

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 24, 2011
TO: Old and Historic Board of Architectural Review
FROM: BAR Staff
SUBJECT: Adoption of Additional BAR Policies

Staff has attached for your review the Board's recommended changes to the proposed additional BAR policies which came out of the February 16, 2011 hearing. The amended policies were adopted by the Parker-Gray BAR at their February 23, 2011 hearing, with the addition of a sentence stating that BAR Staff may require a Board hearing for an alteration/construction project, regardless of whether the project meets the adopted policies.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Old and Historic Alexandria District BAR adopt the attached Proposed BAR Policies as addendums to the relevant sections of the existing *Design Guidelines* and that the BAR recommend to City Council that they adopt a text amendment to allow administrative approval of the minor new construction elements described by this policy.

STAFF

Stephanie Sample, Urban Planner
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager

PROPOSED BAR POLICIES

The proposed policies listed below, like the roof and window replacement policies already adopted by the Boards, are intended to supplement the existing *Design Guidelines* and provide a level of certainty and clarity to the public and the building/contracting industry. Many of the general comments incorporated in the roof and window policies are incorporated in the general section below, followed by specific details for each new policy. Certain items listed below are considered “new” features, rather than historically appropriate repair/replacement, and require a change to the Zoning Ordinance to allow for Administrative Approval by BAR Staff.

<p><i>General comments applying to <u>all</u> policies</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BAR Staff must visit the subject property to determine whether the proposed alteration/construction is visible from a public right-of-way, and then make a written finding as to whether the improvement is eligible for Administrative Approval by Staff. Proposed alterations/construction not in compliance with the Board’s adopted policies and the <i>Design Guidelines</i>, require review and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the BAR. - Where Administrative Approval by Staff is permitted, all of the conditions listed below must be met. -Proposed replacement materials not in compliance with the Board’s adopted policies, or not architecturally compatible or historically appropriate in the opinion of Staff, require review and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the BAR. The BAR will evaluate such cases on the merits of that particular building and the material proposed. - These policies may be amended by the Boards as new materials become available but will be reviewed by the Board and updated at least every five years. (*) Requires a Zoning Ordinance amendment before BAR Staff can Administratively Approve (target date Spring 2011). (~) Item may also require a permit through Code Administration.
<p>Residential accessibility structures *~</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temporary ramps/lifts may be approved administratively, provided that they are on a secondary (non-street facing) elevation and do not permanently alter the building. - Wood components must be painted or stained. Other materials permitted by this policy (metal/synthetic/composite) may be considered if painted.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ramps/lifts must be removed when they are no longer needed.
Storage sheds/playhouses (not play equipment) *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New and replacement accessory buildings used as tool/storage sheds or playhouses not requiring a building permit and complying with the 50 square foot and 7 foot maximum height limitation of the Zoning Ordinance (section 7-202(B)(4)(b)) may be approved administratively if they meet the following conditions (a plat is required to confirm compliance with open space requirements). - They must be easily removable and not located on a permanent foundation. - They must be located within a fenced rear yard of an interior lot or behind a six foot tall solid fence on a corner lot. - Due to their limited visibility from a public street, prefabricated sheds utilizing synthetic and/or composite materials may be used. - No gambrel roof (barn like) sheds allowed.
Doors	<p><u>Exterior doors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wood doors are always encouraged and may contain clear glass panels, where the design is historically appropriate. Art glass panels (stained glass or leaded glass) may be historically appropriate on late 19th or early 20th century doors but require Board approval. - High quality fiberglass or aluminum clad wood doors, in the appropriate architectural style, may be approved administratively on buildings or additions constructed after 1965, when Kaylien Doors began selling fiberglass composite doors and when aluminum clad products became commercially available. - Fiberglass and aluminum clad doors must have a smooth or subtle wood grain finish and be field painted. - Fiberglass and aluminum clad wood doors with glass panels may not be administratively approved by staff on street facing facades.

