Docket Item #s 2 & 3 BAR CASE #2011-0002 & 0005

BAR Meeting January 26, 2011

ISSUE: Partial Demolition and Addition

APPLICANT: Steven Kulinski, AIA

LOCATION: 927 Oronoco Street

ZONE: RB / Residential

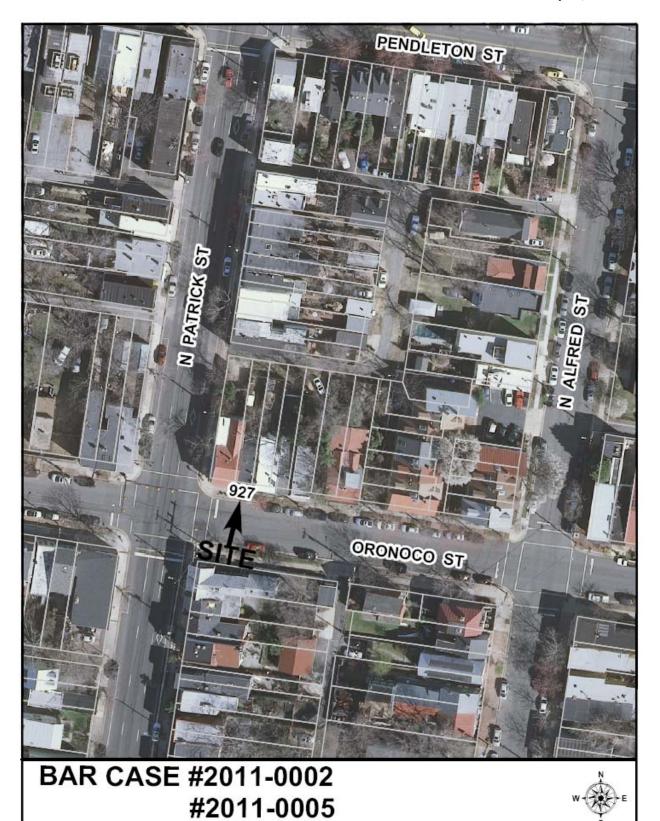
STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish and Certificate of Appropriateness for Additions with the following conditions:

- 1. That cellular PVC windows on the addition are changed to be either painted wood or aluminum clad wood windows.
- 2. That the balustrades are fabricated out of wood or a paintable synthetic/composite solid-through-the-core high-quality material.
- 3. That the size, location, height and possible interior shade option for the skylight are provided for staff approval.
- 4. That Archaeology conditions appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.
 - a. 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.
 - b. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that an inspection schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
 - c. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology

^{**}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 siding or roofing over 100 square feet, windows and 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, 703-746-4200 for further information.



*Note: Staff coupled the cases for 927 Oronoco Street, BAR #2011-0002 (Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate) and BAR #2011-0005 (Certificate of Appropriateness) for clarity and brevity. This item requires a roll call vote.

I. <u>ISSUE</u>

Background

A variance to construct an addition reducing the required open space from 800 square feet to 615 square feet was approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals on December 9, 2010 with the condition that "The fence be relocated to the rear property line." (BZA2010-00027.) The application is now before the Board to determine if the proposed addition is consistent with existing site and compatible with the building's architectural style.

Proposal

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new addition at 927 Oronoco Street.

The Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate consists of:

- Demolish the existing, exterior stucco walls of the two-story extension (c1900) (approx. 390 sq. ft.) (Note: the existing second floor structure will be temporarily supported until the new addition is constructed.)
- Demolish existing rear, exterior chimney.
- Demolish existing kitchen.

The Certificate of Appropriateness consists of:

- Construct a two, story rear addition utilizing the remaining masonry walls (10'6" long x 14'8" wide)
- Construct a new, two-story frame extension (11'6" long x 14'8" wide) (Note: after construction the frame extension will be the only "visible" addition.)

These additions are designed to expand the existing, first story living space and add a third bedroom, and open porch on the second floor.

