Docket Item # 4 BAR CASE # 2009-0142

BAR Meeting July 22, 2009

**ISSUE:** Addition/Alterations

**APPLICANT:** Stephen Kulinski for Alabama Ave LLC

**LOCATION:** 427 North West Street

**ZONE:** RB/Residential

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

- 1. That the applicant work with Staff to determine the condition of the historic wood siding beneath the existing aluminum siding and cedar shakes on the historic house, and if historic siding is found that the applicant work with Staff to determine if it can be retained and repaired or if new wood siding should be installed;
- 2. That smooth Hardieplank siding may be installed only on the rear ell and the new addition, provided that the nails not show in the installation of the siding;
- 3. That if the subdivision of the lot does not go forward or is denied, the existing window openings on the south elevation of the main block are retained;
- 4. That the applicant install single-glazed, two-over-two, true divided light wood windows on the front façade and south elevation of the main block, if those windows are retained;
- 5. That the shutters on the front façade be deleted;

\*\*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 Building and Fire Code Administration (<u>including signs</u>). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.



**Note:** BAR Case # 2009-0141 must be approved before this item may be considered.

#### I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition and alterations at 427 North West Street.

The proposed addition will measure 13.83 feet wide by 18.33 feet deep and will be two stories in height, with a gross square footage of approximately 500. On the south side the addition will project into the yard the same distance as the main block, yet will be set back slightly (seven inches) along the north elevation. The north and south elevations of the addition will be devoid of openings and the rear elevation will have sliding glass (single light) doors on the first floor and a pair of two-over-two windows on the second floor.

The alterations to the front façade consist of replacement double-glazed, true divided light twoover-two wood windows on the second floor and a new two-over-two window on the first floor. A new wood four panel door is also proposed. The historic cornice, window trim and transom will be retained. The applicant proposes to install new carriage style porch lights with a bronze finish on either side of the front door (the same lights will be installed next to the side and rear doors as well). New louvered wood shutters are proposed on this elevation.

On the south elevation of the main block the windows and doors will be removed and siding will be installed on the entire elevation. The alterations to the south elevation of the rear ell consist of replacement windows and a new door, as well as new siding.

On the north elevation of the house the applicant proposes to install new siding and replace the two existing windows.

Although the original siding on the house has not yet been revealed, the applicant proposes to retain the historic siding on the front facade if it is in good condition, or, if Staff finds the historic siding beyond repair, replace it with new wood siding. For the remainder of the historic house and the addition, the applicant proposes to install five inch reveal Hardieplank fiber cement siding and Hardietrim fiber cement trim.

With the exception of the windows on the front façade, all of the wood windows on the historic house and the new addition will be manufactured by Kolbe & Kolbe (Heritage Series) and will have double-glazed, simulated divided lights in a two-over-two configuration with interior spacer bars and 1 1/8" muntins. The windows on the front façade will also be manufactured by Kolbe & Kolbe (Heritage Series) but will have "cut lite" muntins which are double-glazed *true* divided light wood windows. The single door on the south elevation and the sliding door on the rear elevation will be double-glazed, full light Kolbe & Kolbe wood doors.

Two Velux 16 by 48 inch Fixed Curb Mount skylights will be installed on the shed roof at the front of the house. The new roof will be clad with a black EPDM (rubber) membrane.

#### II. HISTORY:

Although the City's real estate assessment records indicate that the two-story, two-bay detached frame house at 427 North West Street was constructed in 1935, architectural details and map research suggests that the house was constructed at an earlier date. The house, in its current configuration, appears on the 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the first time this area of the city was mapped. Given the very simple vernacular Victorian details, Staff believes that the house probably dates from the early 1900s. The applicant believes that the two story ell was constructed at a later date than the front portion of the house and the different window configuration on the addition may support this. The house has been clearly altered over the years, and after having been uninhabited for a number of years, has fallen into significant disrepair.

Staff could find no record of prior BAR approvals for the subject property.

