

Docket Item # 6
BAR CASE # 2007-0132

BAR Meeting
July 25, 2007

ISSUE: After-the-fact Alterations

APPLICANT: Elisabeth Brocking

LOCATION: 405 North Fayette Street

ZONE: RB/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. That the existing vinyl windows be removed and replaced with either wood or aluminum clad windows;
2. That the windows be one-over-one configuration;
3. That the bay window on the front façade be removed and paired windows matching the above be reinstalled; and
4. That the replacement windows be completed within 6 months of approval.

****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 after-the-fact alterations to 405 North Fayette Street, consisting of window replacement and the installation of a bay window on the front elevation. The applicant has replaced all the windows of the property with one-over-one vinyl clad windows manufactured by Thermal Industries.

In addition, a paired set of windows on the first floor, to the left of the entrance, has been altered to a bay window. The installed bay window is 75” wide and 54” tall, and extends 18” from the face of the building. According to the applicant, no structural changes were made to the wall of the house for installation of the bay window.

II. HISTORY:

The three, attached, two story, brick houses at 401, 403 and 405 North Fayette Street were constructed circa 1961 by F. H. Broyhill Construction Co. Inc. The plans for the houses show a higher level of architectural detailing than was apparently constructed. The center unit, 403 North Fayette Street, was to have had a higher cornice. All three units were to have had six over six windows, paneled shutters and molded cornices at the roof line. As built, the houses are largely devoid of architectural embellishment. Today, most of the windows in the three houses appear to have horizontally aligned two-over-two wood sash with aluminum storm windows.

Staff did not locate any prior Board approvals for 405 North Fayette Street. However, the Board did approval replacement windows for 403 North Fayette Street on March 23, 2005 (BAR Case# 2005-0045). The Board’s approval for replacement windows included the following conditions:

1. The windows are to be one-over-one configuration;
2. The windows may be either wood or aluminum clad wood windows;
3. Vinyl windows are not approved; and,
4. There is to be no wrapping of trim.

III. ANALYSIS:

Section 7-202(A)(3) of the Zoning Ordinance states that bay windows, projecting 20 inches or less are permitted structures an any required yard. Subject bay window projects 18 inches into front yard and complies with Zoning Ordinance requirements.

According to the Design Guidelines, “windows are a principal character-defining feature of a building and serve both functional and aesthetic purposes...New and replacement windows should be appropriate to the historic period of the architectural style of the building...Preferred window types: Single glazed true-divided light wood windows with interior storm sash...Discouraged window types: plastic, vinyl, and metal window...plastic, vinyl and metal clad windows.”

It is extremely unfortunate that the applicant replaced windows and installed a bay window on the façade prior to receiving guidance and input from staff and the Board. Staff cannot support the windows as replaced since vinyl windows are clearly not recommended for replacement in the local historic districts (*Design Guidelines*, Windows -page 2). The Board has consistently upheld this guideline. In addition, staff does not support the alteration of the window on the façade to a bay configuration. In that this property is the end unit of a row of three, the new bay

element changes the character of the row by introducing a design element that disrupts the minimalist aesthetic of the row.

Therefore, staff recommends that the vinyl windows be replaced with either a wood or aluminium clad, double-hung window, in a one-over-one configuration. As the horizontally aligned two-over-two windows had not been part of the original design concept and are unlikely to be available today, staff does not believe it is necessary to replicate this configuration.

Furthermore, staff would recommend that the bay window be removed and paired windows be reinstalled, matching the other recommended replacement window type and material.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. That the existing vinyl windows be removed and replaced with either wood or aluminum clad windows;
2. That the windows be one-over-one configuration;
3. That the bay window on the front façade be removed and paired windows matching the above be reinstalled; and
4. That the replacement windows be completed within 6 months of 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 received.