The rear (north) elevation of the frame extension will be detailed with a pair of single, full light doors and a 1/1 double-glazed, double-hung window on the first floor. The second story will have a pair of 1/1 double-glazed, double-hung windows and a single, full light door, which leads out onto the second floor porch. Due to the close proximity of these additions to the property lines, their side elevations will only have fenestrations on the second floor wall of the east elevation. The proposed materials include: cellular (hollow core) PVC windows, aluminum clad wood skylights, fiberglass doors, Hardi-plank lap siding, Azek trim, a hollow-core composite balustrade and vinyl decking.

II. HISTORY

Historic Context

927 Oronoco Street was constructed around 1900 according to Real Estate Records. The building, one in a row of three similar residences, appears on the 1902 Sanborn Insurance Map, the first year this area was mapped. The three late 19th century vernacular rowhouses have been significantly altered over the years. This can be seen in the variety of brick types found on the front facades, the 6/6 windows and the modifications to the front entries. However, they all have retained their unifying brick corbelled cornice.

Description of the Existing Building

The subject two-story masonry Victorian dwelling with two-story extension is detailed with an original corbelled cornice and jack arches. Although Victorian in style, the house now has Colonial Revival details, including 6/6 wood windows and a six-panel wood door. Although the front façade has been reconstructed and the interior completely gutted, the house retains its original form and contributes to the overall streetscape of the historic district.

The subject property is located along the eastern boundary of the historic district. The dwelling faces south and is setback 1' from the front property line. The rear of the property is enclosed with a six-foot high wood fence and bordered by a 10 foot wide public alley.

Previous BAR Approvals

In 1975, the interior of the three residences at 923, 925, and 927 Oronoco Street were entirely gutted (Building Permit #32074, 11/7/75). The Board approved an after-the-fact permit to demolish and reconstruct the structurally unstable brick façade with modern brick in 2008, as the historic brick was not salvageable. (BAR #2008-0030 & 031).

III. ANALYSIS

The proposed alterations comply with Zoning Ordinance requirements, pending compliance with the BZA condition.

Staff has no objection to the proposed encapsulation and demolition of portions of the north (rear) elevation and finds the proposed addition and extension to be compatible with the existing building and surrounding area.

Permit to Demolish

In considering a Permit to Demolish, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, §10-105(B):

- (1) Is the building or structure of such architectural or historical interest that its moving, removing, capsulating or razing would be to the detriment of the public interest?
- (2) Is the building or structure of such interest that it could be made into a historic house?
- (3) Is the building or structure of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty?
- (4) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway?

- (5) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the city?
- (6) Would retention of the building or structure promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in American culture and heritage, and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live?

In the opinion of Staff, this early 20th century townhouse is historically significant to the overall historic district and compatible with the streetscape. Staff has no objection to the proposed demolition and encapsulation of portions of the rear walls and finds the proposed additions to be compatible with the existing building. The area proposed for demolition/encapsulation is located on a secondary elevation, does not remove any portion of the building containing character defining features of uncommon design or historic merit, and does not compromise the historic integrity of the building or the district as a whole. As such, Staff believes none of the criteria for demolition and encapsulation are met and the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate should be granted.

Addition and Alterations

The construction of an addition onto any building within a historic district must be evaluated not only for its impact on the building to which it is being attached, but also for its impact on the district as a whole. The *Design Guidelines* encourage "designs that are respectful of the existing structure and which seek to be background statements or which echo the design elements of the existing structure."

The rear addition and extension will not be visible from Oronoco Street. However, the frame extension will be partially visible from North Patrick Street and visible from the rear public alley. The proposed two-story addition will utilize the existing east and west masonry walls. This addition will contain a kitchen on the first floor and a bedroom on the second and requires the removal of the rear and east facing stucco walls from the house's original extension. The existing floor structure on the second floor will be temporarily supported during demolition and construction of the new addition.

The roofline over the new addition and extension will be an intersecting shed roof. This roof form retains the rear sloping shed roof form of the original building mass and constructs a second, side-shed roof over the new addition and extension.

The proposed two-story frame extension will project from the rear of the new addition and will include a family room on the first floor and a third bedroom and an open porch on the second floor. This design for the new addition and extension does not overwhelm the existing building and respects and retains the building's remaining character defining historic features. Although the program requires the demolition of some of the existing, rear historic exterior walls, the location of the walls to be demolished, and the existing level of integrity remaining in the building make this project unique. Based on physical and documentary evidence, the building's only remaining historic features are the corbelled cornice and the building's original form. Therefore, the building contributes to the district not for its architectural significance, rather for its historic significance.

