

\*\*\*\*\*DRAFT MINUTES\*\*\*\*\*

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review  
Parker-Gray District

**Wednesday, February 24, 2010**  
7:30 P.M., Council Chambers, City Hall  
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: William Conkey, Chairman  
Christina Kelley  
Doug Meick  
Philip Moffat  
Deborah Rankin

Members Absent: Richard Lloyd

Staff Present: Planning and Zoning:  
Stephanie Sample  
Al Cox

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Conkey.

1. Consideration of the minutes of the public hearing of January 27, 2010.  
**BOARD ACTION: Approved as submitted, 5-0.**

On a motion by Mr. Meick, seconded by Ms. Kelly, the minutes of the January 27, 2010 public hearing were approved as submitted.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

2. **CASE BAR 2010-0012**

Request for approval of new construction at **423 N West St**, zoned RB Residential.

**APPLICANT:** Kulinski Group Architects by Stephen Kulinski, AIA for Alabama Ave, LLC.

**BOARD ACTION:** **Approved as amended, 5-0.**

**DISCUSSION**

Ms. Kelly inquired whether the more stylistically appropriate metal shingles or slate could be used on the Mansard portion of the roof in lieu of standing seam metal. The applicant agreed. The applicant also confirmed that this was a ventless gas fireplace, so there would be no chimney.

Mr. Moffat asked the architect to provide more variety between projects in the future. Ms. Rankin complimented the architect's work with staff to create a very attractive project. Chairman Conkey asked the architect to confirm that siding exposure would be 2 ½" in the front. (it is) Mr. Conkey said that, while there was nothing wrong with this design, he felt this was a

missed opportunity and would like new buildings in the district to be more quirky and not blend in too much with the historic structures so that these can be visually distinguished.

**ACTION:**

On a motion by Mr. Moffat, seconded by Mr. Meick, the Board voted unanimously to approve the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the new construction, as amended, with the following conditions:

1. That the Board finds a curb cut is inappropriate and infeasible for this lot and recommends that the Planning Director waive the subject lot's parking requirement.
2. The applicant/developer shall 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.
3. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection or artifact collection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
4. The statements in archaeology conditions above marked with an asterisk "\*" shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.
5. That the applicant use metal shingles or slate on the Mansard portion of the roof in lieu of the proposed standing seam metal.

**REASON:** The Board generally agreed with the staff analysis and found the proposed new construction compatible and in harmony with its historical and architectural setting and environs.

**SPEAKERS:** Mr. Kulinski, the project architect, presented the owner's proposal.

**END DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**DEFERRED ITEMS:**

**3. CASE BAR 2010-0018**

Request for approval of demolition/encapsulation at **918 1/2 Pendleton St**, zoned RB Residential.

APPLICANT: Case Design/ Remodeling Inc. for Michael Ann Casey.

BOARD ACTION: **The Board noted the deferral.**

Deferred pending receipt of additional application materials.

**4. CASE BAR 2010-0020**

Request for approval of addition/alterations at **918 1/2 Pendleton St**, zoned RB Residential.

APPLICANT: Case Design/ Remodeling Inc. for Michael Ann Casey.

**BOARD ACTION: The Board noted the deferral.**

Deferred pending receipt of additional application materials.

**END DEFERRED ITEMS**

**5. OTHER BUSINESS:**

Staff noted the work session to discuss phase II of the James Bland redevelopment project which will follow adjournment of the public hearing.

**6. ADJOURNMENT:**

The public hearing was adjourned by the Chairman at approximately 7:45 pm and the Board went into the work session.

Al Cox, FAIA, Staff  
Boards of Architectural Review

**DRAFT Minutes, with Comments, from the Parker-Gray BAR**  
**Work Session on James Bland**  
Wednesday, February 24, 2010  
7:45 P.M., City Council Work Room, City Hall  
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: William Conkey, Chairman  
Christina Kelly  
Doug Meick  
Deborah Rankin

Members Absent: Richard Lloyd  
Philip Moffat

Staff Present: Planning & Zoning  
Stephanie Sample  
Al Cox  
Maya Contreras  
Tom Canfield

Representing the Applicant:  
Roy Priest, ARHA  
Gregory Shron, EYA

**Overview**

Staff and BAR comments at the work session were generally minor, in part because there are only minimal changes to the building types since Phase I was approved by the BAR. The Board members reviewed streetscape elevations of the Phase II proposal. Mr. Meick stated that he had no issues with the proposal, as submitted, and excused himself from the work session.