The lot on which 427 North West Street is located measures 32 feet wide by 123.42 feet deep. The applicant intends to subdivide the property in order to construct a new house on the southern half of the lot; however, at the present time, Planning & Zoning staff has determined that this may not be feasible. Should the subdivision go forward, Staff would have no objection to the construction of a new house (it appears from map research that originally there were two lots which were consolidated at some point in the past). Any new construction would require Board review and approval – the applicant has provided a streetscape which shows a "future" house south of 427 North West Street.

The house is visible from North West Street and Oronoco Street, and the u-shaped public alley accessed off of Princess Street.

#### III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed addition and alterations complies with zoning ordinance requirements.

It is the opinion of Staff, that the design of the addition is compatible in style and massing to the historic house, and conforms to the *Design Guidelines* for residential additions. In keeping with the recommendations contained in the *Guidelines*, the addition is designed as a background building "...which allow historic structures to maintain the primary visual importance." The change in planes and the minor setback along the north elevation help to distinguish the new construction from the historic house. Staff commends the applicant for the renovation of this historic house. Although the house is rather unremarkable architecturally, its scale and massing make it a contributing resource in the Parker-Gray historic district. That said, Staff has a number of minor concerns.

#### Fiber cement siding

Staff commends the applicant for proposing to retain the existing wood siding on the front elevation, or replacing it with new wood siding if appropriate. However, Staff does not support the applicant's proposal to install Hardieplank siding and trim on the north and south elevations of the main block of the historic house. Staff is aware that the Board has approved Hardieplank siding in the Parker-Gray district in a number of cases over the past six years and that the Board considers each case on its own merits within the context of the *Design Guidelines* and the

Board's adopted fiber cement policy. In most cases where Hardieplank was approved by the Board, the replacement was occurring on secondary elevations (not the front façade), in less visible areas, or in areas that had limited access for maintenance. Given this precedent, Staff would support the use of Hardieplank siding and trim on the rear ell because large portions of the ell are not visible from the right-of-way and it may not date to the original construction of the house, and the new addition, provided that the siding is smooth and that the nails not show in the installation of the siding.

#### Windows

Staff believes that the removal of the windows on the south elevation of the main block is proposed in anticipation of the potential subdivision of the property and the construction of an adjacent house. However, should the subdivision not go forward or if it is denied, Staff recommends that the window openings on this elevation be retained in order to maintain the historic fenestration pattern on what is a highly visible elevation. Staff supports the removal of the door at this location.

The *Design Guidelines* recommend that all windows on historic properties be single glazed (one pane of glass) with true divided lights, although the Board sometimes permits the use of double-insulated (two panes of glass) windows on less visible elevations, and on new construction. In Staff's opinion, the two-over-two windows on the main block (the three windows on the front façade and the five windows on the south facing elevation of the main block, if they are retained) should be single glazed with true divided lights. In Staff's opinion, ideally the two upper windows on the front façade and perhaps one of the windows on the south elevation could be retained and repaired and reused on the front façade. Staff can support the use of double insulated windows on the rear ell, including the north elevation of the ell and the new addition, for the same reasons Staff supports the use of Hardieplank siding in this location – the ell is minimally visible and is set back substantially from the public right-of-way.

Staff also does not object to the proposed skylights, which will not be visible.

## **Shutters**

The *Design Guidelines* recommend that shutters be installed only when they are appropriate to the period of the structure. In the opinion of Staff, although the shutters provide visual interest on a rather plain façade, they are not historically appropriate on a house of this age. This is consistent with a number of other houses dating from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in the immediate vicinity which do not have shutters (the townhouses at 401 through 411 North West Street are just one example).

