

Docket Item # 3
BAR CASE # 2010-0196

BAR Meeting
July 28, 2010

ISSUE: Request for Approval of New Construction
APPLICANT: Wanda Carter
LOCATION: 219 North West Street
ZONE: RB / Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That only smooth fiber cement siding be used and that nails not show in the installation.
2. That PVC trim be solid throughout, millable and painted.
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. 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 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.



I. ISSUE

The applicant proposes to construct a new two story, wood frame, three bay, side gable Italianate Style townhouse dwelling on a currently vacant lot. The windows throughout are Lincoln brand, painted wood, two-over-two, double hung, true divided light with 1 ¼” vertical muntin bar. The siding is James Hardie Artisan Lap, 5/8” thick cement composite clapboard siding with 4” exposure and a smooth surface. Trim is a combination of cement fiber and Azek. Segmental arch window heads and brackets will be Fypon. The proposed roofing is GAF Timberline 30 architectural grade composition shingles -- staff recommends this be a weathered wood blend color. The proposed materials are high quality and have typically been approved by the Board.

II. HISTORY

The *G.M. Hopkins Insurance Atlas* indicates that a house was present in this lot in 1877. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from 1891 shows a two-story frame dwelling with a one-story rear addition. By 1902 the Sanborn Fire Insurance shows a one-story shed in the middle/rear of the property. Between 1941 and 1958, the lot at 219 North West Street was divided into two lots: one fronting North West Street with a small two-story building at the rear and one out-lot accessed by the alley (Hollis Alley) with a one-story shed. Beginning in 1942, the City recognized and taxed the property as two lots, one at the front and one at the rear. The City tax assessment records note no structures on the front lot and a small two-story, two room dwelling on the rear lot. The rear building may have been the ell that remained from the original house facing West Street or the 1912 stable. By 1959 the dwelling on the rear lot was demolished. A freestanding single-family dwelling was approved by the Board for this parcel on December 14, 2005 (BAR Case # 2005-0275).

The 1941 Sanborn map corrected to 1959 shows the subject lot at 219 North West Street as vacant, as also shown on later maps in 1965 and 1985. The Board of Zoning Appeals granted an open space variance for this lot, BZA CASE #2010-0004, on June 10, 2010.

III. ANALYSIS

The style of the proposed townhouse has evolved a great deal since initial meetings with the applicant.

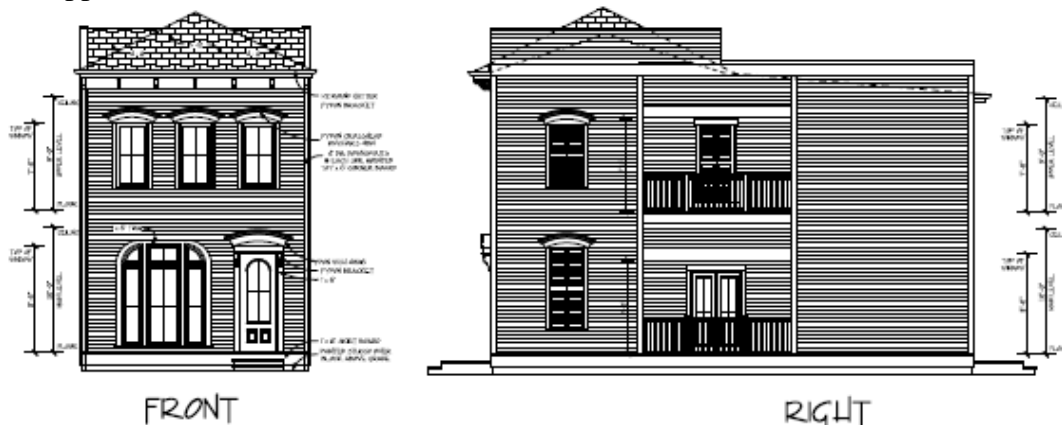


Figure 1: Applicants earlier proposal showing a cross gable roof with parapets at the front, now simplified.

As shown by the illustration in Figure #1 above, the earlier complex roof forms have now been simplified and the trim has been refined. Early proposals were very handsome houses but had more in common with high style Charleston or New Orleans dwellings. The applicant has, therefore, used images of several historic buildings in the Parker-Gray district as inspiration but has not copied any of these directly.

The door and window forms are appropriate to the style and well proportioned. Although it is unusual to see segmental arches over the fenestration on a wood frame house, as this is a brick structural reference, it is not unheard of on historic structures. Staff does not believe it is necessary to include four false windows on the right (south) elevation or 30" diameter louvered gable vents, and would prefer a simpler and more honest expression of the blank side walls normally seen on an urban townhouse, but believes the decorative elements shown are well proportioned. Staff also believes it is unfortunate that the wall panels at the rear parapets do not have a projecting cornice with more depth but this is not allowed because of the location of the property lines. Staff also finds the beam between the first and second floor side porches to be uncharacteristically heavy for historic porches but this is driven by a Zoning Ordinance requirement limiting these ceiling heights to less than 7'-6" to avoid counting it as FAR.

