

Docket Item # 4
BAR CASE # 2006-0266

BAR Meeting
January 24, 2007

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Ann O. Kavaljian by Revell Michael
LOCATION: 527 North Alfred Street
ZONE: RB/Residential

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

1. That the applicant work with staff for an administrative approval of a replacement fence along the rear property line;
2. That the applicant work with staff to determine selection of appropriate external light fixtures, to be reviewed and approved by staff; and,
3. That once the location of the HVAC unit is determined, that the applicant work with staff to determine whether the unit's location, screening, or a waiver of screening, would need Board approval.

BOARD ACTION, DECEMBER 13, 2006: On a motion by Ms. Sample, seconded by Ms. Kelley, the Board voted to defer the application for restudy. The vote was 6-0.

REASON: The Board agreed with the staff analysis that there were too many unresolved design issues and discrepancies with the submitted application materials to issue an approval for the alterations. Among the issues of concern by the Board were the brick siding, specifically the extension of the existing brick façade to the ground and continuity of appearance between older and new replacement brick, the use of Hardiplank as a replacement siding on the original house, HVAC condenser location, and the repair of the stoop.

SPEAKERS: Revell Michael, architect, spoke in support

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, DECEMBER 13, 2006: Staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy.

****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)

Update: Since the December 13, 2006 hearing, the applicant has made revisions to the proposed alterations that address concerns expressed by staff in the prior report and the Board at the hearing. The applicant will not pursue constructing a rear addition due to zoning and FAR issues.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the existing two story frame rowhouse at 527 North Alfred Street. The front (west) façade will remain as it is, with the brick siding and the wood siding at the base of the bay window. The applicant will not paint the front elevation as previously proposed. All new windows on the front will be two-over-two, double-glazed, double-hung wood windows with true-divided lights by Lincoln. The existing front door will be replaced with a four-panel wood door, which is appropriate for the age of the house. A carriage style light fixture will be installed above the existing transom over the front door. The applicant is still researching the exact fixture and has agreed to discuss with staff for final selection. The new front steps will be cast stone.

On the rear (east) elevation. The applicant proposes to replace the existing door and window on the first story and large window opening on the second story of the ell with a pair of French doors in each story. The new doors will be wood and will not have divided lights. The first story door will have a canister light above it and the second story door will have simple steel railing which will project 4" from the building face. The new windows on the rear will be one-over-one double-hung wood windows. The existing beaded masonite siding on the rear ell (east and north sides) is proposed to be replaced with beaded German drop siding in an appropriate width and dimensions. A new aluminum gutter will be installed at the back roofline with two new downspouts on either side.

The applicant is still exploring the location of new HVAC units. The applicant would prefer to locate them on the ground, in the area between the ell and the property line, rather than on the roof.

The applicant is proposing to replace the existing fencing with a historically appropriate board-one-board wood fence, along the back. Staff may approve this administratively.

The house is visible from North Alfred Street and the north-south public alley off of Pendleton Street.

II. HISTORY:

The two story frame house at 527 North Alfred Street is one of a row of 11 houses (509 through 529 North Alfred Street) which were constructed prior to 1902 and may date to the last decade of the 19th century. Staff was unable to locate any records for BAR review of prior cases at 527 North Alfred Street.

The Board approved the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate on December 13, 2006 (BAR Case # 2006-0265).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations comply with the zoning ordinance requirements.

Staff commends the owner for renovating this house, located in a significant row in the Parker Gray District and for listening and responding to the concerns of the Board and staff from the prior meeting. The applicant and her architect met with staff to discuss the issues and work to resolve them for this application.

As stated in the prior staff report, the majority of the houses in the row are clad in some version of wood siding similar to the original. It is hoped that in the future, the few clad in non-original materials, will be restored to their original condition. Of course, staff would prefer that the wood siding on the front of 527 North Alfred Street be restored now, but at this time the applicant would prefer to maintain the present situation.

While the existing windows appear to be historic, these windows are in very poor condition, and staff does not object to their replacement since the applicant is willing to replace them with appropriate windows per the Design Guidelines. Staff does not object to the alteration of the openings on the rear (east) wall of the rear ell as the current fenestration pattern and window sash and door on the rear of the ell do not appear to be original.

Staff does not object to the replacement of the masonite siding at the back of the house (north and east sides). It is not original and the wide, beaded appearance is inappropriate for this Victorian house. The applicant has agreed to replace this siding with wood German drop siding, in an appropriate dimension.

In regards to the HVAC unit, staff believes that a ground level location would be most appropriate if allowed by zoning and open space requirements, as it would not appear to be visible from a public right-of-way due to fencing. If the unit has to be placed on the roof and is visible, staff would recommend that this issue come back to the Board for review, particularly if a waiver of screening would be sought.

Staff would recommend that the applicant work with staff for selection and approval of light fixtures.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant work with staff for an administrative approval of a replacement fence along the rear property line;
2. That the applicant work with staff to determine selection of an appropriate external light fixtures, to be reviewed and approved by staff; and,

3. That once the location of the HVAC unit is determined, that the applicant work with staff to determine whether the unit's location, screening, or a waiver of screening, would need Board approval.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-2 Additions and alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit (USBC 108.1). Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application (USBC 109.1).
- C-3 A Construction permit will be required for the proposed project.
- C-4 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

Historic Alexandria:

No comments.