

Docket Item #6
BAR CASE# 2004-0201

BAR Meeting
October 27, 2004

ISSUE: Addition and alterations

APPLICANT: Nathan Carter

LOCATION: 813 Oronoco 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 addition and alterations with the following conditions:

- 1) The beaded lap siding on the front of the house should be retained if at all possible and, if not, Staff must agree to the need for replacement and the selection of the replacement siding;
- 2) The cornice should be omitted altogether or a simple fascia board be used instead;
- 3) The chimney at the center of the gable roof should be repaired and retained on the exterior;
- 4) The standing seam roof should be a true standing seam rather than pre-fabricated;
- 5) The front door should be a six panel door;
- 6) The front windows should have true divided lights;
- 7) If the Board does approve simulated divided light windows, the windows should have muntins no greater than 7/8" wide and should be approved by Staff before installation;
- 8) The windows in the two story cinder block section just beyond the historic main block should be four over four rather than six over six;
- 9) If the transom over the front door is to be replaced, it should have three lights;
- 10) The fiber cement siding should be smooth, not wood grained, and must be installed so that the nails do not show;
- 11) Fiber cement siding should be installed on the west elevation of the rear addition where it projects beyond 815 Oronoco Street;
- 12) If replaced, the rear fence must be located entirely on the subject property and should be painted or stained; and,
- 13) The HVAC units should be located on the ground towards the rear of the east elevation.
- 14) 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 #5 must be approved before this docket item can be considered.

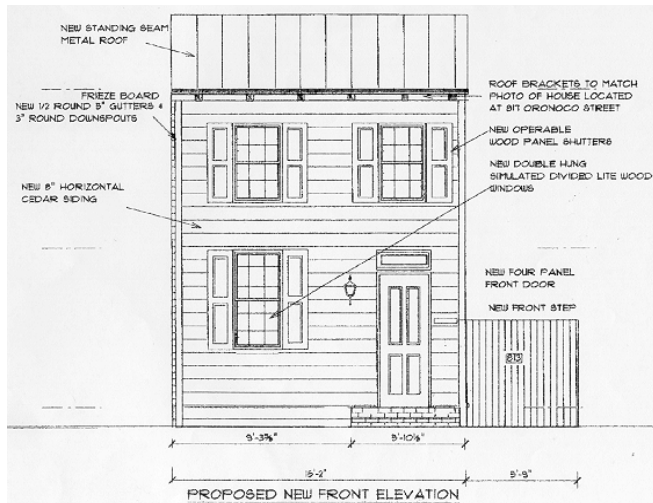
I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a certificate of appropriateness for a small second story addition at the rear of the house and for a variety of minor alterations intended to improve the appearance and historic authenticity of the house. The front and portions of the side and rear of the house are visible from the street and public alley at the rear. The front and rear fences somewhat obscure views of the first story on the sides and rear.

Front (south) elevation

The existing rolled roof on the gabled main block will be replaced with a new standing seam metal roof. Half round gutters and round downspouts will be installed at the front of the house. The existing cement parged chimney in the center of the main block roof will be removed. A new cornice with paired brackets to match that at 817 Oronoco Street will be installed. The existing beaded lap wood siding on the front of the main block will be replaced by new 8" lapped

cedar siding. The existing siding is clearly old and may be original. The windows, which are modern replacement windows, will be replaced with new double hung simulated divided light windows in a six over six configuration. The dimensions of the windows on the second story in the front will be reduced by approximately 1' in length while those on the first story will remain the same. Operable wood paneled shutters will be installed on the front windows. The non-historic front storm and exterior door will be removed and replaced with a new four panel wood door. The drawings show the front door opening reduced in width by approximately 6". Staff assumes that this is an error. The single light transom above the door will either remain or be replaced in kind. Specification sheets provided by the applicant appear to be for a transom, indicating that it will be replaced, but the change is not shown on the drawings. A carriage style brass lamp will be installed to the left of the door. The existing concrete front stoop will be replaced with a new brick stoop similar to that at 817 Oronoco Street. The wood fence and gate to the right of the house at the front will remain.



East elevation **Figure 1 - Front Elevation**

The east elevation of the main block is to remain as is, with the exception of the windows. Here, as elsewhere, the new windows will be double hung simulated divided light wood windows in a six over six configuration. The existing windows are not historic.

The two story cinderblock addition will be clad in 8" fiber cement siding. The existing metal windows will be replaced with new double hung simulated divided light wood windows in a six over six configuration. The existing door will be replaced with a new fully glazed door. The material of the door is not specified. A specification sheet provided by the applicant appears to indicate that it will be wood. A carriage style brass lamp will be installed above the door.

The one story cinderblock section will have new fenestration, consisting of a set of three long four over four wood windows with simulated divided lights. Fiber cement siding will cover the cinderblock.

The second story addition will have the same footprint as the existing one story cinderblock section. The new addition will continue the "flat" roof line of the existing second story addition.

