

Docket Item # 4
BAR CASE # 2007-0128

BAR Meeting
July 25, 2007

ISSUE: Alterations

APPLICANT: Bradham Auto Electric Service, Inc. by Prescott, Inc.

LOCATION: 220 North Henry Street

ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: 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)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for resurfacing the south (rear) elevation of the commercial building at 220 North Henry Street to create an entirely false façade using EIFS. This new façade will include: a cornice running the length of the entire building, faux pilasters creating separation for imagined bays, archways with keystones all executed in an EIFS (synthetic stucco) system.

The existing windows are proposed to remain in their current configuration.

The overall color will be a brick red color with trim elements in a tan color.

The applicant has supplied actual samples of the EIFS material to be used for color and texture. These will be made available to members at the public hearing.

II. HISTORY:

220 North Henry Street is a one story masonry building that houses an automobile repair facility. It was constructed in 1958 and 1960.

III. ANALYSIS:

Proposed resurfacing complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

The resurfacing is proposed to provide a more genteel view of the neighborhood for the new upscale condominium owners at the Prescott. The new condominium unit owners, in the view of the developers of the project, would likely prefer not to view remnants of the automobile service legacy of the Route 1 corridor and prefer a view of a somewhat clearer environment.

The rear of the Bradhams building is a simple unadorned cinder block elevation that has a robust simplicity. In the opinion of staff, the proposal will fundamentally alter the visual character of the building.

Staff does not understand the necessity of altering the visual composition of the existing building to the extent proposed and believes that the simple utilitarian elevation should be maintained. In the opinion of staff, the new imagined Classicism for the rear elevation as proposed is inappropriate for this mid-20th century automotive structure. Further, staff notes that EIFS is a late 20th century synthetic substitute for stucco and as such is generally not appropriate in the historic districts.

For all of these reasons, staff can find no justification for altering the visual character of the existing building to the extent proposed. Staff believes that a simpler design approach that maintains the existing character of the building should be developed. Therefore, staff recommends deferral of the application for restudy.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends deferral of the application.

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 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).

Historic Alexandria:

No comments were received.