

Docket Item # 4
BAR CASE # 2008-0201

BAR Meeting
November 19, 2008

ISSUE: New mixed-use building
APPLICANT: Harrison Holdings LLC (John Marino)
LOCATION: 1123 Queen Street
ZONE: CL/Commercial Low

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

1. That the nails not show in the installation of the smooth Hardiplank siding;
2. That a low or flat profile glass skylight be installed instead of the proposed acrylic dome skylight;
3. Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds; and,
4. The above statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including sheeting and shoring and grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

****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.



BAR CASE #2008-0201

11/19/2008



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new mixed use building on a vacant lot at 1123 Queen Street. The building will have commercial uses on the first floor and a residential apartment on the second floor.

The new building will be set back approximately 8' from the front property line, the same set back as the adjacent house to the east at 1119 ½ Queen Street. The lot to the west is a one story brick commercial building formerly used as a restaurant and located on the front property line. The rear of the house will be set back approximately 20' from the north property line. The lot itself has street frontage only on Queen Street; it is not served by an alley or court and the building will not have on-site parking. The building will measure 14'4" wide by 42' deep, and approximately 19' high as measured to the cornice.

Front (south) Elevation – The front elevation of the building will be two bays wide with a front mansard roof and a sloping rubber membrane roof behind. The first floor will have a full light wood door with a two-light transom and a projecting bay window. The bay window will project almost 2' from the plane of the building and will have a wood cornice and two wood panels beneath. The glass on the front of the bay will be separated by a 1 1/8" wood muntin bar. The two Kolbe and Kolbe wood windows on the second floor will have a two-over-two light pattern, and will be double insulated with true divided lights and 1 1/8" muntins. This muntin width matches both the bay window and the historic windows on the adjacent house at 1119 ½ Queen Street. The building cornice will have dentils and three brackets, not unlike the Italianate house next door, and will be constructed of wood and Fypon. The house will be clad with smooth Hardiplank siding in a Navajo beige color (the applicant has provided a color sample which will be available at the hearing). The standing seam metal mansard roof will be black and the trim throughout will be white. The front door will be stained. The house will sit on a concrete foundation and will have grass in the front, with the exception of the concrete walk leading to the building entrance. The trim on the front of the house will be wood, with the exception of the Fypon (a type of urethane millwork) used on the building cornice.

Side (east and west) Elevations – Neither the east or west elevation will have any penetrations. The side elevations will be minimally visible between the 2' and 3' gaps separating the subject property from the adjacent buildings. Two electric meters will be installed on the east elevation where they will be minimally visible.

Rear (north) Elevation – The rear elevation will have full light sliding glass doors centered on each floor and a projecting two-story 3'6" by 3'6" mechanical enclosure. The second story deck will measure roughly 5' by 6' and will have a black metal railing and spiral stairs providing access to the ground floor. The deck will be constructed of Trex, a composite material of wood and vinyl and the gutters and downspouts will be aluminum. A domed skylight will be installed on the rear slope of the rubber roof. The applicant does not intend to install a fence to enclose the rear yard. The rear elevation will be minimally, if at all, visible from the alley in the center of the block.

II. HISTORY:

According to the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, there was a two story building and a one story outbuilding at 1123 Queen Street as early as 1891 (the Hopkins atlas showed a structure with a different footprint in 1877). During its history, the property was used as both a residence and as a combination grocery store/residence. The buildings were demolished sometime in the 1970s. The Board has never acted on a case involving the subject property, which has remained vacant since this area was designated as the Parker-Gray Historic District in 1984. However, the Board has acted relatively recently on the adjacent pre-1877 house at 1119 ½ Queen Street, approving a partial demolition and a new addition in 2002, and re-approving the same project in 2003 (BAR Case #2003-0301 & 302, December 17, 2003).

