new entrance. The new storefront will be constructed of bright polished brass and will have double doors flanked by full light sidelights and a transom. The same storefront system was originally proposed for the east elevation, but the applicant has since withdrawn that request.

II. HISTORY

According to the City's real estate records, the two-story brick building at 427 North Lee Street is part of a larger condominium office complex, Lee Street Square, constructed in **1980**. Portions of the north and west wall of this corner office building clearly date from an earlier period, most likely from building's association with the City's gas works. Alexandria Gas Company was located on this site beginning in **1851**, and historic map research shows a warehouse in this location. Other than two exterior brick walls and corbeled brick cornice, there is no evidence of a historic warehouse.

III. ANALYSIS

Staff has no objection to the proposed demolition of a portion of the existing standing seam metal roof in order to install a shed dormer. Furthermore, Staff supports the installation of a new storefront system on the North Lee Street elevation, with one minor condition. The proposed demolition and alterations comply with the Zoning Ordinance.

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, none of the criteria for demolition are met and the Permit to Demolish should be granted. The area proposed for demolition is minimal, and is located on the secondary, less prominent roof slope. Furthermore, although a portion of the building may date from the 19th century, the roof – as well as the fenestration on the building - is clearly a late 20th century feature. No character defining features of uncommon design or historic merit are impacted, nor do the small areas of demolition compromise the integrity of the building as a whole.

Alterations

Staff has no objection to the proposed dormer and storefront entry system. The elevator is necessary to make the building ADA compliant and will have a relatively minor impact on the exterior of the building. The low slope of the shed dormer, as well as the matching roof material and color, will make it minimally visible.

While Staff supports the installation of doors on the North Lee Street elevation (the two steps up to this opening suggest that it was an entrance in the past) the material selected by the applicant – polished bright brass – contrasts starkly with the existing dark bronze anodized aluminum window and door frames throughout the Lee Street Square development. While understanding the need to differentiate and identify the building entrance on this façade, Staff recommends that the new storefront system be constructed of either dark aluminum to match the existing adjacent storefront windows or from another high quality material which will be visually compatible with the rest of the office complex, such as oiled bronze.

STAFF

Stephanie Sample, 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 Administration:

- F-1 The following comments are for preliminary review only. Once the applicant has filed for a building permit, code requirements will be based upon the building permit plans.
- C-1 A building permit is required for the partial demolition and reconstruction of the structure to accommodate the proposed elevator prior to the start of work
- C-2 Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application (USBC 109.1).
- C-3 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-4 Any cutting away or modification of the existing roof truss to accommodate the elevator must be designed by a Professional Engineer registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia and submitted to the department for review and approval.
- C-5 Altered portions of the building must conform to all ADA requirements for accessible route, entrance and egress,
- C-6 Smoke and/or fire detection devices shall be installed per the IFC 2006 as amended.
- C-7 A fire prevention code permit is required for the proposed operation.

Transportation & Environmental Services:

- R-1 The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition.
- C-1 Any work within or from the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61)

V. IMAGES



Figure 1. Existing east elevation.



Figure 2. Photo simulation showing location of shed dormer on east elevation.



Figure 3. Photo of existing west (North Lee Street) elevation.



Figure 4. Example of a polish brass entrance similar to the proposed west entrance

