

Docket Item #9
BAR CASE# 2005-0049

BAR Meeting
April 27, 2005

ISSUE: Addition and alterations
APPLICANT: Tracey & Rita Winbourne
LOCATION: 126 North Patrick Street
ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

To conclude, Staff recommends:

1. That the second story addition above the flounder be deferred for restudy; and,
2. That the drawings and specification sheets be revised to be consistent with one another and to accurately reflect what is being proposed with particular attention to the following:
 - That the existing exterior doors be retained or, if they must be replaced, be replaced with appropriate wood doors;
 - That the transom over the front door be retained;
 - That the applicant investigate relocating the vents and utilities towards the rear of the house;
 - That the applicant provide specification sheets for the vents and paint the vents to match the wall;
 - That the brick in the second story addition match that of the existing and that it be painted to match the rest of the house; and,
 - That a specification sheet or detail drawing be provided for an appropriate deck railing.

NOTE: Docket item #8 must be approved before this docket item may be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to make a number of alterations to the exterior of the house and to add to the second floor of the rear flounder section.

Alterations

Windows - All of the existing windows, which are wood, double hung windows with true divided lights, will be replaced. These windows may date to 1937, when a permit was issued to replace windows throughout the house, rather than to the mid-19th century when the house was constructed. The drawings indicate that the new windows will be Pella Proline windows, which are aluminum clad windows with simulated divided lights. However, the contractor maintains that the windows will be Kolbe & Kolbe wood windows with true divided lights with a 7/8" profile and has submitted a cut sheet for these windows. The Kolbe & Kolbe windows will closely match the existing windows and correspond to the five front replacement windows that were approved administratively by Staff on August 20, 2004. The drawings indicate that the new windows will have the same configuration as the existing, except on the second story sunporch where the two over two windows will be replaced with six over six windows.

There currently are wood louvered shutters located at the third story windows. These will be removed. The drawings do not show any shutters on the renovated building.

Doors - While the drawings do not refer to replacement doors, the applicant has provided a specification sheet indicating that the front door, powder room door (facing front or east on the one story brick infill section) and the kitchen door (located in the north elevation of the flounder section) will be replaced. According to the specification sheets, the proposed replacement doors

are fiberglass doors manufactured by Pella. The existing front door is a wood five panel door that probably dates to the latter part of the 19th century. The proposed replacement door is a four panel door. The existing powder room door is an unusually narrow half-glazed wood door with two panels below. The proposed replacement door is also a half glazed door with two panels below. The existing kitchen door is a half-glazed wood door with two panels below. The replacement door will have two lights over two panels. In addition, while the drawings do not indicate that a new transom is to be installed, specification sheets were provided with a rectangular wood and rectangular aluminum clad transom indicated. The only transom shown on the drawings is that over the front door. The existing front door transom appears to be original and consists of a rectangle divided into seven lights by two intersecting curves.

The drawings also appear to show conflicting information about a door at the rear (west side) of the one story infill section. The existing/demo rear elevation drawing appears to show the door removed. However the proposed rear elevation drawing shows the same door in place and the plans appear to show a window in this location. According to the contractor, both doors on the brick infill section will be retained in place but will be inoperable, with wallboard behind them on the interior.

Roof - The existing metal roof is to be retained except on the rear flounder section which is to be raised.

Shed - As previously discussed, the existing concrete block shed at the rear of the house will be shortened and a new west wall will be constructed 2' in from the present wall. An HVAC unit will be located at grade at the rear of the shortened shed. The HVAC unit will be screened by the existing fencing.

Vents and utilities- The drawings appear to show five new vents penetrating the north wall of the main block and one the the west wall of the one story brick infill section. A number of these will be visible from the public right of way. No information was given to illustrate these vents. The electric meter and various electric and cable connections are located on the north wall of the main block. They are fully visible from the street. Staff previously encouraged the applicant to investigate whether these could be moved further back on the house. However, no further information was provided or change in location indicated with regard to this matter.

Addition

The addition will be located on top of the existing one and a half story brick flounder at the rear of the house. The addition will raise the flounder to a full two stories and change the roof slope from south to north to east to west. The new roof slope over the raised section will then be in line with the back slope of the gable over the main block and will appear as a continuation of that slope. The new roof will be clad in standing seam metal to match the existing metal roof. The walls of the addition will be of brick. Staff assumes the new brick will match the existing and that the new addition will be painted to match the rest of the house. The north side of the addition will have two small 6 light windows to match those below. The windows will be Kolbe & Kolbe wood windows with true divided lights with a 7/8" profile. The rear (west) elevation

of the addition will be raised to a full two stories and will have a fully glazed door to the right and a small six light window, matching those on the north side, to the left. The specification sheet provided for the door shows a fiberglass door with “grilles between the glass.” This is a matter of some confusion as Staff had understood from the applicant that the doors were to be wood and drawings call for a “full-lite” door. The door will lead to a new wood deck with metal railing.