III. ANALYSIS:

The subject property is zoned CL/Commercial Low. On October 10, 2008, the City determined that the applicant could rebuild a noncomplying two-story structure at 1123 Queen Street, provided that there was no increase in floor area ratio (FAR), density, height or degree of noncompliance from the previous building. The proposed building has less FAR than the previous structure and provides more open space due to the fact that the one story shed will not be reconstructed. The proposed building is also located entirely on the subject property, as opposed to the previous structure which encroached on the neighboring property to the west.

In the CL zone there are no required front yard setbacks for commercial uses and a 20' setback for residential uses. The *Design Guidelines* recommends that new commercial buildings be sited to reflect that prevailing front setback pattern along the blockface. Similarly, for new residential structures the *Guidelines* recommend that the "front plane of the building is in line with the prevailing plane of the other residential buildings on the street." Because this mixed use building will be somewhat of an anomaly on the street – having both commercial and residential uses – Staff can support the applicant's proposal to set the building back 8' from the property line. The building relates stylistically much more closely to the adjacent residential building at 1119 ½ Queen Street and not to the neighbor to the west, Sergeant's restaurant, which is not a contributing resource in the historic district.

Staff believes the proposed new mixed-use building complies with the *Design Guidelines* for new construction and is appropriate in terms of size, massing, materials and architectural character. The *Guidelines* specifically state that "...the Boards seek to promote compatible development that is, at once, both responsive to the needs and tastes of the late 20th century while still being compatible with the historic character of the districts." In the opinion of Staff, the exterior appearance of the proposed building takes its architectural clues from the surrounding residential and commercial uses on the block and the surrounding Parker-Gray neighborhood. It has Italianate style detailing such as two-over-two windows with wide muntins and a heavy bracketed cornice relating to the vernacular residential houses found throughout the neighborhood. The projecting bay window on the first floor is also reminiscent of many of the historic mixed use commercial/residential buildings found in both historic districts.

While the *Design Guidelines* specifically discourage the use of new materials on historic properties, the Boards have traditionally been more open to using newer materials on additions

and new construction. In particular, with respect to fiber cement siding, the Board has adopted the following policy:

1. That fiber cement siding not be installed on an historic structure;
2. That historic materials should not be removed to install fiber cement siding;
3. That fiber cement siding replace other artificial or composite siding;
4. That the nails not show in the installation of the siding; and,
5. That smooth siding be installed.
6. That BAR Staff may administratively approve the installation of fiber cement siding on *non-historic* buildings (those constructed in 1975 or later).

Thus, the use of fiber cement on this new building is in conformance with the Board's policy, provided that the smooth fiber cement siding be installed so that the nails do not show. Staff also has no objection to the use of Fypon on the upper cornice because it will be located 19' above street level. The Trex material proposed for the rear deck will not be visible from a public right-of-way.

While the Boards generally discourage the use of spiral stairs, the *Design Guidelines* state that they are "...appropriate for late-20th century buildings and should be inconspicuously located." Staff has no objection to the stair because it will not be visible from the rear and only a small portion – 1 foot – projects beyond the building wall and will be visible from Queen Street. To comply with the *Guidelines* as they relate to skylights, Staff recommends that a low or flat profile glass skylight be used instead of the proposed acrylic dome skylight.

Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archaeology and recommends that they also be included as a condition of the approval.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the nails not show in the installation of the smooth Hardiplank siding;
2. That a low or flat profile glass skylight be installed instead of the proposed acrylic dome skylight;
3. Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds; and,
4. The above statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including sheeting and shoring and grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 All exterior walls within 5 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides of the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance. Openings in exterior walls between 3 and 5 feet shall not exceed 25% of the area of the entire wall surface (This shall include bay windows). Openings shall not be permitted in exterior walls within 3 feet of an interior lot line.
- C-2 Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Enforcement that will outline the steps that will taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-3 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-4 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-5 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully details the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-7 Permission from adjacent property owners is required if access to the adjacent properties is required to complete the proposed construction. Otherwise, a plan shall be submitted to demonstrate the construction techniques utilized to keep construction solely on the referenced property.
- C-8 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection
- C-9 This structure is proposed to contain mixed use groups and is subject to the mixed use and occupancy requirements of USBC 508.
- C-10 The drawings do not show steps or stairs. Stairs must comply with USBC. Stairways of 3 or more risers require handrails.
- C-11 Required exits, parking, and accessibility within the building for persons with disabilities must comply with USBC Chapter 11. Handicapped accessible bathrooms shall also be provided.

