Docket Item # 1
BAR CASE # 2011-0065

BAR Meeting
April 20, 2011

ISSUE: Alterations (Window Replacement)

APPLICANT: Rob Kaufman/PMA Properties

LOCATION: 101 North Columbus Street

ZONE: KR / King Street Urban Retail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the application for double glazed aluminum-clad replacement windows with the condition that the applicant match the existing light configuration (4/1, 6/1 and 8/1) and provide full specifications in conformance with the Alexandria Replacement Window Performance Specifications prior to application for 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 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.


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I. ISSUE

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace 110 windows on the second, third, and fourth stories at 101 North Columbus Street. The existing windows are single-glazed wood windows in a variety of light configurations including 8/1, 6/1, and 2/1 with exterior aluminum storm windows. This four-story commercial building is located at the northwest corner of King Street and North Columbus Street. The applicant is requesting approval of simulated divided light, double-glazed aluminum-clad windows manufactured by Jeld-Wen.

II. HISTORY

The brick four-story commercial building, known historically as the Doniphan Building, was constructed in **1907** according to Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps and an article in the Alexandria Times (*Out of the Attic*, July 2-8, 2009). It was constructed as a store/retail on the ground floor with apartments on the upper stories. In 1929, the building suffered a substantial fire which gutted the entire building, as evident in the attached photograph provided by the owner.

In 1995 and 1996, the Board approved a storefront and signage for the first floor tenant, Bertucci's restaurant (BAR Case #s 1995-0009 and 1996-0009).

III. ANALYSIS

The proposed alterations comply with the Zoning Ordinance.

Based on a site inspection, the majority of the existing windows on the building appear to be replacement windows installed after the 1929 fire and would be considered "recent" windows by the Window Policy. While there are occasional single panes in a multi-pane sash that have old "wavy" glass, the vast majority of the sash contain a modern float glass and the sash inspected by Staff were not constructed with mortice and tenon joinery.

As with many early 20th century buildings, this structure is an eclectic combination of architectural styles. The bracketed cornice and bay windows recall the late 19th century Italianate style while the arched canopy over the west entry is from the early 20th century Beaux Arts style. Documentation of the original window light patterns at this building is somewhat sparse. However, the photograph provided by the applicant of the 1929 fire, shows an unusual combination of window light configurations, including both 2/2 and 8/8 windows. The current windows with 4/1, 6/1 and 8/1 light configurations are stylistically more appropriate for an early 20th century Craftsman or Colonial Revival style building.

The recently adopted Window Policy states that previously replaced window sash "may be replaced in the historically appropriate style with one of the following:

a. Single-glazed painted wood sash must be used on the street façades of 18th and 19th century buildings with multi-light windows. Painted wood, simulated divided light, insulated glass windows may be used on the secondary elevations of these buildings. Energy panels may be used on single-glazed replacement windows.
b. 1/1 or 2/2 sash windows with modern float glass may be replaced with double-glazed painted wood windows on any façade."

Regarding the use of double-glazed windows, the Window Policy states that "Double-glazed (insulated) and simulated divided light painted wood windows may be used throughout on buildings or additions constructed after 1930, when Thermopane insulated glass windows were invented." As to aluminum-clad wood windows, the Window Policy states that "High quality, appropriately detailed aluminum-clad wood replacement windows may be used on buildings constructed after 1969…[they] may also be used on any 20th-century commercial building more than four stories in height and on multifamily projects with greater than four units."

This application provides an interesting case study in the application of the Board's new Window Policy. First, should the building be returned to the more Italianate (2/2 windows) style that it had when constructed but was changed in 1929 after the fire? Second, are double-glazed windows acceptable for a building from this period? Third, are aluminum-clad windows acceptable? Staff finds that the Window Policy allows for a variety of options in this case and believes that this is the reason the Board reserved the ability to interpret the policy on a case-by-case basis.

While a return to the original design, with 2/2 windows, is one option, after the fire a distinct decision was made to install windows contemporary to that 1929 time period in the form of 4/1, 6/1, and 8/1 windows. Other buildings constructed in the City in the late 1920s, most notably in Rosemont and the Town of Potomac, were constructed in the Craftsman or Colonial Revival styles, often with 6/1 windows. Staff finds that the current light configuration of a multi-light sash over a single-light sash has gained historic significance over time, as this building has had the 4/1, 6/1, 8/1 window configuration for more than eighty years. Staff, therefore, recommends that the design of any replacement windows match the pattern of the existing sash.

Staff can also support the use of double-glazed windows. Double glazing is allowed administratively on buildings constructed after 1930 and this is approximately when the existing windows were installed after the fire. Double glazing is also allowed administratively on single light sash, which is the case for the lower half of all of these windows. For the upper half of the sash, the Window Policy requires single glazing on multi-pane windows on the street facing façade of 18th and 19th century buildings but is silent on whether double-glazed windows are appropriate for early 20th-century (1900-1929) buildings. This silence was intentional in order to permit the Board to consider the merits of individual cases, as this was a transitional period of building technology and buildings in this era frequently combined several architectural styles. Finally, in this particular case, the windows proposed for replacement are all above the first floor, being removed from the pedestrian by at least 15 feet and the spacers within the two panes of glass in a simulated divided light sash will not be easily visible from the street. On balance, at this height, the simulated divided light sash will look much better than the existing windows covered by storm windows.