The work session comments consisted primarily of specific building/unit comments, although there was a lengthy discussion about the exterior elevations of the alley dwellings, and Staff and the BAR's desire to see some architectural variation of these units between each phase of development. Some additional materials were requested when the applicant submits Phase II of the project for Certificate of Appropriateness approval later this spring. As discussed at the work session, some standard BAR conditions will be brought forward with each phase of development. In general, the Board did not review the details of building types previously approved, though the relationship of these units to the other units in Phase II was discussed.

There was some question about the meaning of BAR Concept Approval. Staff clarified that the published BAR policy includes approval only of "scale, mass and architectural character" and that, following DSUP approval, architectural and stylistic details are resolved upon return to the BAR for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Further, DSUP condition #17 states numerous times that the applicant is to continue to work with Staff to address the perceived mass and scale and refine the details of these buildings, particularly at the alley houses and the multifamily buildings.

The Board asked that the submission materials for BAR approval of Phase II include the portion of the site plan showing the footprint of the front of the house out to the curb, including the location of proposed landscape area, steps and fences. This was provided with Phase I and it was very helpful for the Board members to see the elevations in direct relation to the site in front of the units. The Board also requested perspectives for this phase of development, similar to what was submitted with Phase I, although it is not necessary for them to be in color, in order to understand the proposed building massing and its relationship to the existing neighborhood.

The applicant noted that they have resisted presenting additional perspectives because of the cost, but indicated that the large and detailed marketing model may be complete in time for the BAR submission. Mr. Shron also stated his concern that further BAR requests for alterations in later phases may create significant marketing challenges, since they are now in “final production” of marketing materials for the entire five phase project. The color elevations and a detailed model now being produced are for use at the sales office. The Board asked why they were being asked to review the development in phases if the final color renderings and model were being produced in advance, and whether this meant that input from the BAR on later phases was moot. The applicant responded that they felt that the BAR approval EYA received at Concept level and Phase I gave their marketing staff the confidence to proceed, but acknowledged that it was at their own risk.

Mr. Shron offered that, depending on the location of the model at that time, either a work shop site visit by the Board or close up photographs of the model would greatly help to show the relationship of the new development to the surrounding community. The Board members agreed that carefully composed photographs of the model from street level could possibly substitute for the desired perspectives.

Mr. Shron and Mr. Priest reiterated to the Board a number of times that the design costs for the development have mounted significantly and the amount of changes requested by Staff and the BAR are becoming a concern.

### **Work Session Comments**

1. In reference to Staff’s comment about the use of architectural grade composition shingles, the applicant stated that there was a drafting error and that composition shingles should not have been proposed on any front elevations. Instead, the palate of roofing materials approved in Phase I would continue to be used – standing seam metal or metal shingles, and slate or synthetic slate.
2. In reference to the cluster mailboxes, the applicant indicated that these were shown on the final site plan drawings and has agreed to include the design and location for the mailboxes when Phase II is submitted for BAR approval.
3. There was some discussion about Staff’s proposal to modify the standard HVAC waiver of screening condition in Phase I. The new condition will recommend that after the HVAC condensers are installed, Staff will work with the applicant to relocate any visible units so that they are either not visible or minimally visible. The idea behind the modification is that in some cases the screening of the units can draw more attention to the rooftop features than the units themselves.