According to the drawings, the deck railing will have a “metal rod baluster”. The applicant provided specification sheets showing several such balusters. It is not clear whether one of these has been selected. The deck will be supported on 6 x 6 wood posts and will extend over an existing one story concrete block storage shed that abuts the rear of the house. The storage shed will be shortened by approximately 2' from its current length to allow for the installation of a new HVAC condenser unit on a pad within the current footprint of the shed. The reason for this is that the open space for the property is currently less than that required and must not be reduced any further.

The front (east) and north elevations of the house are visible from Patrick Street. The north and portions of the rear (west) elevations are also visible from Cameron Street in views through the adjacent parking lot. A 6' high wood fence partially blocks views to the lower level of the house at the back.

II. HISTORY:

As discussed in docket item #8, the two and a half story, two bay wide brick house was constructed as a pair with 124 North Patrick Street between 1847 and 1858. The original massing of the house at 126 North Patrick Street can still be seen although several later additions partially obscure it. The rear flounder is thought to date to the original period of construction. The matching house at 124 North Patrick Street had an extensive brick addition added to the rear in 1975.

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 acceptable. However, Staff does have a number of specific concerns:

Windows - There are discrepancies between the specification sheets, the drawings and the information provided to Staff by the contractor about what is proposed. Staff does not recommend approval of the Pella Proline windows as shown on the drawings as they are aluminum clad and have simulated divided lights. The *Design Guidelines* discourage aluminum clad windows and suggest that simulated divided light windows are appropriate only where there is minimal visibility from a public way (Windows - Page 2). According to the contractor, the windows will be Kolbe & Kolbe wood, true divided light with windows with 7/8" muntins. If this is so, the notes on the drawings should be changed. Staff believes the proposed Kolbe & Kolbe windows are appropriate. As mentioned above, Staff already administratively approved the replacement of the front windows with wood, true divided light windows. Staff believes the

existing windows may date to the 1937, when a building permit was obtained to change out the windows and some doors, and thus their removal does not appear to represent a loss of 19th century fabric. In addition, in almost all cases the proposed windows will match the existing. Staff would prefer that the replacement windows for the sunroom were two over two, as they are currently, rather than six over six, as proposed. The two over two windows reflect the later date of the sunroom addition. However, Staff does not object to the proposed six over six windows.

Doors - There are discrepancies between the specification sheets, the drawings and the information provided to Staff by the contractor about what is proposed. To the extent that it is possible, Staff would prefer that all the existing doors be retained. If replaced, the doors should be replaced with wood doors that replicate the existing as closely as possible. Staff does not recommend approval of the proposed fiberglass doors. The contractor has assured the Staff that the doors will be wood and has indicated that some of the doors that are marked on the specification sheet as to be replaced will not be replaced. The drawings should be carefully revised to accurately show which doors will be replaced and the correct specification sheets should be provided for those that will. Any replacement doors should be wood.

The existing front door transom should be retained.

Vents and utilities - Staff again requests that the applicant investigate whether any of the utilities could be relocated to a less visible location. Staff finds the addition of a number of new vents on this highly visible wall to be unfortunate. The vents should be as small and unobtrusive as possible and should be painted to match the wall. Staff recommends that the applicant provide specification sheets for the vents.

Addition - Staff finds the alteration of the flounder at the rear of the house unfortunate. As explained above, Staff believes the flounder to be original to the mid-19th century construction date of the house. It is a traditional form for a "back building" or service wing in Alexandria. Its 1 ½ story height visually communicates its service function and early period of construction. However, Staff understands that at the same time the 1 ½ story height makes the second level of the flounder virtually unusable by today's standards and is therefore willing to accept the need for an addition to raise its height to a fully functional two stories.

On the other hand, Staff wonders if the design of the new raised rear section could be revised to preserve more of the form and feeling of the present flounder wing. Staff would prefer that the south to north slope of the roof be retained in the addition. This would preserve the flounder form and perpetuate the present interesting variation in rooflines, rather than unifying the front and back under one sweeping roof slope as is proposed. In addition, Staff is not convinced that the proposed addition of two small windows above the existing loft level windows is the best solution to the problem of how to light the new second story space. Even though it means removing the existing, presumably historic, windows, Staff would prefer to see two larger windows placed in a more standard location.

Staff requests that the applicant clearly indicate what the deck railing will look like. The various railing alternatives submitted appear to be rather suburban in character. Staff previously

recommended to the applicant that the railing have a traditional appearance. There was no response to this recommendation.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

To conclude, Staff recommends:

1. That the second story addition above the flounder be deferred for restudy; and,
2. That the drawings and specification sheets be revised to be consistent with one another and to accurately reflect what is being proposed with particular attention to the following:
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CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 There are several existing and proposed openings on the North side of the vacant property that appear to be within 5 feet of the interior lot line. The renovation of the structure shall comply with C-1 below.
- 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 The size of the proposed addition has not been provided. A soils report may be required based upon the size of the addition and 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:

“No comment.”