C-12 Toilet Rooms for Persons with Disabilities:

- (a) Water closet heights must comply with USBC 1109.2.2
- (b) Door hardware must comply with USBC 1109.13

C-13 Toilet Facilities for Persons with Disabilities: Larger, detailed, dimensioned drawings are required to clarify space layout and mounting heights of affected accessories. Information on door hardware for the toilet stall is required (USBC 1109.2.2).

Office of Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

COMMENTS EXPECTED LATER TODAY.

VI. IMAGES



Figure 1: Adjacent Buildings

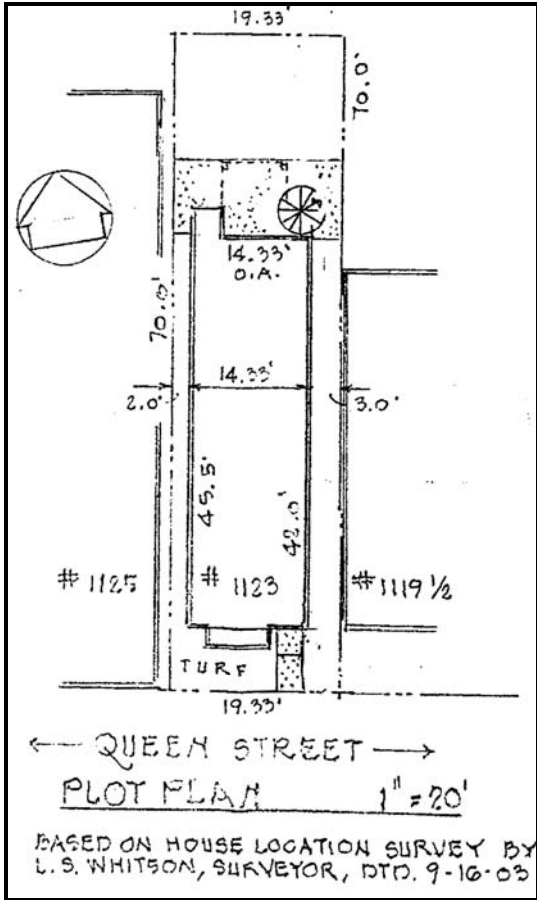


Figure 2: Site Plan

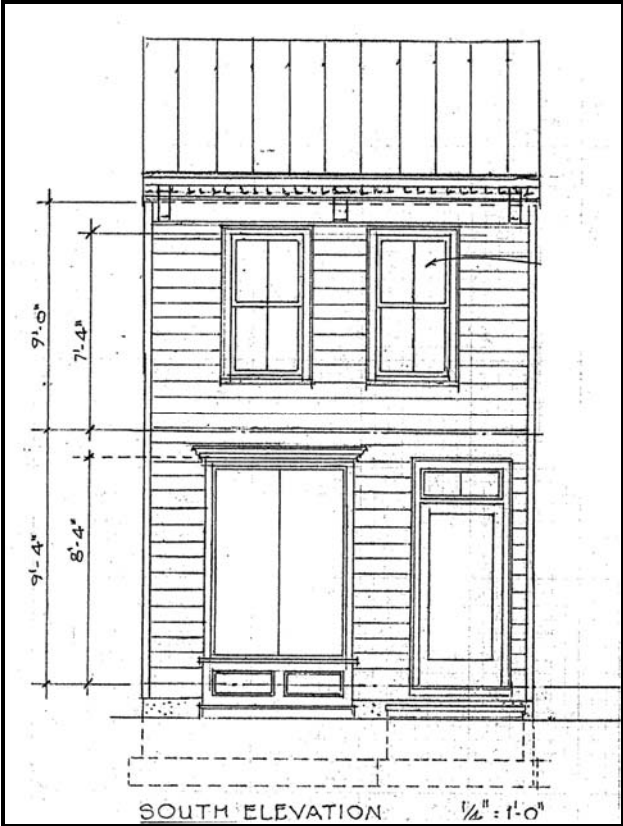