**IV. <u>STAFF RECOMMENDATION</u>**: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

- 1. That the applicant work with Staff to determine the condition of the historic wood siding beneath the existing aluminum siding and cedar shakes on the historic house, and if historic siding is found that the applicant work with Staff to determine if it can be retained and repaired or if new wood siding should be installed;
- 2. That smooth Hardieplank siding may be installed only be installed on the rear ell and the

- new addition, provided that the nails not show in the installation of the siding;
- 3. That if the subdivision of the lot does not go forward or is denied, the existing window openings on the south elevation of the main block are retained;
- 4. That the applicant install single-glazed, two-over-two, true divided light wood windows on the front façade and south elevation of the main block, if those windows are retained;
- 5. That the shutters on the front façade be deleted;

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# V. <u>CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS</u>

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 Additions and Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-7 Additions and Alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit. Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application. The plans must include all dimensions, construction alterations details, kitchen equipment, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical layouts and schematics.
- C-8 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-9 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-10 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

## Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

# Alexandria Archaeology:

There is low potential for significant archaeological resources to be disturbed by this project. No archaeological action is required.

# <u>Transportation & Environmental Services</u>

- R1. The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 8-1-22 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. [Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (T&ES)
- R2. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R3. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R4. No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (T&ES)
- R5. An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R6. Compliance with the provisions of Article XIII of the City's zoning ordinance for stormwater quality control is required for any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- F1. An approved grading plan may be required at the time of building permit application. Insufficient information has been provided to make that determination at this time. In summary, City Code Section 8-1-22(d) requires that a grading plan be submitted to and approved by T&ES prior to the issuance of building permits for improvements involving:
- the construction of a new home;
- construction of an addition to an existing home where either
  - the addition exceeds the area of the existing building footprint by 100% or more;
  - or, the construction of the addition results in less that 50% of the existing first floor exterior walls, in their entirety, remaining;
- changes to existing grade elevation of 1-foot or greater;
- changes to existing drainage patterns;
- land disturbance of 2,500 square feet or greater.
  Questions regarding the processing of grading plans should be directed to the T&ES Site

Plan Coordinator at (703) 838-4318. Memorandum to Industry No. 02-08 was issued on April 28, 2008 and can be viewed online via the following link.

http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/info/gradingPlanRequirements.pdf

# VI. <u>IMAGES</u>

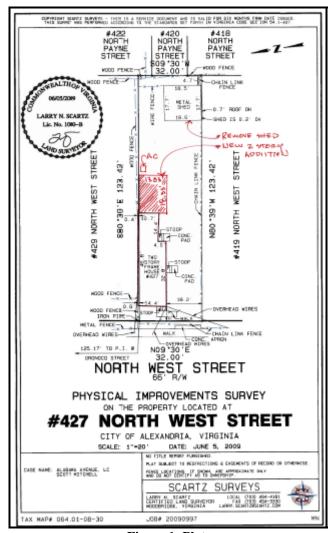


Figure 1: Plat.



Figure 2: Photos of existing house.

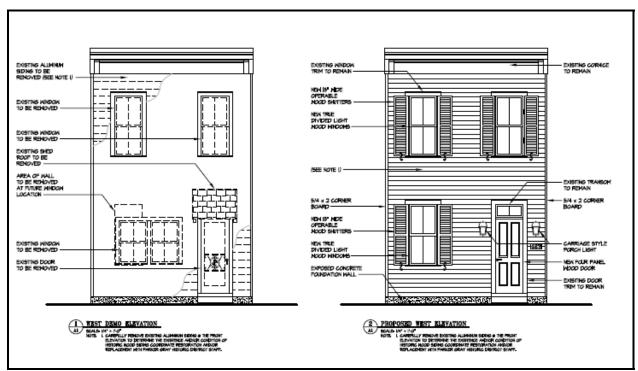


Figure 3: Existing and proposed front facade.