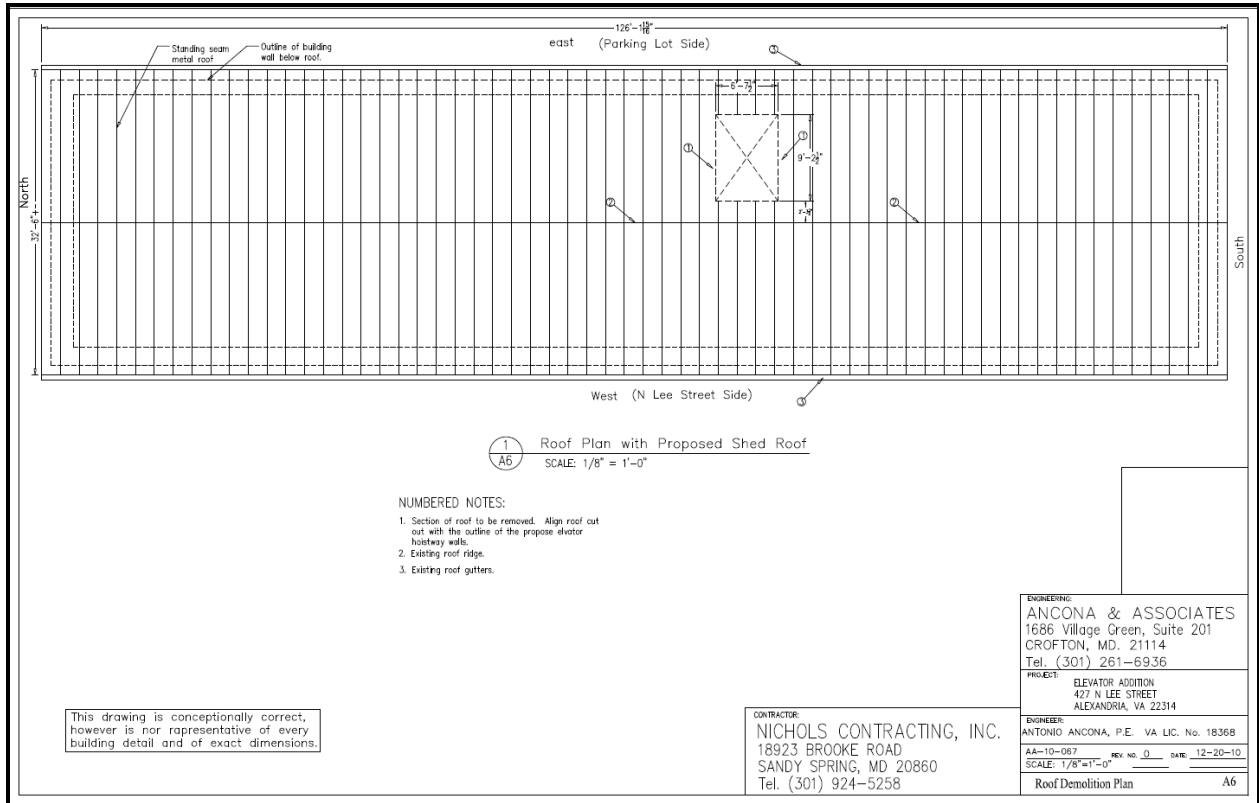


Figure 5. Proposed partial demolition – east roof slope

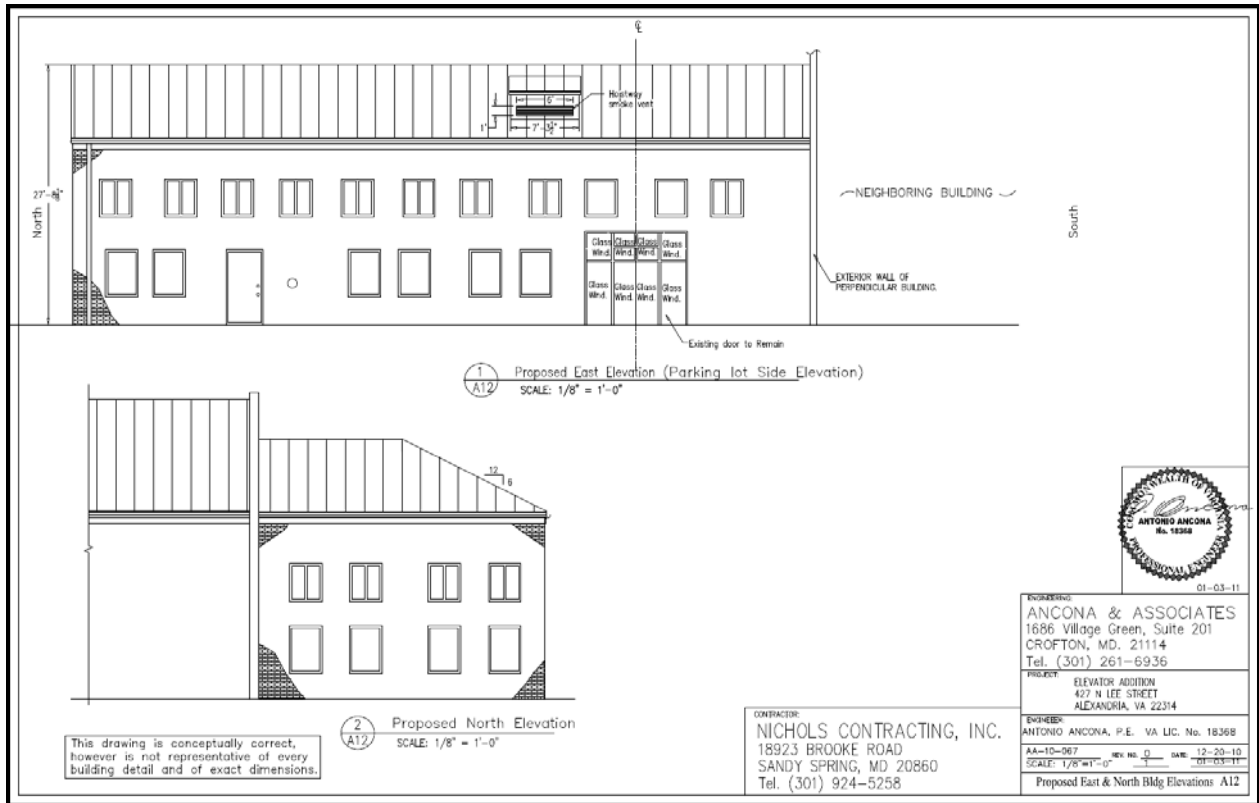


