

Docket Item #5
BAR CASE #2004-00202

BAR Meeting
September 22, 2004

ISSUE: Fence
APPLICANT: Mija Romer
LOCATION: 1310 Princess Street
ZONE: RB/Residential

****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 front and side fence be stained or painted within 6 months of installation; and,
2. That the applicant have a fence location survey prepared prior to proceeding with installation to ensure that the fence will be located entirely on the property at 1310 Princess Street.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a 6' high board fence. The fence will be located on an existing brick patio. The patio is approximately 2' above the grade of the adjacent property to the north, 1312 Princess Street and thus will appear to be approximately 8' above grade when viewed from outside the property. The fence will match the existing fence near the front of the house on the west side of the property. The new fence will extend from the existing front fence back 26'5" along the west property line. It will stop where the east side yard fence of the neighboring property, 1312 Princess Street, begins. Again, because the property at 1312 Princess Street is at a lower grade than 1310 Princess Street, the proposed fence will appear taller than the existing fence at 1312 Princess Street which is a similar 6' high wood fence, but is set on grade. The new fence will enclose an area that is currently open, allowing access to the side and back yard of 1310 Princess Street.

The existing front fence replaced a dilapidated stockade fence and gate in the same location. The replacement of the front fence with a new board fence was administratively approved by Staff during the recent renovation of 1310 Princess Street. In August 2004, the applicant's contractor began work on the side fence. This fence is not a replacement fence and had no Staff or Board of Architectural Review approval. According to the applicant, she did not think the side fence required review due to its lack of visibility. The Planning and Zoning Office was notified of the work in progress and determined that the side fence was visible, though minimally, when viewed from the public sidewalk at the front, through the narrow strip of land on the east side of the house at 1312 Princess Street. Therefore, Planning and Zoning Staff requested that the applicant halt work and apply to the Board for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

II. HISTORY:

The residences at 1304-1310 Princess Street are a four-unit, Art Moderne, brick-faced concrete block row designed by Alexandria architect Paul S. Lubienski in 1941. The rowlock and contrasting brick "streamlining," the stepped parapet, and the rolled steel casement windows (particularly the corner windows) are characteristic of the Moderne style. On September 24, 2003, the Board approved the renovation and addition to 1310 Princess Street (BAR Case #s 2003-00184 and 2003-00185).

III. ANALYSIS

The proposed fence complies with the zoning ordinance requirements.

In the opinion of Staff, the design of the proposed fence is appropriate for the mid-20th century house at 1310 Princess Street and for the surrounding neighborhood. The design and materials of

the proposed fence conform with the *Design Guidelines*. However, Staff notes that the *Guidelines* recommend that wood fences be painted or stained (Fences - Page 2). In addition, Staff notes that the neighbor at 1312 Princess Street has expressed concern that the fence may be beyond the property line. Thus, Staff cautions the applicant that the fence must be entirely on the property at 1310 Princess Street and is requiring that a fence survey be prepared prior to proceeding with installation.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the front and side fence be stained or painted as soon as is practicable; and,
2. That the applicant have a fence location survey prepared prior to proceeding with installation to ensure that the fence will be located entirely on the property at 1310 Princess Street.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

“No comments.”

Office of Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”