

Docket Item #3  
BAR CASE #2003-0218

BAR Meeting  
February 25, 2004

**ISSUE:** Rear addition

**APPLICANT:** Sheila Farrell

**LOCATION:** 409 North Henry Street

**ZONE:** CL/Commercial

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**\*\*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 the Code Enforcement Bureau (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Enforcement, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the location of the door and window openings on the first floor be adjusted so that they are more symmetrically aligned and relate better to the sliding doors and window above;
2. That the muntins be omitted from the doors and windows;
3. That the window and door trim be “traditional” rather than “picture frame” style and that the windows have sills;
4. That the new construction be delineated from the existing house by trim boards;
5. That the north side gutter and downspout issue be resolved with any design changes to be approved by Staff;
6. That the screening for the air conditioning unit be approved by Staff;
7. That the parking area be delineated from the yard prior to completion of the project; and,
8. That the following statement must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement:

Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.

NOTE: Docket item #2 must be approved before this docket item can be considered.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant’s Description of Undertaking:

“Proposed 12 foot addition to back of house.”

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new two story, gable roofed, frame rear addition to the existing two story, flat roofed, frame house at 409 North Henry Street. The building, which has been used for commercial purposes, is being rehabilitated for residential use. The addition will have the gable oriented to the rear. The 21' peak of the gable will be the same height as the front of the existing house. The addition will be 14.5' wide; the same width as the existing rear wall. It will be located on the north property line and 3.5' from the south property line. The addition will add 12' in length to the house which is currently 42.6' long. The north and south sides of the addition will be blind.

The rear or east elevation (identified on the plans as “front”) will have a door and window on the first story. The window will be a Norco wood window with a 5/4" by 4" wood casing. The double hung, simulated divided light window will have a three-over-three configuration and will be located slightly to the south of the centerline of the east elevation. The door, located at the north end of the east elevation, will be a wooden door with three lights above four panels. There will be an exterior light fixture over the door. The fixture has not yet been selected. The second

story will have a pair of Norco sliding doors, each having 15 lights. It is assumed that the door will be wood with simulated divided lights. It will be surrounded by a 5/4" x 4" casing. A wood railing will be flush against the sliding doors. The railing will be simple in design and will be painted as soon as is practicable. Light fixtures will flank the sliding doors. These fixtures have not yet been selected. Above the sliding doors, centered in the peak of the gable, will be a fan-light window. It is assumed that this window will also be a Norco wood window with simulated divided lights. The addition will be clad in 6" "colonial lap" fiber cement siding. The corners will be finished in 5/4" by 4" trim boards. There will be 5/4" x 8" trim at the roof line and a 5/4" x 6" rakeboard. The roof will be clad in asphalt shingles. The drawings show aluminum gutters along the north and south sides with aluminum downspouts at the rear corners of these elevations. Although not shown on the drawings, according to the contractor, the air conditioning unit will be placed on the ground at the back of the house and will be screened. No paint colors were provided for the addition.

There is no work proposed for the exterior of the existing house.

The addition will be visible in views through the block as well as from the public alley behind the property. The detached house has a large parking lot adjoining it to the north and a 3.5' gap between it and the building to the south.

#### History and Analysis:

As discussed in docket item #2, the two story frame house was constructed circa 1903 (Building Permit #37, 4/21/1903). The building attained its present size circa 1931 when the original one story rear ell was extended and raised by a story. While the building retains its original massing when viewed from the front, there is little original exterior fabric extant. The walls are clad in aluminum siding. The one-over-one wood windows appear to be modern, probably dating to the renovation in 2000. The front door is a modern wood six panel door. If there was once a cornice or any other trim, it has been removed or concealed by the siding.

On November 13, 2003, the Board of Zoning Appeals approved a variance to construct a 12' by 14.3' two-story rear addition in the required side (north and south) yards. The proposal included reconfiguring the existing asphalt parking area at the back of the property to provide 849.6 square feet of open space and two off-street parking spaces to meet the open space and parking requirements for a residential building in a CL zone. The CL zone requires a single-family dwelling to provide two minimum side yard setbacks of 8' or one-third the building height, whichever is greater. The existing structure, located on the north property line and 3.5 feet from the south property line is non-complying and the proposed addition will extend these conditions. The Board granted a variance from section 12-1-2(A) of the zoning ordinance relating to physical enlargement of a noncomplying structure. Therefore, the proposed addition meets the requirements of the zoning ordinance.

Staff believes the proposed addition is generally acceptable. In its size and massing, it is reasonable in relation to the existing house and nearby buildings. However, Staff is concerned that the rear elevation bears little relation to historic architectural patterns of the district. It reflects modern suburban design rather than the vernacular Italianate style that 409 North Henry

Street undoubtedly once exhibited. On the other hand, Staff's concern is mitigated by the fact that the historic front and new addition will not be viewed together and that the front elevation retains little original architectural character. However, Staff does believe that the design of the rear elevation would be improved if it were more regular and simple. To that end, Staff recommends adjusting the location of the door and window openings on the first floor so that they are more symmetrically aligned and relate better to the sliding doors and window above and that the muntins be omitted from the doors and windows. In addition, Staff recommends that the window and door trim be "traditional" rather than "picture frame" style and that the windows have sills. Furthermore, Staff recommends that the new construction be delineated from the existing house by trim boards which will also serve to finish off the joint between the aluminum siding and fiber cement siding.

Staff notes the comments of Code Enforcement with respect to the drainage systems. As currently designed, the gutter and downspout on the north side are located on the adjacent property and the downspout empties onto that property. The applicant must either execute a legal agreement with the adjacent property owner to allow this condition or revise the design. The addition could be pulled back from the north property line to ensure that the gutters will be located on the subject property or the north side gutters could be redesigned to be integral to the roof. In either case, the north side downspout must be moved to the east (rear) elevation. Staff believes these alterations would have a minimal effect on the appearance of the project and could be reviewed by Staff. As mentioned above, the air conditioning unit, which is to be located at the east end (rear) of the house, must be screened and the screening must be approved by Staff prior to construction. In order to meet zoning requirements, before approval of the Certificate of Occupancy, a paved parking area with two spaces, measuring 18' wide and 16' deep, must be installed at the back of the property and any extraneous paving in the yard area must be removed. Lastly, Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archeology and recommends that they be included as a condition of the approval.

## CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

### Code Enforcement:

- C-1 All exterior walls within 3 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides, with no openings permitted within the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided.
- C-2 Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Enforcement that will outline the steps that will taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-3 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-4 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-5 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-7 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully detail the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-8 Permission from adjacent property owners is required if access to the adjacent properties is required to complete the proposed construction. Otherwise, a plan shall be submitted to demonstrate the construction techniques utilized to keep construction solely on the referenced property.
- C-9 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

### Historic Alexandria:

It is difficult to judge if the open space requirement is met. There is no calculation included.

### Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 The Sanborn Insurance Map indicates that a house was present on this lot by 1891. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources which could provide insight into domestic activities in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Alexandria.

- R-1 Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
- R-2 The above statement must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.