

Docket Item #6
BAR CASE# 2005-00106

BAR Meeting
May 25, 2005

ISSUE: Replacement windows

APPLICANT: Rosemary Feit Covey

LOCATION: 118 North Patrick Street

ZONE: CD/Commercial

****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 for replacement windows with the following conditions:

- 1) That the existing front windows be repaired and retained;
- 2) That the other windows be replaced with wood simulated divided light windows; and,
- 3) That the window in the rear (west) elevation on the second story of the main block be replaced with a six-over-six window.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace sixteen existing windows. The existing windows are wood windows with true divided lights. For the most part, the existing windows have a six-over-six configuration. The exceptions appear to be as follows:

- The three basement windows, which are not easily viewed, but appear to be awning and/or casement windows.
- The window in the rear (west) elevation on the second story of the main block which is currently six-over-one. This window undoubtedly was a six-over-six originally and had the bottom sash replaced at some point in the 20th century.
- The long window at the end of the north side elevation which is certainly not original and appears to be composed of two fixed lights.
- The small window in the first story of the rear elevation which is a single fixed light.

The new wood windows will replicate the existing configurations with the exception that the replacement for the six-over-one window will be six-over-six, according to a note on the elevation drawings. The new windows will have simulated divided lights with 7/8" wide muntins. The exterior muntin will be wood and there will be a spacer bar between the glass.

All elevations of the house are visible from Patrick Street and from the adjacent City-owned parking lot. A six foot high fence on the north and west (rear) sides of the property limits views in to the lower level of the house along the north side and rear. The front of the house abuts the public sidewalk.

II. HISTORY:

According to Ethelyn Cox's Historic Alexandria, Virginia: Street by Street, the paired houses at 116 and 118 North Patrick Street were built by Charles Scott between 1830 and 1832. The two story, three bay wide gable roofed houses are fine examples of federal townhouses of the type constructed for middle class residents and they retain a high degree of integrity. In 1987, the Board reviewed a proposed addition for 118 North Patrick Street but it was deferred for restudy and apparently never constructed (BAR Case #2005-0049, 4/27/2005).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations comply with the zoning ordinance regulations.

Staff prefers to see the retention of historic windows whenever possible. Preservation of original material is particularly desirable in an early 19th century building such as this. Staff believes the front windows at 118 North Patrick Street may be original. (A similar visual assessment could not be made of the other windows as they were inaccessible and located at a greater distance from the public right-of-way.) According to the *Design Guidelines*, “a central tenet of the philosophy of historic preservation is that original historic materials should be retained and repaired rather than replaced” and “it is the general policy of the Boards not to approve wholesale replacement of historic windows” (Windows - Page 2).

With respect to the replacement windows, the *Guidelines* state that single glazed true divided light wood window are the preferred window type and that simulated divided light windows are appropriate only in limited circumstances: “for the rear elevation of a structure which has minimal visibility from a public way” (Windows - Page 2). The proposed simulated divided light windows have the narrowest muntin bars available (7/8"), but even so will not be able to replicate the delicate appearance of the existing 19th century windows. Therefore, Staff recommends that the five existing front windows be repaired and retained. If desired, the applicant may install either interior or exterior storm windows. (Storm windows do not require BAR approval.)

The other windows on the side and rear of the house are considerably less visually accessible and thus Staff is willing to recommend that they be replaced with wood simulated divided light windows as proposed. Staff believes the long window at the end of the north elevation and the single fixed light window in the rear wall are not original windows and would prefer that the replacement windows not replicate these, but rather be changed to a configuration more appropriate to the period and style of the house. However, as these windows are fairly well obscured by the fence, Staff will not object to the proposed replacement configurations. On the other hand, the more visible window in the rear (west) elevation on the second story of the main block which is currently six-over-one should certainly have a six-over-six replacement window, returning it to its original configuration. The elevation drawings provided by the applicant show this correction but the plans do not.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

- 1) That the existing front windows be repaired and retained;
- 2) That the other windows be replaced with wood simulated divided light windows; and,
- 3) That the window in the rear (west) elevation on the second story of the main block be replaced with a six-over-six window.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

No comment.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.