

Docket Item # 4
BAR CASE # 2007-0043

BAR Meeting
March 28, 2007

ISSUE: Awning
APPLICANT: C. Cameron Purpose & Shaun Shephard
LOCATION: 515 North Alfred Street
ZONE: RB/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, MARCH 28, 2007: Staff recommends approval of a new shed-style awning, with the following conditions:

- 1) That the applicants revise the size of the awning so that it does not project past the bay window on North Alfred Street,
- 2) That the width and height of the awning be reduced to a size that is in scale with the front façade,
- 3) That the applicants submit revised drawing of a reduced sized shed-style awning to staff for approval prior to filing for a building permit, and
- 4) That the applicants file for a building permit prior to installation as required.

BOARD ACTION, NOVEMBER 29, 2006: On a motion by Ms. Kelley, seconded by Mr. Lloyd, the Board denied the application for after-the-fact approval of an awning with the condition that the awning be removed by the end of the year. The vote was 6-0.

REASON: The Board agreed with the staff analysis and believed that while the awning was attractive it was more appropriate for a commercial building and not in keeping with the Design Guidelines.

SPEAKERS: Casey Purpos, applicant, spoke in support
Deborah Cressman, 519 N. Alfred Street, spoke in opposition.
Jeff Franco, 519 North Alfred Street, spoke in opposition

****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)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a new awning over the front door of 515 North Alfred Street.

The proposed awning is a shed-style awning with a 1"x1" aluminum metal framing. The awning will be a canvas material in a black color, with the street number, 515, displayed on the 1' drop in white. The awning will project 4' from the face of the building, and will be 3'6" wide, 2' tall with a 1' drop. The awning frame will be attached to the face of the building using z-brackets. The existing awning shown in the submitted photographs and denied by the Board must be removed prior the Board hearing.

II. HISTORY:

The two story frame house at 515 North Alfred Street is one of a row of 11 houses (509 through 529 North Alfred Street) which were constructed prior to 1902, the first year the area was included in Sanborn mapping, and may date to the last decade of the 19th century. Although one of the houses on the south end of the row (511 North Alfred Street) was no longer extant by 1907, the row represents one of the largest single developments of the Victorian period in the Parker-Gray District.

The Board approved an after-the-fact garden shed on June 22, 2005 (BAR Case #2005-0110).

The Board denied an after-the-approval of an installed bull nose shaped awing on December 13, 2006 (BAR Case # 2006-0227). The applicant appealed the Board's decision to the City Council, and the case was docketed to be heard by the Council on January 20, 2007. The applicants requested a deferral due to illness then subsequently withdrew the appeal on February 21, 2007 and filed the current application for a replacement awning.

III. ANALYSIS:

Canopy complies with zoning ordinance requirements. Ordinance #3864 permits awnings to project up to 4.00 feet from the front building over the public right-of-way and must be 8.00 feet above the sidewalk. Proposed awning projects no more than 4.0 into public right-of-way and must be raised to comply with the 8.00 height clearance above the right of-way.

According to the Design Guidelines, "awnings should be appropriate and sympathetic to the historical style of the building to which they are attached. Shed or sloped awnings are more appropriate than other awning forms in the historic district. Awnings should not overwhelm or obscure the architecture and decorative features of historic buildings. Rigid frame bull nose awnings are only appropriate for buildings dating from the late 20th-century. "

The new awning is more appropriate in terms of style for this historic house on North Alfred Street. However, staff is still concerned that the size of the proposed awning is overwhelming to the appearance of the front façade, especially since if this awning is approved, it will be only one in this row of houses. As proposed, the new awning would project 4' from the face of the building. In staff's opinion, a new awning should not project past the character-defining feature of the bayed window. A 4' projection would project past the bay window, and introduce a visual disruption that is not recommended and impacts the character of the block. In addition, staff is

concerned that the width of 4' could be problematic. Most doors are between 36" and 42" in width. The awning should only be as wide as necessary for installation purposes. The height of the proposed awning is also a concern and should be reduced.

Staff had requested the applicant to meet prior to submitting the new awning application to ensure that what was being proposed was appropriate. While staff still maintains that a shed-style awning could be installed on the property, the scale and size of the awning must be appropriate so as not to detract from the appearance of the house or appear disruptive to the row.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of a new shed-style awning, with the following conditions:

- 1) That the applicants revise the size of the awning so that it does not project past the bay window on North Alfred Street,
- 2) That the width and height of the awning be reduced to a size that is in scale with the front façade,
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- 4) That the applicants file for a building permit prior to installation as required.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Alterations to the existing structures 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 Awnings must comply with all applicable requirements of USBC 3105.3 and 3202.3.1 Retractable and fixed awnings must have a minimum 7 foot clearance from a sidewalk to the lowest part of the framework or any fixed portion of any retractable awning is required. Retractable awnings must be securely fastened to the building and cannot extend closer than 24 inches in from the curb line (USBC 3202.3.1).
- C-4 A construction permit will be required for the proposed project.
- C-5 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

Historic Alexandria:

Awning style is more appropriate and proportional that previous proposal.