Overall, staff has no objections to this proposal and appreciates the flexibility that the applicant has shown as numerous schemes were requested in search of an appropriate Alexandria vernacular. Staff recommends approval of the application, as submitted with the standard conditions about fiber cement siding and solid, painted PVC trim.

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 Administration 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 2006 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Construction and trade 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 A Certificate of occupancy shall be obtained prior to any occupancy of the building or portion thereof, in accordance with USBC 116.1.

Historic Alexandria

No comments received.

Alexandria Archaeology

- F-1 The G.M. Hopkins Insurance Atlas indicates that a house was present on this lot

in 1877. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities in 19th-century Alexandria.

- R-1 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.
- R-2 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.

Transportation and Environmental Services
Recommendations

- 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)
- R7. The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition. (T&ES)
- R8. Construction of a new driveway entrance, or widening of an existing driveway entrance, requires separate application to; and approval from, the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services.

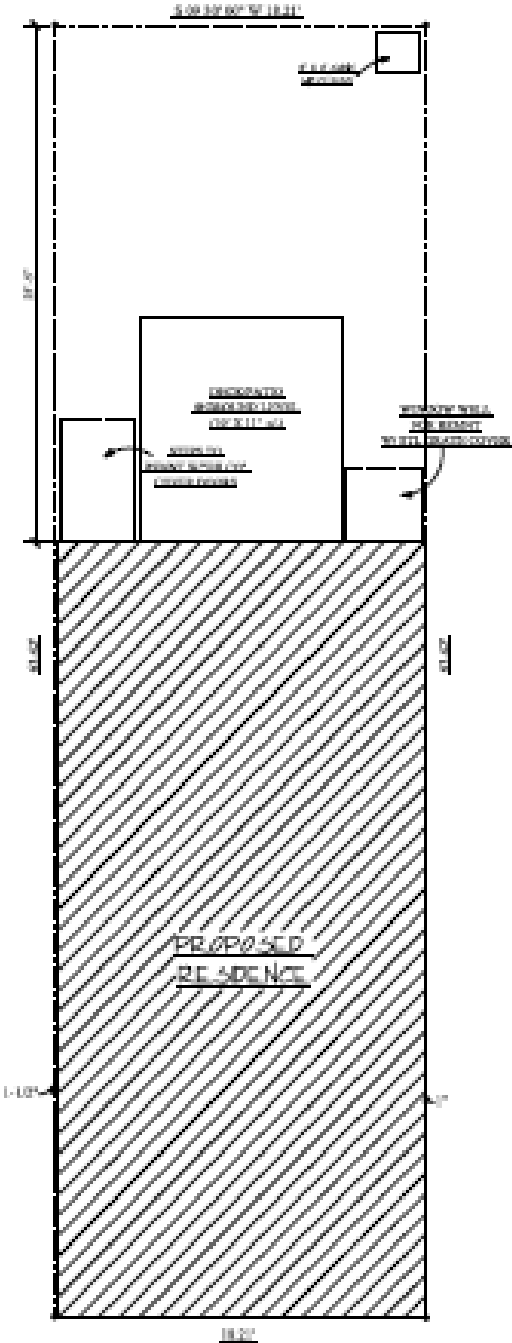
Findings

- 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 than 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) 746-4064. 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>**

City Code Requirements

- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99).
- C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line.
- C-3 Roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation & Environmental Services. (Sec.8-1-22)
- C-4 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3)
- C-5 Pay sanitary sewer tap fee prior to release of Grading Plan. (Sec. 5-6-25)
- C-6 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61)