	<p><u>Storm doors *</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New full-view storm doors with minimal rails and stiles may be approved administratively provided that they are constructed of wood, solid-through-the-core and millable PVC, aluminum or fiberglass. - Early buildings must use traditional knob hardware on the exterior. Lever hardware may be used on any door interior and may be used on the exterior where the storm door is installed on those portions of a building constructed after 1900. - The door and trim of the wood, solid-through-the-core and millable PVC or fiberglass storm door must be field painted. Aluminum storm doors may be factory finished. Storm doors should be painted the same color as the existing main door and the storm door frame painted to match the existing door frame. <p><u>Automobile Garage doors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing overhead acting sectional doors for automobile garages constructed after 1970 may be replaced with high quality pressed steel, which became commercially available beginning in the 1970s. Synthetic/composite doors must have a smooth or subtle wood grain finish and be field painted or factory finished a color which complements the body of the building. - Original, side-hinged or side-sliding wood doors on early garages or sheds must be retained and repaired, or replicated in the original material and style.
Drainage*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Metal snow guards and metal half-round or ogee gutters may be installed provided they are stylistically appropriate and the gutters and downspouts are located so as not to obscure or detract from architectural features. - The gutters/downspouts must be constructed of wood or metal, which may be painted or factory finished in a color to match the trim.
Utility meters: Electrical, gas, cables*~	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utility meters may be administratively approved on secondary wall elevations, and should be painted to match the adjacent surface.

Exhaust/supply fans/plumbing vents*~	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small vents measuring less than one square foot may be installed on secondary wall elevations or roof slopes, provided that they are painted to match the adjacent surface.
Fences/gates*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New rear and interior side yard fences and gates up to 6' high which do not face a public street may be administratively approved if they meet zoning requirements (a plat is required to confirm compliance). - Fences which face a public or private street require Board approval and must be painted or stained. - Secondary wood fences which are located behind the main building in a rear yard or interior side yard may be constructed of stylistically appropriate unpainted wood or metal. Chain link, rustic stockade and hollow vinyl materials are not appropriate. (Stockade style fences are those which contain rustic vertical half-round boards pointed at the top.)
HVAC*~	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimally visible ground mounted condenser units may be administratively approved in side and rear yards. - Architecturally appropriate screening may be required, depending on visibility.
Exterior lighting*~	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New light fixtures may be approved administratively provided that they are architecturally and historically appropriate in design and material. - Electric light fixtures may be converted to gas where historically appropriate, and vice versa.
Shutters*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All new or replacement shutters must be operable (shutter dogs and hinges) and sized to fit the opening of the window, as described in the <i>Design Guidelines</i>. - Where architecturally appropriate, new shutters may be administratively approved on buildings which did not previously have shutters. - High quality wood shutters are encouraged. However, composite/synthetic shutters may be acceptable for buildings constructed after 1970, if they are constructed of a solid, millable material with a smooth or subtle wood grain surface and are field painted.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hollow vinyl or steel shutters are not permitted.
Siding & Trim*~	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The replacement siding policy expands upon the Board’s existing fiber cement policy and past practice, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing early siding must be preserved wherever possible. - Where synthetic siding, such as Insulbrick, Formstone, aluminum or vinyl, is removed, and early siding is uncovered below, retention, repair and selective replacement of the early siding is required. Where staff finds in the field that the early siding is too damaged to be repaired, new siding must match the material, profile, exposure and texture of the early siding. - Fiber cement siding and synthetic/composite trim may only be installed on buildings and additions constructed after 1975 and must have a smooth finish without a wood grain surface texture. - Synthetic/composite trim may only be approved administratively in certain limited locations on early buildings, such as the fascia board behind gutters or a water table near grade, where wood trim is consistently exposed to moisture. - Replacement siding/trim over 100 square feet requires a building permit
Railings*~	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New handrails may be administratively approved on existing stoops if they are visually minimal (post and rail without balusters) and constructed of metal or painted wood in a historically appropriate style. Guardrails required by the building code require BAR approval.
Antennas*~	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Antennas not requiring an SUP may be approved administratively if they are mounted on a wall or are freestanding tripods on a flat roof set back a minimum of 10’ from the building face. - Antennas may not project above the wall on which they are mounted and must be painted to match the adjacent wall surface. - Small dish antennas must be located in the least visible roof/wall location, not on a street façade, and

	be painted to match the adjacent material.
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Authority

Under Zoning Ordinance section 10-109 & 10-209, historically appropriate repair and replacement of materials can be approved without the necessity of a Certificate of Appropriateness. Since 2009, Staff has been documenting projects falling under this provision through an Administrative Approval process (which includes a 2 page application and tracking through the City’s Permit Plan system).

No BAR Approval Required

By past practice, some alterations do not require BAR or BAR Staff Administrative Approval, including: art, play equipment, paving not used for parking, landscaping plant materials, storm windows, and temporary or portable planters.