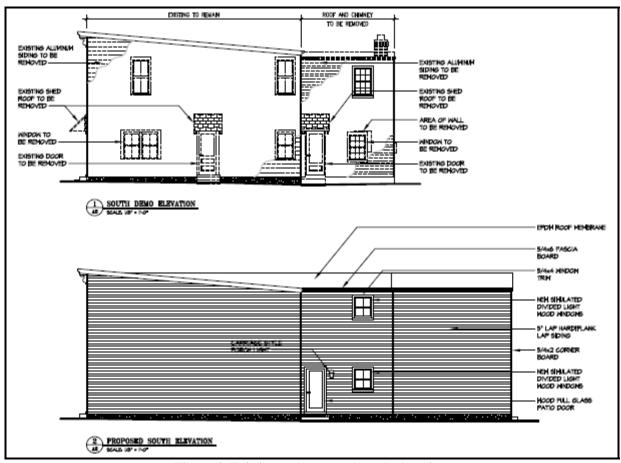


Figure 4: Existing and proposed south elevation.

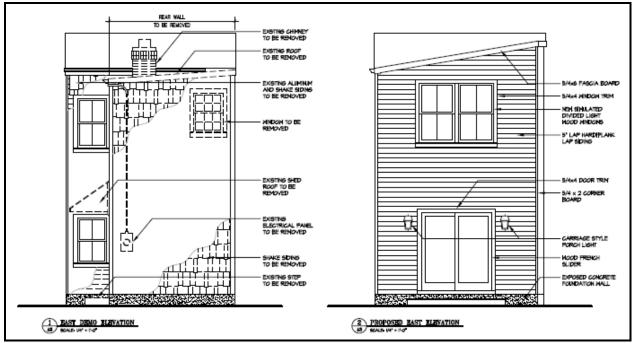


Figure 5: Existing and proposed east elevation.

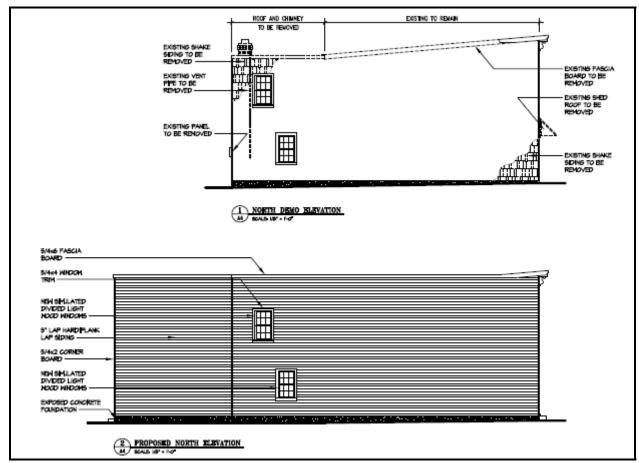


Figure 6: Existing and proposed north elevation.

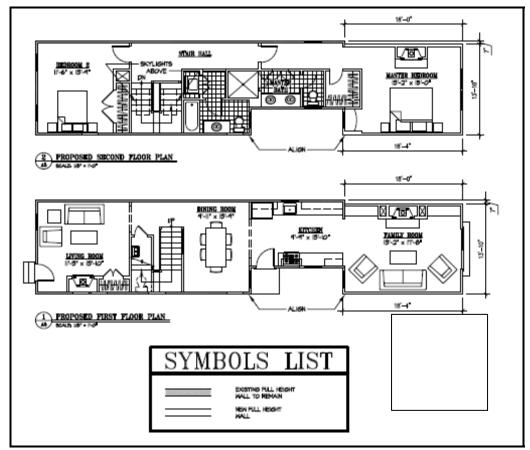


Figure 7: Existing and proposed floor plan.



Figure 8: Proposed streetscape showing possible new construction on adjacent lot.

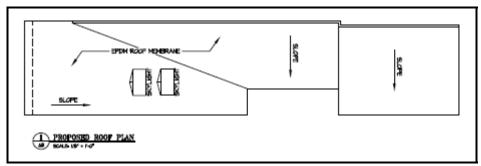


Figure 9: Roof plan.