4. Staff suggested - and the applicant agreed to at least consider - adding another wooden front door type (4 panel) to provide architectural variation between the units.
5. The color of the loft level of the townhouse units was also discussed and the applicant indicated that they had already complied with Staff's request to use colors which made the loft units recede into the background. Staff confirmed that it appeared the colors were very subtle, but that it was difficult to see on the renderings.
6. In reference to Staff's question about whether any changes were proposed to the color palette, the applicant said that the same color palette from Phase I would be used, with the possibility of one additional color. All colors not approved in Phase I will be provided for BAR approval during Phase II.
7. During a discussion about alterations to the units over time, both Mr. Shron and Mr. Priest stated that there would be a Home Owner's Association which would approve any future alterations within the development prior to submission to the BAR, similar to the process now used at Ford's Landing.
8. Staff asked the applicant to identify the boxed feature at the cornice level of the townhouses. The applicant indicated that this was a parapet extension and a detail would be provided when the plans were submitted for BAR approval.
9. Staff and the Board encouraged the applicant to provide details of the solar collectors and mounting locations with the Phase II materials. This is something that could be covered under a blanket approved from the BAR for all phases of the development, if it complies with the *Design Guideline* on solar collectors.
10. In response to Staff's suggestion that more stylistically appropriate stamped metal shingles - or slate or a slate composite - be used in place of standing seam metal on some of the mansard style roof the applicant indicated that they would consider using this additional roofing material, provided that the cost did not exceed the cost of the other roofing materials.

### **Alley dwellings**

The Board and the applicant had a lengthy discussion about the elevations of the proposed alley dwellings. Staff and the Board encouraged the applicant to modify the skin of this building type so that the units have a slightly different architectural expression between phases, as the same alley dwelling type will be located in Phases I, II and III. The Board also believed that these units, because they are on new streets internal to the development, have the opportunity to have a more modern expression or to reflect the significant Art Deco and Streamline Moderne buildings within the Parker-Gray Historic District.

The Board limited their suggested changes to the balcony rail (pop out), the large bay window, and the detailing at the front door (canopy). Staff and the Chairman of the BAR both stated that this could be done without any change to the location of the brick wall, overall fenestration pattern or interior layout, and that generally the same design language

would be used but with subtle variations in design. A number of suggestions were made which the applicant should consider, from using the different window muntins, materials, texture, colors or stylistic details (“different and simple”). The Board also reminded the applicant that throughout previous discussions, during both work sessions and at public hearings, it was clear that they expected to see architectural variation between phases, so that this very large project would be compatible with the scale of the existing blocks of historic structures and not look like a single development.

The applicant was concerned with the marketing challenge if the buildings were not consistent between phases. They also stated that they would consider varying the skin of the units, provided that there was no additional cost associated with the change.

### **Summary**

The Board agreed that development of the submission did not appear to warrant another work session but wanted the input of members unable to attend the work session. Staff offered to meet with those Board members individually at their convenience. The Chair agreed.

Mr. Shron stated EYA’s intention to have Phase II of the project heard by the Board at their April 21 public hearing. He indicated that demolition would begin in March and the sales office would open in early May 2010. Utility cutoff for demolition had been delayed by the snow storm.

### **Notes from follow-up BAR staff meeting with Mr. Philip Moffat on 3/3/10**

Because Mr. Moffat was unable to attend the work session, he met with BAR Staff on March 3, 2010 to review and comment on the material presented at the work session. Mr. Moffat echoed the comments of his colleagues at the work session and provided the following specific requests:

1. The side elevations of lots 45, 18 & 14: The windows should be more informal and/or asymmetrical to more accurately reflect typical secondary elevations (similar to the side elevation of Lot 41). He suggested the addition of a side entrance on this elevation.
2. Lots 42, 43 & 44: A perspective is needed to show the visibility of the loft levels from North Columbus and North Alfred Streets.
3. Lots 8 & 9: The brick color may be too dark and visually heavy and will not show the masonry detailing to advantage. He recommended a lighter red or salmon color brick.
4. Lots 27, 28 & 29: These three units are too stylistically similar to the adjacent historic properties. He recommended that the units in Building #14 be flipped, so that Lot 25 & 26 are adjacent to the historic properties.
5. General comments: The streetscape elevations are very predictable and more variety is necessary to reflect the character of the existing historic block faces. Mr. Moffat also echoed the other Board member’s comments about the need for perspectives and revised architectural elevations for the alley dwellings.