

Docket Item # 2
BAR CASE # 2010-0071

BAR Meeting
April 28, 2010

ISSUE: Alterations
APPLICANT: Charles and Dorthy Taylor
LOCATION: 406 North Alfred Street
ZONE: RB/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriate application with the condition that:

The wood components of the wheelchair ramp be painted or stained.

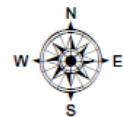
****EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of final approval if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of 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 (including signs). 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.



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4/28/2010



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to affix a wood wheelchair ramp to the existing brick and wood stair which currently leads to a rear door at 406 North Alfred Street. The proposed wheelchair ramp will be minimally visible from the rear public alley, as the rear property is enclosed by a chain link fence.

II. HISTORY:

406 North Alfred Street is a c1870s, semi-detached, two-story residence with a decorative metal Mansard roof and a front façade clad in Formstone. The front elevation features a 2-1/2 story integrated tower, overhanging eaves with decorative brackets, and a denticulated cornice in the Queen Anne style. The windows are 1/1 with a simple window surround and rectangular hood molding.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations comply with the Zoning Ordinance.

The Board approved the preconstruction of this wheelchair ramp prior to receiving formal BAR approval due to the unforeseen time constraints of the homeowner, as a non-profit group was utilizing volunteers to construct the proposed ramp and their scheduled construction day was immediately prior to the monthly BAR hearing. The Board unanimously approved this unusual process for this specific case based on images of the proposed ramp e-mailed by staff several weeks ago.

When evaluating handicap accessibility alterations to properties in the historic district, the *Design Guidelines* recognize the importance of balancing accessibility with historic preservation objectives and require that access be appropriate to the historic structure. The *Guidelines* specify that accessibility ramps and structures should not hide, obscure or cause the removal of historic architectural details; and that ramps should be made of materials which are sympathetic to the building materials generally found in the historic districts. For example, painted wood has been approved as an appropriate material for accessibility ramps throughout the districts. Staff recommends that the wood be painted or stained in this instance as well, as architectural features were generally not left untreated on urban structures in the late 19th century.

The wheelchair ramp will be located on the rear, a secondary elevation visible only from the alley, and will be fabricated from materials which are appropriate to this historic structure and the district as a whole. The ramp's installation is easily reversible and causes no permanent damage to the structure's historic or architectural fabric. Staff believes that the proposed location and materials are the best possible solution for this required alteration and recommends that the Board support the application if the wood members are stained or painted.

STAFF:

Michele Oaks, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Administration:

- 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 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the 2006 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 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-5 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-6 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES):

No Comments.

Historic Alexandria:

No Comments.

