

Docket Item # 1  
BAR CASE # 2011-0041

BAR Meeting  
March 16, 2011

**ISSUE:** Certificate of Appropriateness  
(Alterations to an Existing Enclosed Porch)

**APPLICANT:** William Cromley

**LOCATION:** 428 North Columbus Street

**ZONE:** CL/Commercial

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant may opt to use either one or two panels below the paired windows after determining with Staff the more appropriate choice in the field; and
2. That the applicant submit door and window specifications that meet the Alexandria Replacement Window Performance Specifications prior to issuance of a building permit.

\*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 issuance 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, 703-838-4360 for further information.



**BAR CASE #2011-0041**



## **I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of new windows, doors and paneled, tongue and groove wainscoting on an existing enclosed porch and the reconstruction of a door hood above the entry at 428 North Columbus Street.

The alterations are to include:

- Reconstruct a bracketed, gabled wood door hood above the entry door on the east elevation of the main building mass.
- Remove the existing doors and windows on the enclosed, two story porch and replace with:
  - a. Two-over-two, simulated divided light, painted wood windows per the Alexandria Replacement Window Performance Specifications. Each pair of windows will be supported by a knee wall constructed with panels of tongue and groove wainscoting and installed between simple pilasters.
  - b. Painted wood, glazed entry doors with two horizontal lower panels.

## **II. HISTORY:**

The building located at 428 North Columbus Street is a simple, two-story, front gable, freestanding frame dwelling likely dating from the **early to mid-19th century**. The building appears on the G.M. Hopkins Map from 1877. In this map, it is depicted abutting the north property line and set back from the other three property lines. Immediately south of this property were two freestanding dwellings. The first Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicts this block for the first time in 1896. In 1896, this building was a two-story frame building with a two-story frame porch on the south elevation and a one-story rear addition. By 1902, according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the house had been altered: the one-story rear addition was now a two-story ell attached to the main block, with a small one-story porch on the south elevation, and a new one-story rear addition was added to the west elevation. On the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from 1941 and 1958, the building is slightly modified from the original form but maintains the same form of a two-story main block with rear ell, and a two-story side porch on the south elevation. The 1958 Sanborn map depicts the porch as open. It is likely that the porch was enclosed in the 1970s when Masonite siding was added. At the rear (west) elevation, a two-story addition has been added with an exterior stair. The property was subdivided in 1992 and a party wall was constructed between 428 North Columbus Street and a new building constructed at 808 Oronoco Street.

In 1973, the Board approved Masonite siding (8/15/73) for this building. In 2009, the Board considered a potential proposal to demolish this building as an informational item. During the discussion, the Board noted that they would likely not support a Permit to Demolish.

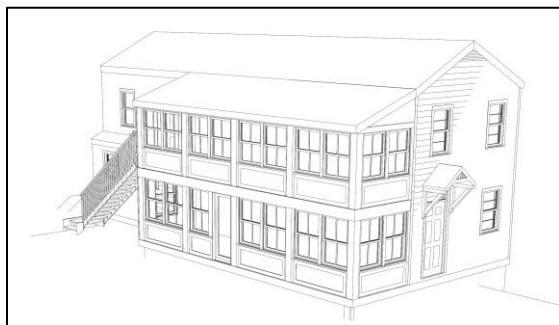
## **III. ANALYSIS:**

This building evokes a vernacular, freestanding farmhouse form and style which makes it architecturally unusual in the district. This building relates to the adjacent property immediately to the south which is a freestanding frame building constructed circa 1858. The mature landscape setting of both properties is also relatively unique in the district, particularly in consideration of the modest size of the building at 428 North Columbus Street. Although the

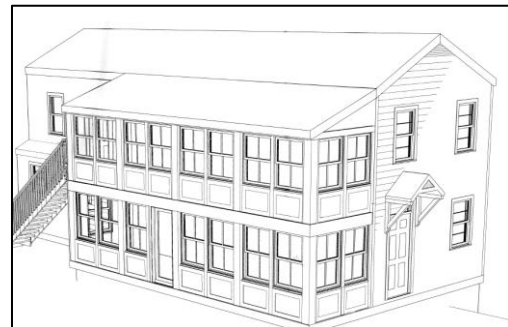
two-story side porch was a late 19<sup>th</sup>-century addition, it represents the traditional evolution of buildings throughout the district, and has achieved historic significance in its own right. Therefore, the return to a more clearly articulated enclosed porch form—one that is clearly identifiable as a porch through the use of distinctly different materials and fenestration—is not only appropriate but encouraged.

The *Design Guidelines* identify porches as “important architectural elements, especially on residential structures.” The *Guidelines* note that “side porches are found on many 19<sup>th</sup> century residential structures in the historic districts,” and that “porches should be made of materials which are sympathetic to the building materials generally found in the historic districts.”

The original submission featured pairs of two-over-two double-hung windows above individual panels, with each pair of windows divided by simple pilasters. The applicant has since met with Staff and simplified the design by creating one larger panel beneath each pair of windows, in order to emphasize the bay spacing of the porch columns. However, the applicant has requested the option of dividing the panels below the windows into two separate panels upon a field determination of which appears more appropriate. Because this is a minor change to the overall project proposal and both are considered generally appropriate, Staff is comfortable working with the applicant in the field to determine whether a single or double panel is most appropriate once construction begins.



Revised Alternate Submittal



Original Submittal

The simple architectural detailing of the porch reflects the vernacular style of the building and pays homage to the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century date of construction and sleeping porches of that era without overshadowing the severely simple main building. Additionally, the proposed design reverses inappropriate alterations that have occurred over time and emphasizes the original vertical proportion of the two bay gable end of the main building. The proposed materials, including the two-over-two wood windows, painted wood pilasters without capitals or bases, and tongue and groove panels are historically appropriate. Staff believes that one-over-one sash windows would be simpler, stylistically neutral and less specific to the 19<sup>th</sup> century period. However, Staff does not object to the two-over-two windows, finding them historically appropriate to the original period of construction of the porch.

A 1973 photo illustrates a Craftsman style bracketed door hood at the front entrance. While it is difficult to determine whether this door hood was an original feature, it creates a visual focus at the building entrance and its simple vernacular scale and form is appropriate in this case.

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to an existing enclosed porch with the condition noted above.

**STAFF:**

Catherine Miliaras, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning  
Michele Oaks, 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

Zoning Section:

C-1 Proposed replacement windows and trim comply with zoning. No changes to the height or footprint are proposed.

Code Administration:

No comments received.

**V. IMAGES**



**Figure 1. Front (east) elevation, existing.**



**Figure 2. Side and front (south and west) elevations, existing.**



**Figure 3. Bracketed door hood, circa 1973.**



**Figure 4. Original submission with two-panel option.**





Figure 5. Revised submission with single panel.