

Docket Item #3
BAR CASE #2005-00167

BAR Meeting
July 27, 2005

ISSUE: Replacement windows

APPLICANT: Erik Petersen & Melissa Zimmerman

LOCATION: 622 North Columbus 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 as submitted.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for replacement windows at 622 North Columbus Street. The existing original multi-light steel casement windows are proposed to be replaced with new aluminum clad wood windows. The existing windows consist of combinations of fixed and casement sections.

All of the windows will be one-over-one or single lights with the exception of the two first story windows on the front elevation. These existing three light casements with a fixed single light transom above will be replaced with two-over-two double hung windows with 7/8" simulated divided lights.

II. HISTORY:

The subject property at 622 North Columbus Street is located in the center of a row of seven, two story, brick-faced concrete block houses designed by W. H. Bacon Jr. in 1940 (permit #2562, 6/24/40).

There are no records of previous BAR approvals for this property.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed replacement windows comply with zoning ordinance regulations.

As mentioned above, the subject property is the middle unit in a row of seven houses. The windows in the other six houses have previously been replaced with one-over-one vinyl windows. Staff was unable to locate any approvals for these windows. As originally designed, the simple buildings were visually unified in their use of multi-light steel casement windows.

A central tenet of the philosophy of historic preservation is that the original historic materials should be retained and repaired rather than replaced. In the case of this row of houses on North Columbus Street, the steel casement windows are a primary character-defining element of the facade. The proposed windows will differ from the original in terms of material, operation and configuration.

On the other hand, the Board has previously approved the replacement of steel casement windows in similar houses, acknowledging that repair of these windows is difficult and expensive. Likewise, it is understood that replacement in-kind with steel windows would be prohibitively expensive. The Board has expressed a preference for aluminum clad wood windows to replace steel windows as the material would be metal, like the steel originals. Staff has also supported the use of aluminum clad windows in these cases with the condition that the windows match the existing configuration as closely as possible.

In this case, the proposed windows, although different in configuration from the originals, will return some of the uniformity that had once characterized the buildings. While Staff would

prefer to see replacement casement windows matching the original configurations, Staff can support the windows as proposed.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

No comments.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.