When evaluating alterations and changes to buildings that contribute to a district's historic significance, the focus is to ensure that the integrity of the district is not negatively impacted. This is achieved by preserving the individual building's traditional streetscape patterns. These include height, massing, side and front setbacks. In this case, the proposed construction of a modest addition on the rear of this building, will retain the existing height, side and front setbacks, and perceived massing, therefore, it will not negatively impact the integrity of the historic district. It is for these reasons staff supports this individual case. The building, after the proposed construction of the additions will remain a contributing resource to streetscape of the historic district.

Staff is concerned with many of the proposed materials outlined for the project, as they are not typically approved by the BAR on historic or modern buildings within the historic district. These include the cellular PVC windows, fiberglass doors, and hollow-core composite railings. The vinyl composite decking proposed will not be visible from the public ROW and the fiberglass doors on the lower level will be only minimally visible over the wood fence along the public alley.

Windows

The applicant is proposing cellular PVC windows. Although Staff supports the use of a appropriate high-quality modern window materials, as long as they are compatible with the existing and surrounding buildings in the district, the newly adopted Window Policy specifically discourages the use of vinyl. Hollow, extruded vinyl windows such as these are particularly problematic because of their poor past performance and because their typical white shiny surface cannot be painted the wide variety of colors used on historic windows. The newly adopted Window Policy does, however, allow the use of high quality aluminum clad wood windows on new construction and additions. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Board support painted wood or aluminum clad 1/1 windows instead of the proposed cellular PVC.

Doors

The Board has maintained in the past that exterior doors should be constructed of natural materials, even on modern buildings within the Historic District. Recently, Staff has been working on a Modern Materials Policy that includes fiberglass doors. In this draft policy, Staff has concluded that a field painted, smooth fiberglass door is nearly indistinguishable from a field painted wood door. From Staff's research, high-quality fiberglass doors can be molded to have the same crisp lines and panels as wood doors, yet have greater lifespan and increased thermal efficiency. Because they are filled with foam, they have a density and sound very similar to wood. Staff also notes that high quality versions of these doors are not inexpensive and should be more durable than doors constructed of modern, fast growth wood. Therefore, Staff will be recommending in February 2011 that the Board adopt a Policy allowing high-quality fiberglass doors for buildings or additions post-dating 1965, when fiberglass doors became commercially available in the U.S.

While, Staff will not generally be recommending the use of glazing within fiberglass doors, because the trim piece necessary to frame the thicker insulating glass is unusually large and out of character with historic wood doors, the doors in this case are on the rear of the structure on a modern addition and will be only minimally visible from the alley over a 6' tall wood fence.

Balustrade

The current proposal specifies that the balustrade is fabricated of a hollow-core composite product. The Board generally considers high-quality synthetic/composite materials to be solid-through-the-core, field paintable, milled similarly to wood, and to have a similar texture and feel to wood. Therefore, Staff finds the proposed use of the hollow-core PVC product not consistent with these policies and recommends that the applicant submit either a painted wood balustrade or a balustrade fabricated from a high-quality synthetic/composite solid-through-the-core, paintable material.

Skylight

The proposed aluminum clad wood skylights will be minimally visible from the public ROW. Staff believes that, due to the proposed location on a rear and the shallow second floor roof slope, the skylight will be appropriate. However, since the skylight locations on the roof were not presented in the application packet, it is recommended that the size, location, height and possible interior shade option are provided for staff approval.

In Staff's opinion, the proposed addition, as modified with the recommended conditions, is appropriate and compatible to the main house in terms of mass, scale, height, and architectural expression, and does not negatively impact the overall integrity of the historic district.

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and the Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition and alterations with the conditions noted above.