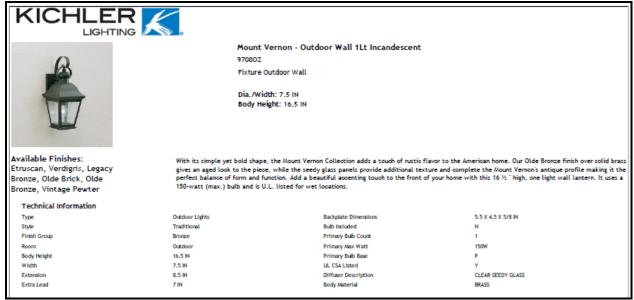


Figure 10: Proposed light fixture.

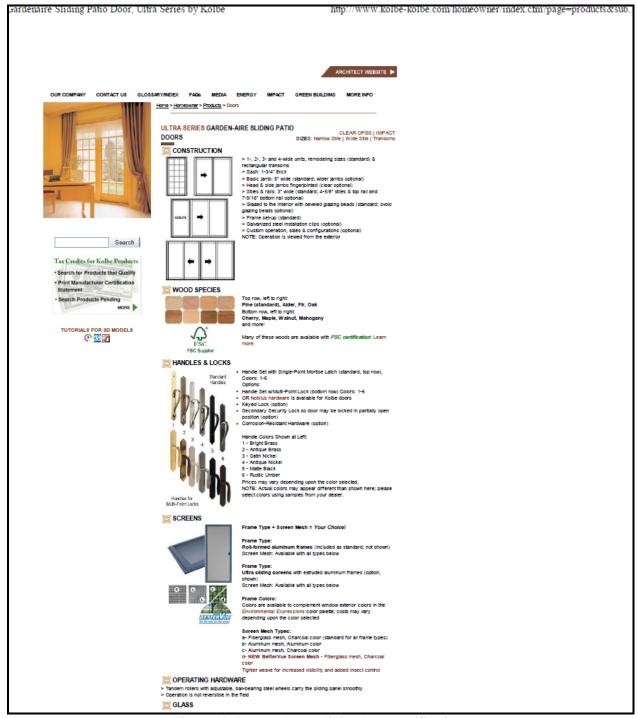


Figure 11: Proposed rear sliding door specification.

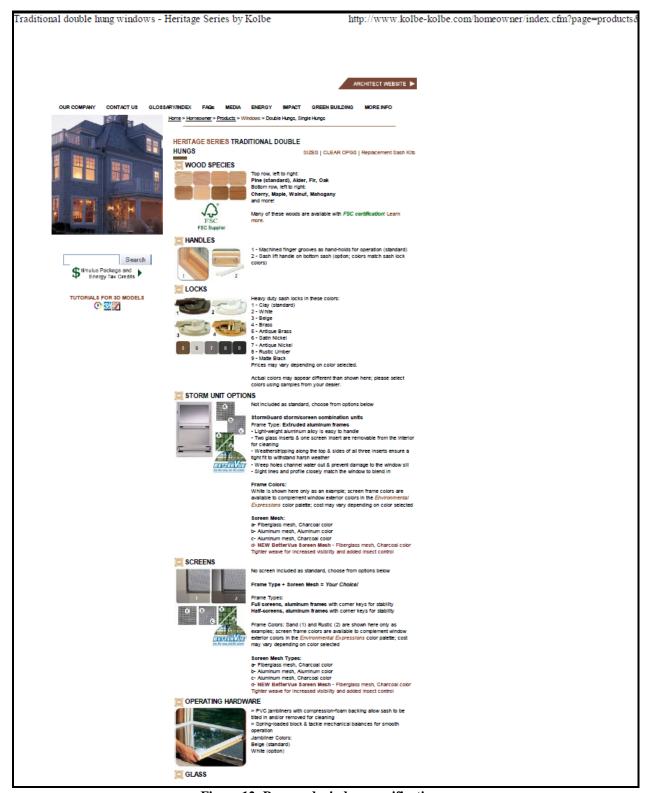


Figure 12: Proposed window specifications.

