

Docket Item #5
BAR CASE #2006-0201

BAR Meeting
September 27, 2006

ISSUE: Alterations

APPLICANT: ARHA by Connie Lennox

LOCATION: 1424 Princess Street

ZONE: RB/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

- 1) That the applicant obtain Staff approval for the new exterior light fixture prior to approval of the building permit; and,
- 2) That the exterior light fixture must be installed without adding any electrical conduit to the exterior of the building.

****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.

(Insert sketch here)

ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new handicapped accessible entrance at the existing ground level apartment at the Jefferson Village Complex, 1424 Princess Street, apartment #T-1. The area to be altered faces North West Street (the east end of Building #5). The proposed new door will be a six panel metal door in a metal frame. A new concrete walkway will lead to the door. There will be 1' high concrete retaining walls along the walkway immediately in front of the door. There will be a single light fixture mounted above the new door.

HISTORY:

The Jefferson Village complex was built in 1965 as public housing by the Alexandria Housing and Redevelopment Authority (AHRA). It stands on property once occupied by the Jefferson School. Designed by local architect, Victor Smolen, the complex contains 34 townhouse units and one 35-unit apartment building. The complex was designed in a spare modern style with predominantly rectilinear forms. The single exception to this vocabulary is the simple barrel-arched door openings on the townhouse units. On February 23, 2000, the Board approved replacement of the windows, sliding doors, entrance doors and site and entry lighting at Jefferson Village (BAR Case #2000-0014).

ANALYSIS:

The proposed door opening complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

The *Design Guidelines* recommend against metal doors in the historic district, except “in certain limited circumstances for 20th century retail, commercial and industrial buildings.” (Doors - Page 3). While not specifically listed in these exceptions, Staff believes metal doors are acceptable in this case, for a late 20th century public housing complex. All other doors on the project metal. The Board approved metal doors and windows in 2000. The proposed location of the new door will balance that of an existing door on this facade.

Staff notes that no information was provided for the proposed light fixture over the door and recommends that the fixture be approved by Staff prior to issuance of the building permit. In addition, Staff notes that in recent ARHA renovation projects, including at Jefferson Village, electrical conduit has been strung across the exterior of buildings. The light should be installed so that there is no visible conduit.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

- 1) That the applicant obtain Staff approval for the new exterior light fixture prior to approval of the building permit; and,
- 2) That the exterior light fixture must be installed without adding any electrical conduit to the

exterior of the building.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-2 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 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-4 Required exit shall be accessible for persons with disabilities.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

Although this request appears provisionally appropriate, it does not include all of the information on the project on the project (i.e. legend which explains numbered elements of the project and right side of sheet explaining elevation of door).