STAFF

Michele Oaks, Historic Preservation Planner Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Administration

- C-1 A building permit is required for the demolition and addition prior to the start of work
- C-2 Prior to the issuance of a demolition or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Administration that will outline the steps taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community.
- C-3 Trades permits for plumbing, electrical, and mechanical work are required to be issued for prior to the start of that work.
- C-4 Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application (USBC 109.1). Plans should include, at a minimum, the area, use, and ceiling height of all rooms; size and location of all door and window openings; footing/foundation details; floor and roof framing.
- C-5 Hard wired, interconnected smoke detectors are required to be installed, as per 2006 IRC as amended.
- C-6 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-7 All exterior walls within 5 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides, with no openings permitted within the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. (USBC 704.5)

Transportation and Environmental Services (T & ES)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition. (T&ES)
- R1. The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 5-6-224 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)

FINDINGS

- F1. Existing reviews; BZA2010-00027. (T&ES)
- F2. 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 5-6-224 requires that a grading plan be submitted to and approved by T&ES prior to the issuance of building permits for improvements involving: (T&ES)
- 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) 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). (T&ES)
- 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. (T&ES)
- 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.5-6-224) (T&ES)
- C-4 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3) (T&ES)
- C-5 Pay sanitary sewer tap fee prior to release of Grading Plan. (Sec. 5-6-25) (T&ES)
- C-6 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61) (T&ES)

Alexandria Archaeology

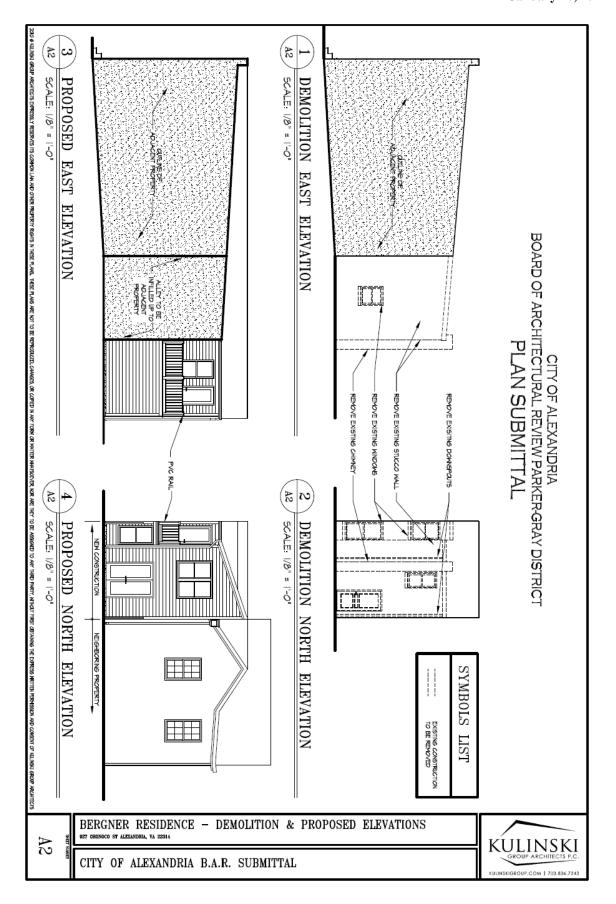
F-1 This property is situated in a late 19th/early 20th-century African American neighborhood. The lot therefore has potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into late 19th-century domestic activities, perhaps related to African Americans.