It will be clad in fiber cement siding and will have a set of three long four over four windows matching those below.

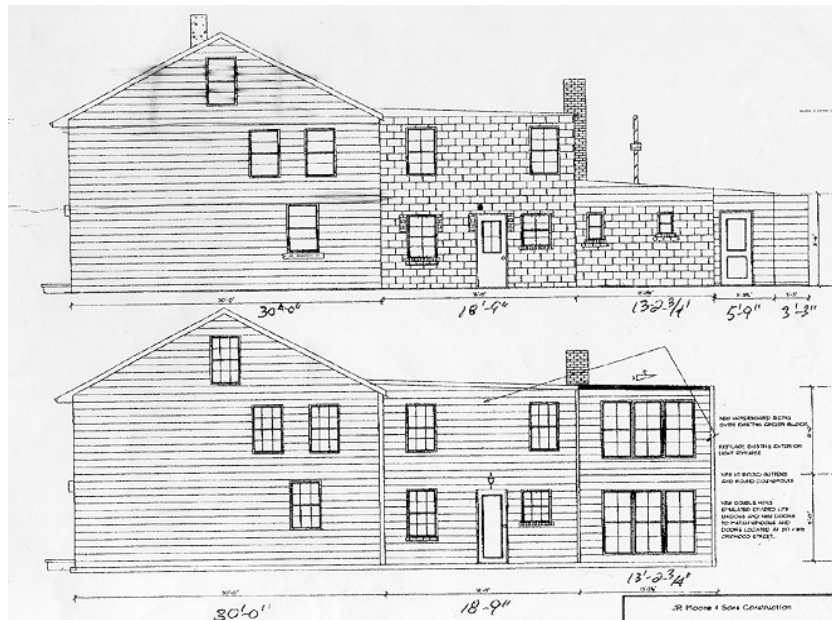


Figure 2 - East Side Elevation

Rear (north) elevation

The rear elevation will be composed of the existing single story cement block section with the new second story addition above. There will be a pair of fully glazed doors flanked by long four over four double hung simulated divided light wood windows in the first story. The material of the door is not specified, but is assumed to be wood. Two carriage lamps will be located above the doorway. The new second story will have a set of four long four over four double hung wood windows. Half round gutters and round downspouts will be located on the rear elevation. An existing brick chimney at the back of the two story cinderblock section will remain in place and will appear above the new second story addition. The rear of the existing two story cinderblock section is approximately two feet wider than the rearmost section of the house and thus will be visible from the back. This narrow section of wall will be clad in fiber cement siding.

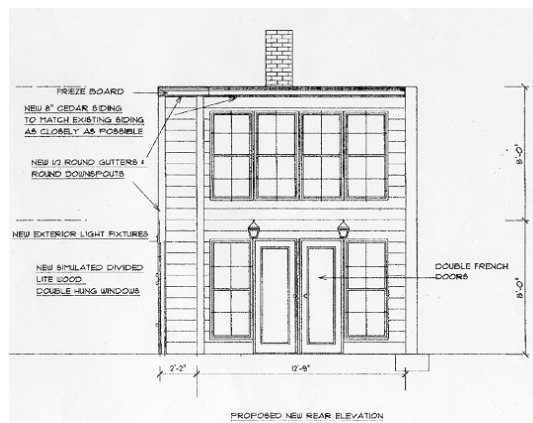


Figure 3 - Rear Elevation

West elevation

As 813 Oronoco Street is longer than 815 Oronoco Street, its neighbor to the west, the west wall is exposed for approximately 10' in length and two stories in height at the north end. As this wall is on the property line, building code requires that it remain without openings. No west elevation drawings were provided.

Site

According to the applicant the rear fence will be replaced with a six foot board fence. The existing rear fence encroaches into the alley behind the house.

The plans do not show the location of the HVAC units, but the applicant has indicated that they will be placed on the ground towards the rear of the east elevation. As the property does not have the open space required for this zone and ground mounted HVAC units are counted against the required open space, the location of the units is important. The area between the east wall of the house and the east property line can not be counted as open space as it is less than 8' in width. Thus this is an ideal area in which to locate the HVAC units. If located on the roof, the units would require screening or, alternatively, a waiver of roof top screening, both of which would require approval of the Board.

II. HISTORY:

As discussed in docket item #5, the two story, gable-roofed frame house may date to as early as the mid-19th century and almost certainly was present by 1877. The series of cinderblock and frame additions behind the main block date to the mid- and late-20th century.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed addition and alterations comply with the zoning ordinance requirements.

In the opinion of Staff, the proposed addition and alterations are generally appropriate and compatible with the *Design Guidelines*. The renovation of this early building located in a row of fine mid- to late-19th century houses will be highly beneficial for the block and the greater Parker-Gray District. However, Staff does believe the project can be improved in a number of ways and notes that clarification is necessary on some points.