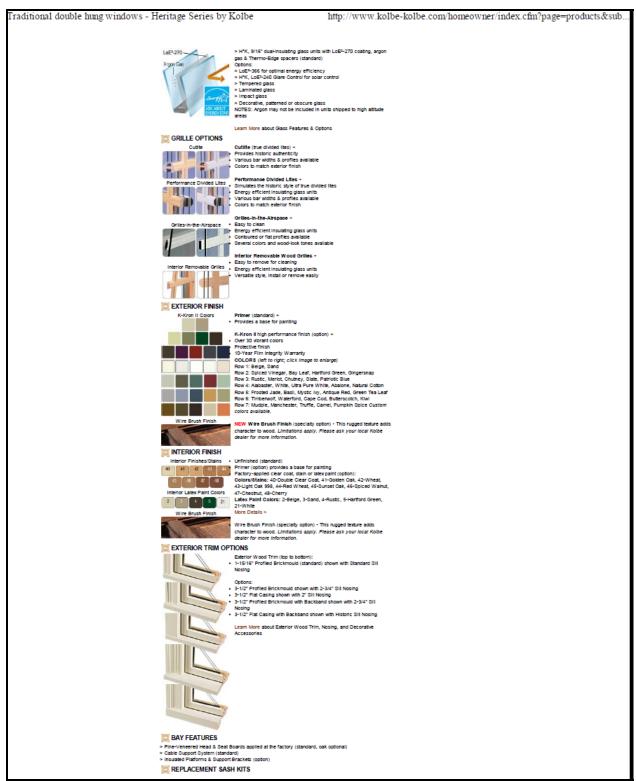


Figure 13: Proposed window specifications.

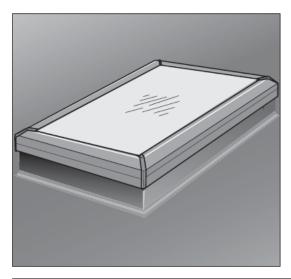
English: Installation instructions for curb mounted skylight

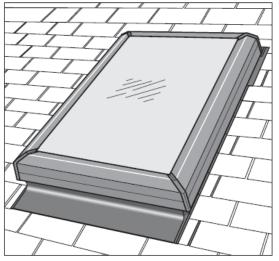
Español: Instrucciones de instalación para tragaluz montado en brocal

Français: Instructions d'installation pour puits de lumière sur le cadre









English: FCM is designed for roof pitches  $0^{\circ}-60^{\circ}$  (0:12 - 20:12).

# Special consideration for applications below 15°:

- Any condensation that forms on the glass due to high humidity may drip.
- Standing water and dirt left on the glass over time may cause smudging and corrosion of the glass.

Neither of the two above stated occurrences are covered under the VELUX warranty. ECL flashing is designed for roof pitches  $15^{\circ}-60^{\circ}$  (3:12 – 20:12).

Español: El FCM está diseñado para techos con inclinación de 0° – 60° (0:12 – 20:12). Consideraciones especiales para aplicaciones bajo 15°:

- Cualquier condensación que se forme en el cristal debido a la humedad alta puede gotear.
- Agua estancada y dejada directamente en el cristal con el tiempo puede causar manchas y corrosión en el cristal.

Ninguno de los dos casos mencionados arriba está cubierto bajo la garantía de VELUX. El tapajuntas ECL está diseñado para techos con inclinación de 15° – 60° (3:12 – 20:12). Français: Les puits de lumière FCM sont conçus pour être installés sur toitures avec inclinaison variant entre 0° et 60° (0/12 – 20/12). Certaines conditions de garantie s'appliquent lors d'une installation sur une toiture avec inclinaison inférieure à 15° impliquant l'une ou l'autre des situations suivantes:

- Dans des conditions très humides, toute condensation se formant sur la surface vitrée pourra s'écouler.
- Avec le temps, l'eau s'accumulant directement sur la surface vitrée pourra générer de la corrosion et des taches sur le verre.

Aucunes des deux incidences ci-haut mentionées sont couverts sous la guarantie Velux. Le solin ECL est conçu pour une inclinaison de toiture variant entre 15° et 60° (3/12 – 20/12).

Figure 14: Proposed skylight specification.