Figure 3: Front Elevation

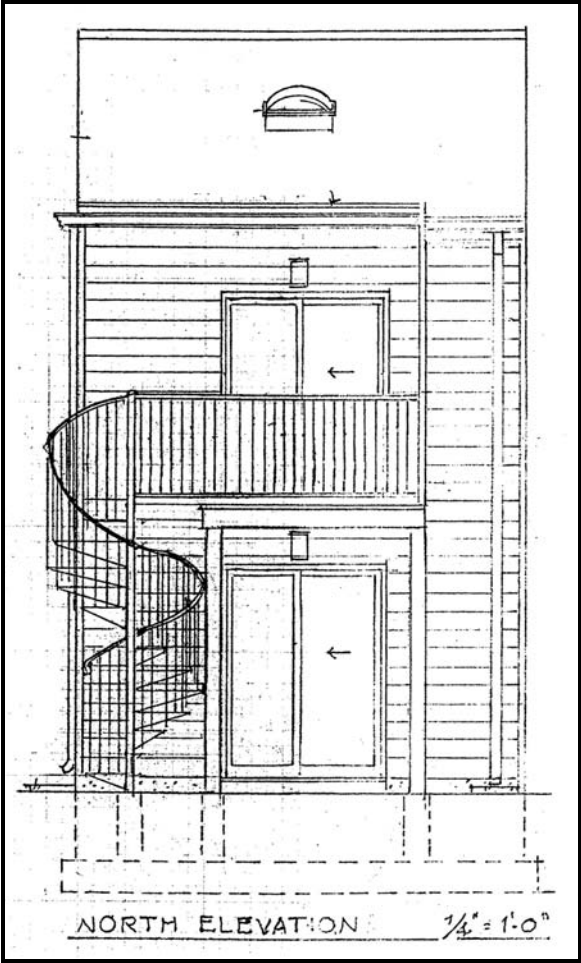


Figure 4: Rear Elevation

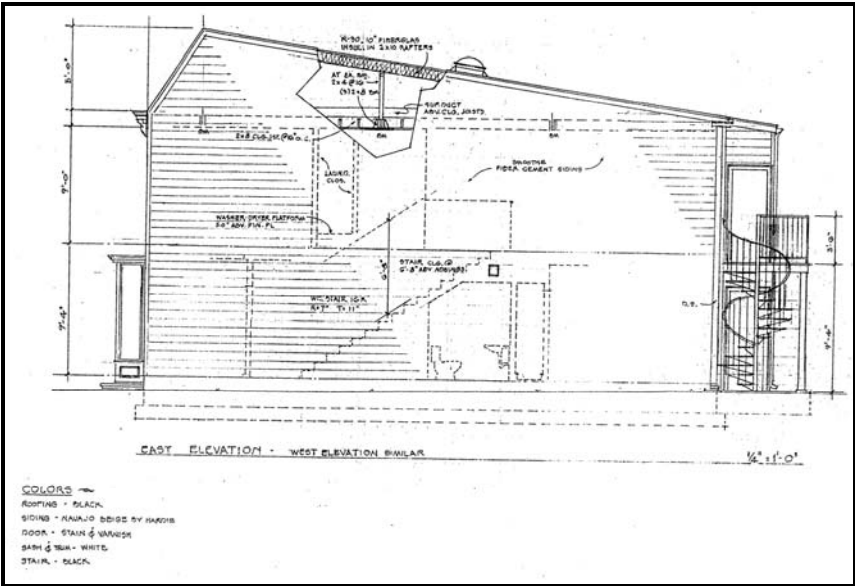


Figure 5: Side Elevation

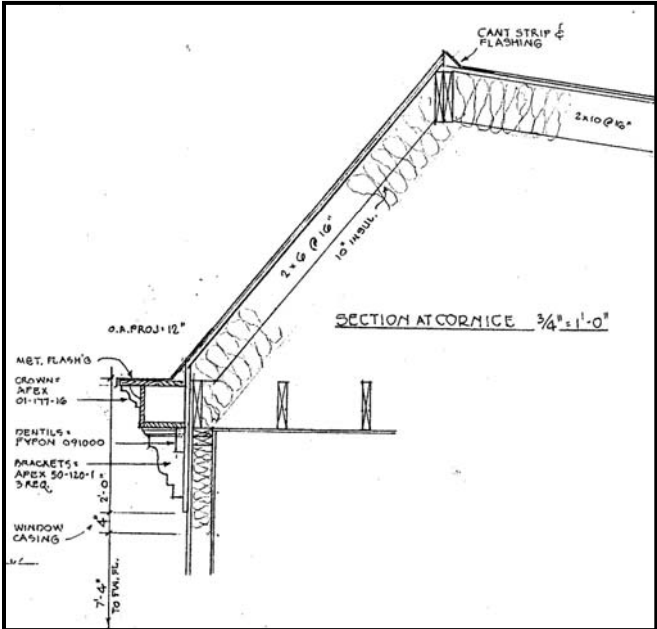


Figure 6: Cornice Detail

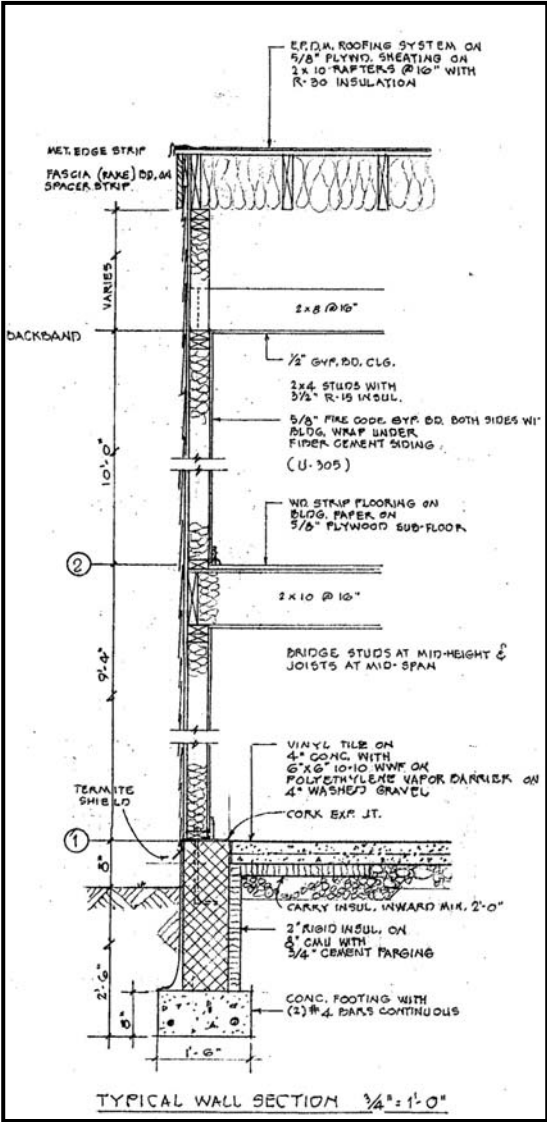


Figure 7: Wall Section