V. IMAGES



Figure 1. Photo of Existing Conditions – Front Elevation

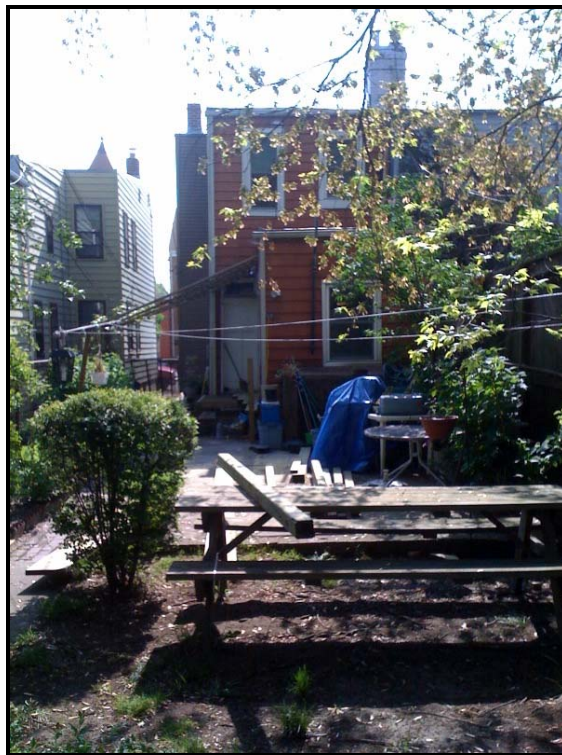


Figure 2. Photo of Existing Conditions – Rear Elevation

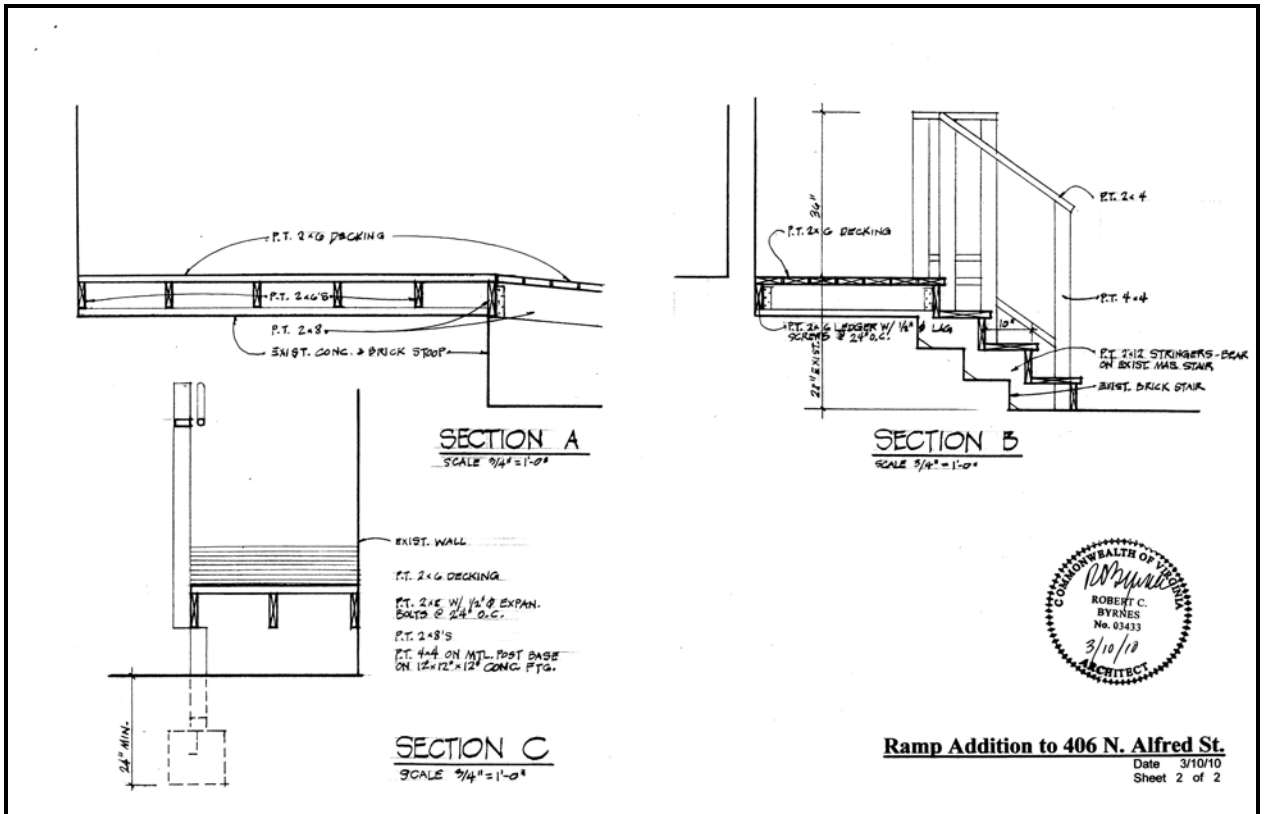
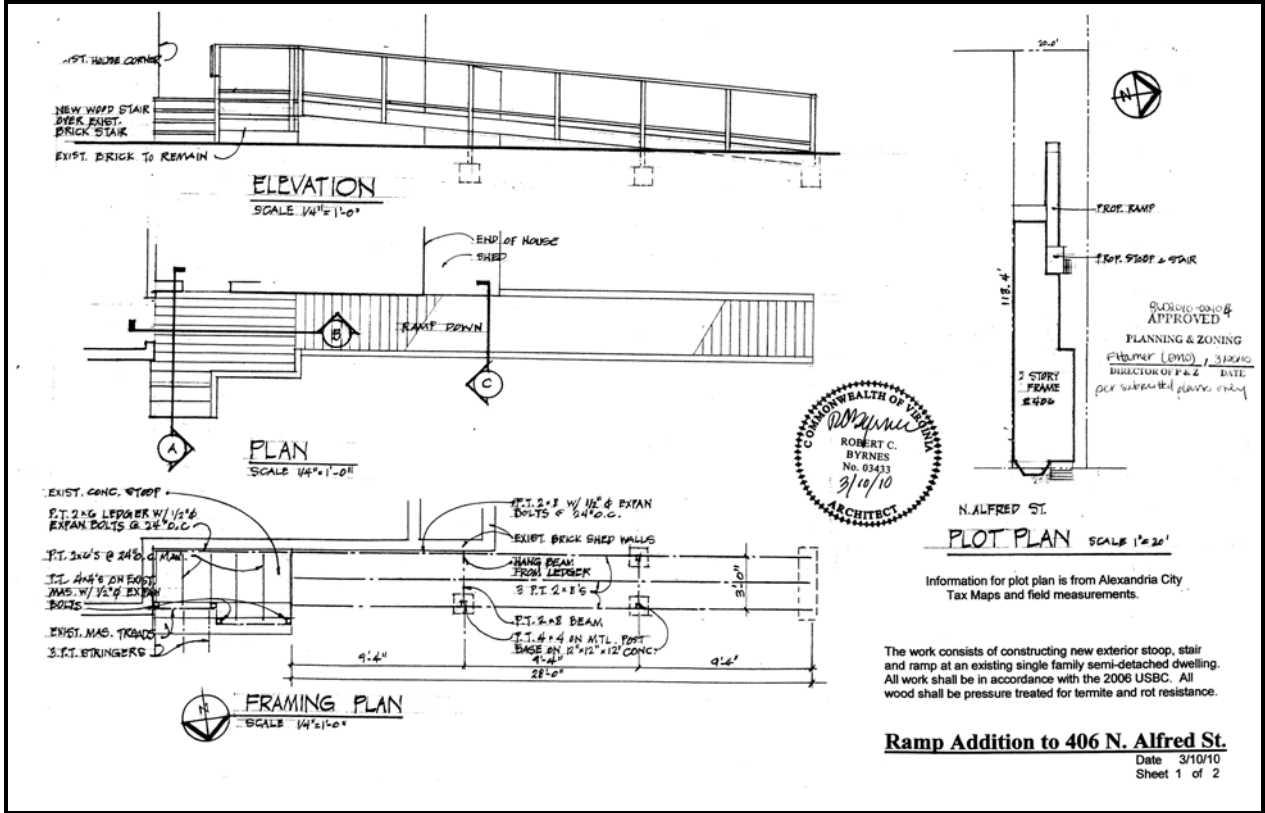


Figure 3. Proposal