Staff finds it more challenging to support the use of aluminum-clad windows for a building constructed in 1906. Although the Window Policy allows clad windows on any building *over* four stories in height, because of the challenges of regular painting and maintenance at this greater height, this building is only four stories tall. However, the Window Policy also allows the use of aluminum-clad windows on any multi-family building constructed during the 20th century with more than four dwelling units. While this building is now a commercial building, and has been since a remodel after the 1929 fire, Staff notes that it was originally constructed as

a mixed-use building with apartments on the upper floors. Staff finds that the building still reads architecturally as an early 20th-century apartment building and therefore can support the use of aluminum-clad windows in on those upper floors of the building this instance.

STAFF
Catherine Miliaras, 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

C1- A building permit will be required to be issued prior to the start of work.

C2- The following information will be required to be submitted for review at the time of permit application;

- BAR approval and any attached conditions
- The total number of windows to be replaced
- If the opening is to be enlarged the size of the lintel will be needed
- If the opening is to be reduced the use of the space with the window will be needed to determine light and ventilation requirements
- In either case additional information ("cut sheet") will need to be included showing U-factor and SHGC

V. IMAGES

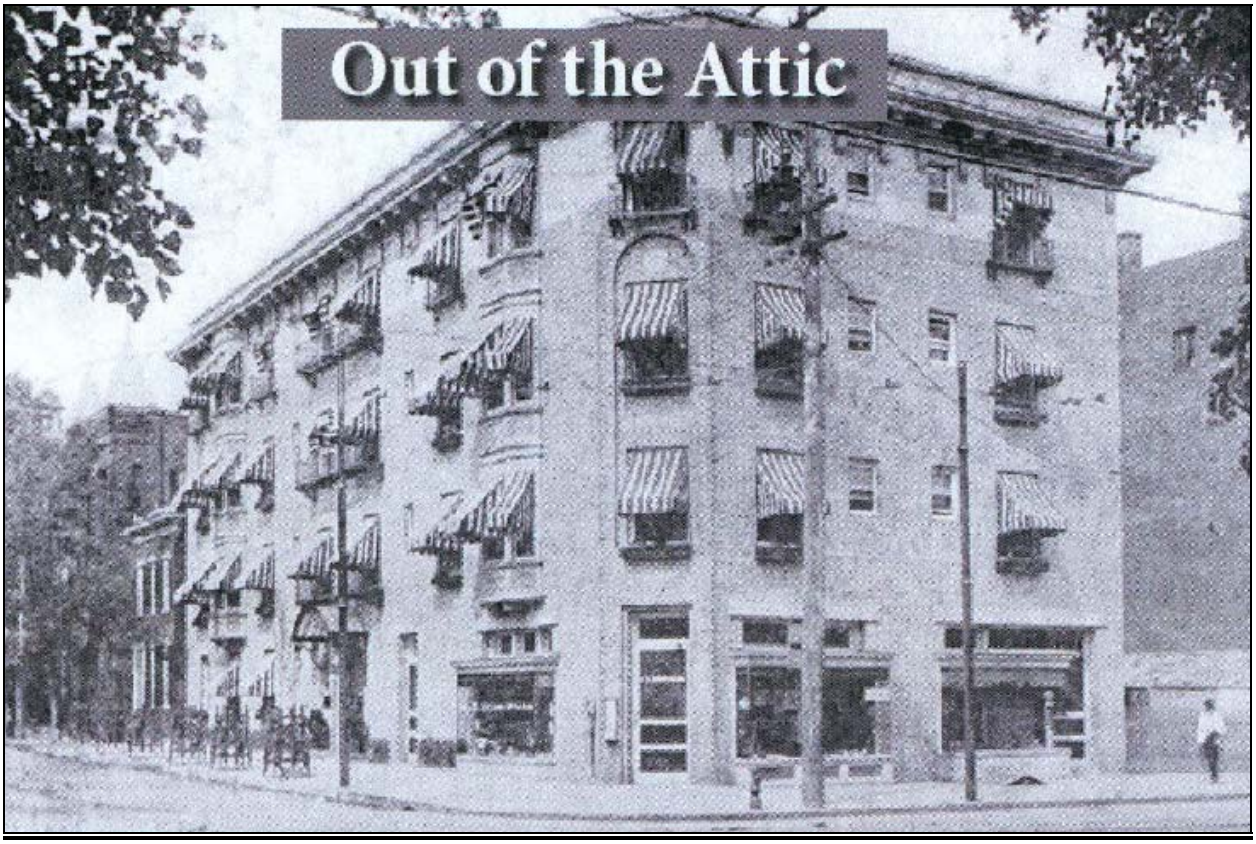

Figure 1. Photograph of 101 North Columbus Street, circa 1908 (*Alexandria Times*, July 2-8, 2009).

Figure 2. Photograph of 1929 fire (provided by Rob Kaufman).

Figure 3. Existing conditions, looking northeast.