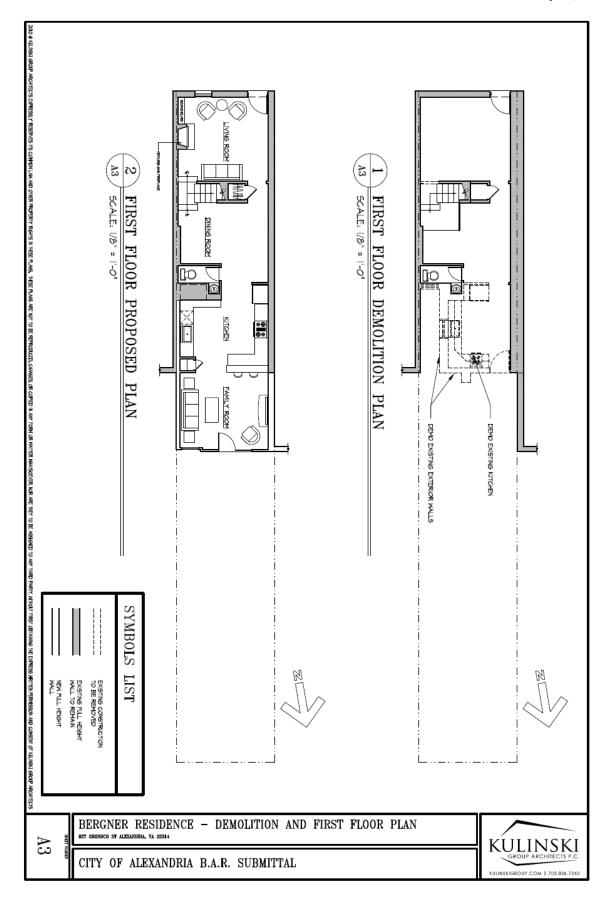
Conditions/Recommendations

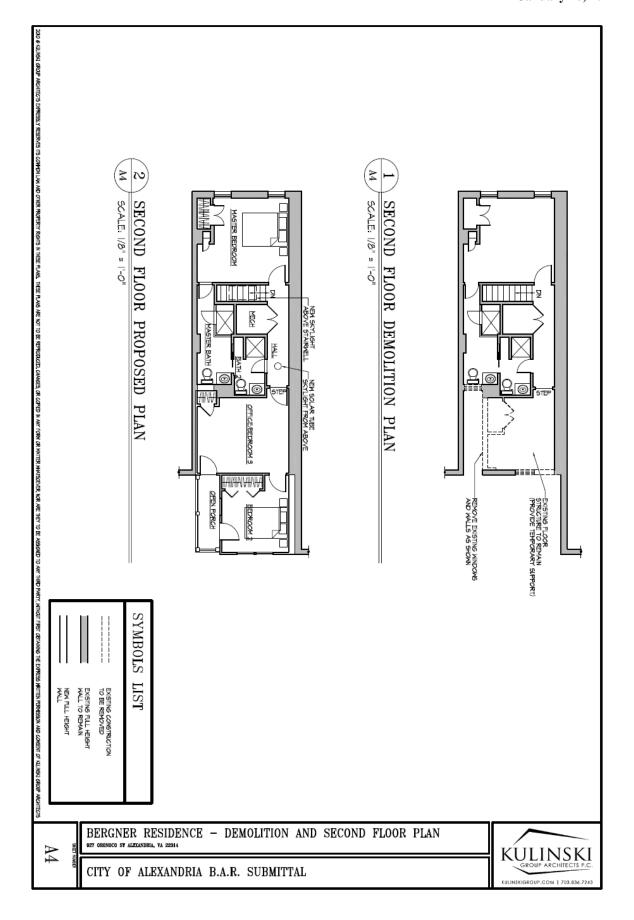
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V. IMAGES