Figure 6. Proposed dormer.

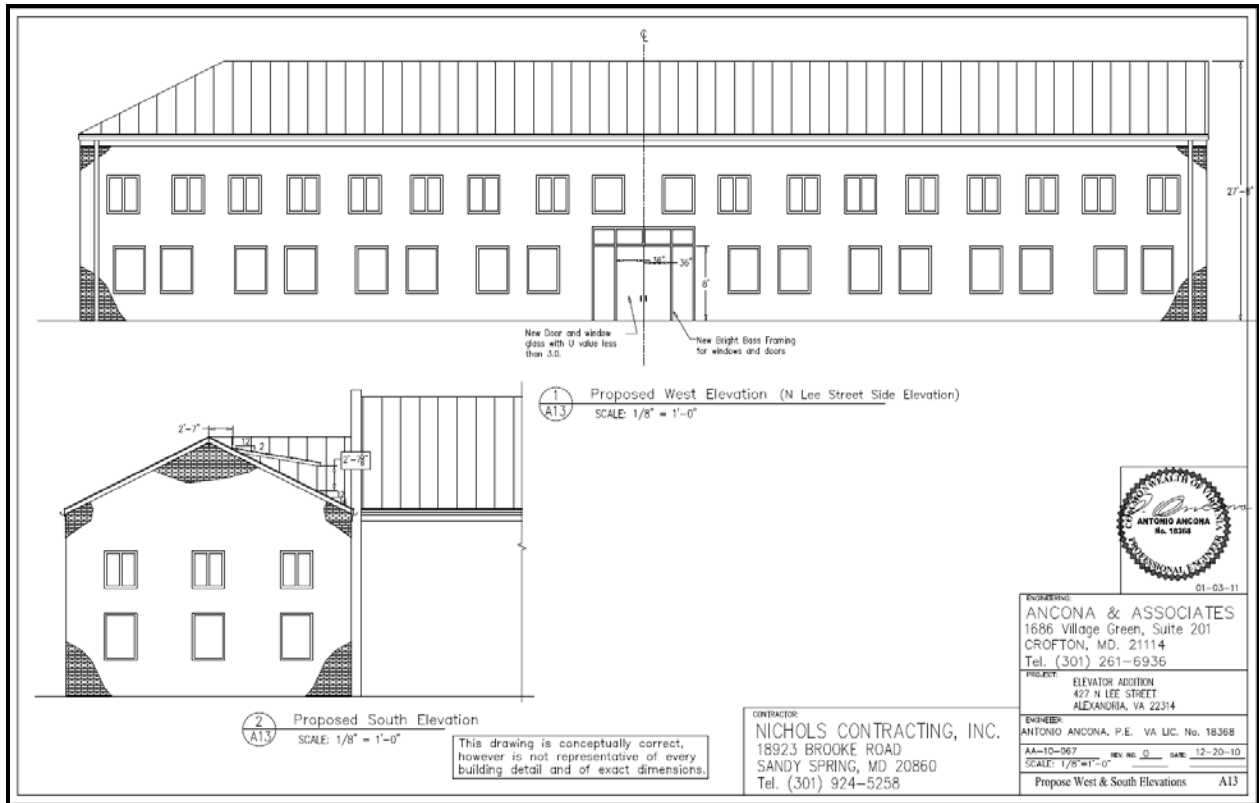


Figure 7. Proposed west elevation.