V. IMAGES



SITE PLAN

LOT 30
NORTH WEST ST.
ALEXANDRIA, VA

Figure 2

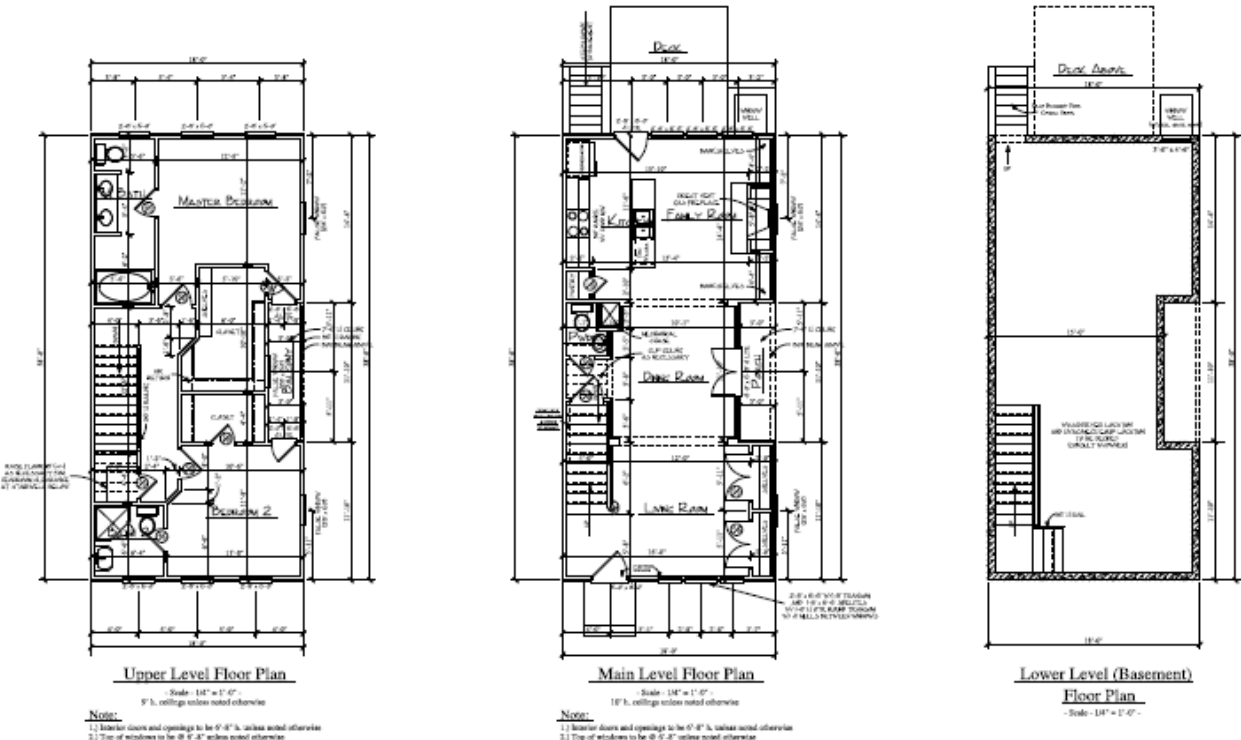
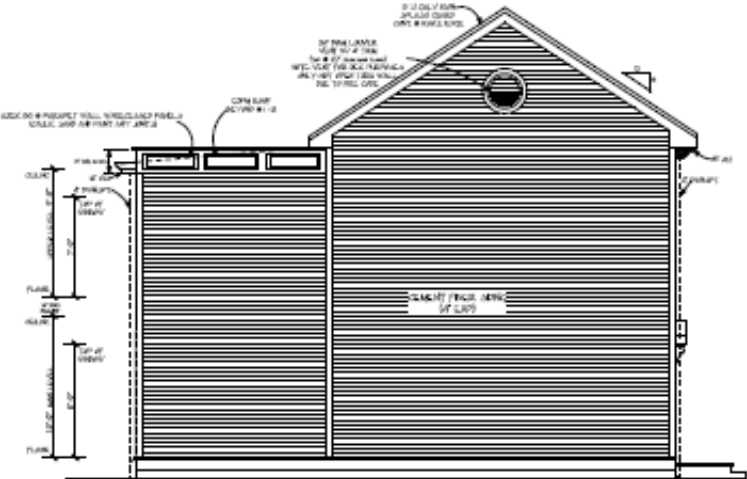
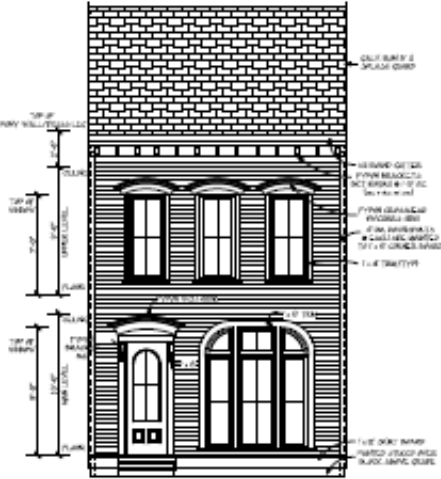


Figure 3



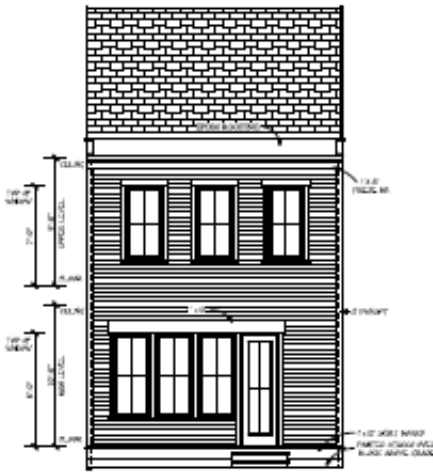
LEFT ELEVATION
 V&T = 1 - 0'



FRONT ELEVATION
 V&T = 1 - 0'



RIGHT ELEVATION
 V&T = 1 - 0'



REAR ELEVATION
 V&T = 1 - 0'

Figure 4