As discussed in docket item #5, Staff believes the house at 813 Oronoco Street was built separately from the four houses at 815-821 Oronoco Street and that it predates them. Therefore, Staff believes that every effort should be made to maintain the individual historic characteristics of 813 Oronoco Street, to the extent that these can be identified or surmised.

Siding

The beaded lap siding on the front of the house is similar to that found on antebellum houses in the Old and Historic District and unless evidence is uncovered to indicate otherwise, Staff believes it is original to the building. Although somewhat rough due to paint build-up and weathering, a cursory investigation suggests that it is sound, except at the top where prolonged water infiltration has occurred. Therefore, Staff believes that, if at all possible, this siding should be retained. If replaced, it should be replaced with siding that matches the existing as closely as

possible.

Cornice

Similarly, Staff believes that it would be a mistake to add a cornice matching the cornice at 817 Oronoco Street. The bracketed cornice is typical of the Italianate style. If added to the house at 813 Oronoco Street, the cornice would incorrectly link the house to the row of four and would suggest a later date of construction than may be appropriate. Therefore, Staff believes the cornice should be omitted altogether or a simple fascia board be used instead.

Chimney

The center chimney is a characteristic of early residential construction in Alexandria. Therefore, Staff believes the chimney should be repaired and retained on the exterior, even if it is removed on the interior. Although the interior does not fall under the Board's purview, Staff notes that an original mantel remains in the front room on the first floor and encourages the applicant to retain this element in place or relocated to another wall as an item of architectural interest.

Roof

The standing seam roof should be a true standing seam rather than pre-fabricated.

Front door

A four panel door is shown on the drawing. This is a Victorian door type which is likely to be seen in conjunction with four over four or two over two windows. As the windows at the front of the house are to be six over six and the house is thought to be related more to Federal period than Victorian period, the front door should be a six panel door.

Windows

The front windows, which are readily accessible as the front of the house is at the sidewalk and the windows are at eye level, should have true divided lights rather than simulated divided lights. The *Design Guidelines* recommend the use of true divided light windows and limit the use of simulated divided light windows to elevations that have minimal visibility (Windows - Page 2).

If the Board should approve simulated divided light windows for the front of the house, Staff recommends that the windows have muntins no greater than 7/8" wide and that Staff approve the window selection before installation. The specification sheet the applicant provided indicates that the muntins will be 1" wide. Windows with muntins this wide have a clunky and inauthentic appearance.

Lastly, Staff recommends that windows in the two story cinder block section just beyond the historic main block be four over four rather than six over six, to differentiate this modern addition from historic building.

Transom

It is not entirely clear from the materials submitted whether the transom over the front door is to be replaced. If it is, Staff recommends that it be replaced with a three light transom, which would be more compatible with the period of the building and configuration of the replacement

front windows.

Fiber cement siding

The Board has adopted the following policy with respect to fiber cement siding (Hardiboard):

1. That fiber cement siding not be installed on an historic structure;
2. That historic materials should not be removed to install fiber cement siding;
3. That fiber cement siding replace other artificial or composite siding;
4. That the nails not show in the installation of the siding; and,
5. That smooth siding be installed.
6. That BAR Staff may administratively approve the installation of fiber cement siding on *non-historic* buildings (those constructed in 1975 or later).

As the areas where the fiber cement siding is to be used are non historic, Staff has no objection to its use, but notes that item #s 4 and 5 should be included as conditions of the approval. In addition, Staff recommends that the fiber cement be installed on the west elevation of the rear addition where it projects beyond 815 Oronoco Street.

Fence

If replaced, the rear fence must be located entirely on the subject property. In addition, Staff notes that the *Design Guidelines* call for wood fences to be painted or stained (Fences - Page 3).

HVAC units

The HVAC units should be located on the ground towards the rear of the east elevation. If located anywhere else, Staff must approve the new location.

Lastly, Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archeology and recommends that they be included in the conditions.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the addition and alterations with the following conditions:

- 1) The beaded lap siding on the front of the house should be retained if at all possible and, if not, Staff must agree to the need for replacement and the selection of the replacement siding;
- 2) The cornice should be omitted altogether or a simple fascia board be used instead;
- 3) The chimney at the center of the gable roof should be repaired and retained on the exterior;
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- 9) If the transom over the front door is to be replaced, it should have three lights;

- 10) The fiber cement siding should be smooth, not wood grained, and must be installed so that the nails do not show;
- 11) Fiber cement siding should be installed on the west elevation of the rear addition where it projects beyond 815 Oronoco Street;
- 12) If replaced, the rear fence must be located entirely on the subject property and should be painted or stained; and,
- 13) The HVAC units should be located on the ground towards the rear of the east elevation.
- 14) 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.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 All exterior walls within 5 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. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance.
- 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 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 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-7 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-8 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:

“No comment.”

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 Historical maps indicate that a house was present on this lot by 1877. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources which could provide insight into residential life in 19th-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.