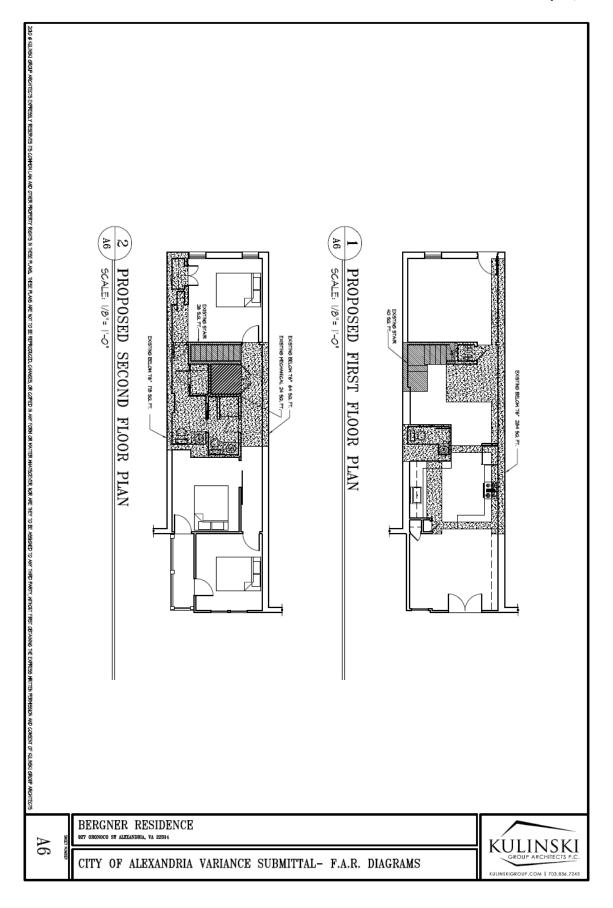


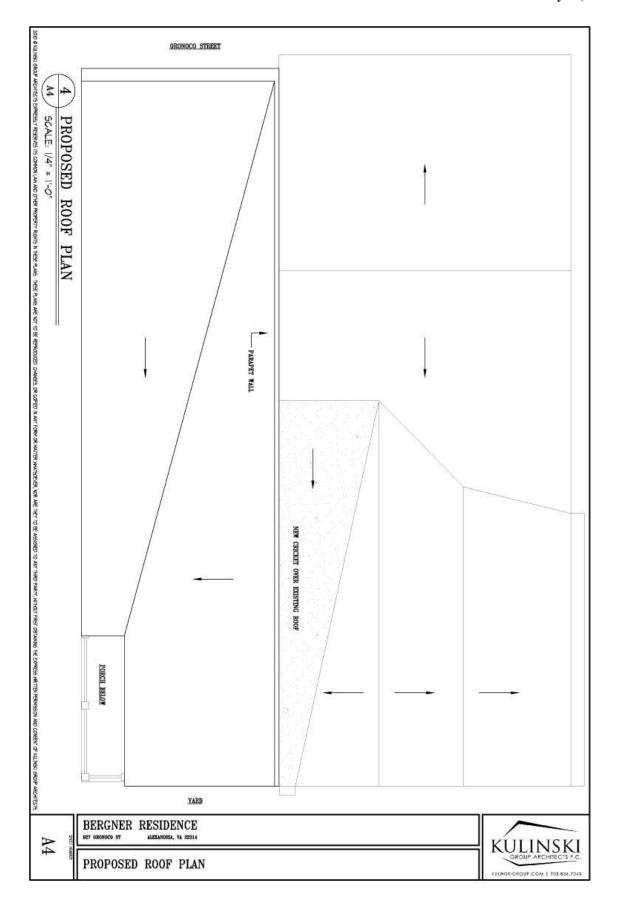














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City of Alexandria - Board of Architectural Review Parker Grey Historic District 927 Oronoco Street Alexandria, VA 22314

Materials Specification List

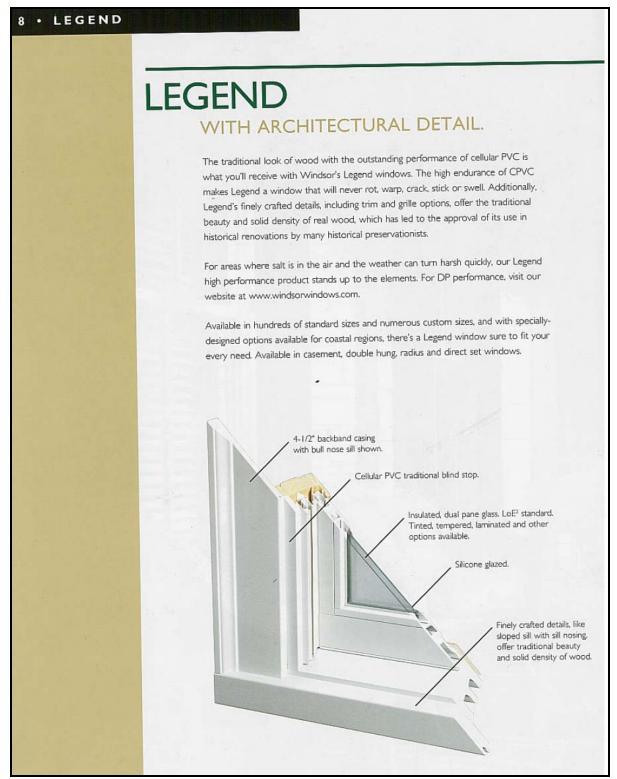
- 1 New Rear Patio Door:
 - Plastpro One lite flush glazed full lite door
 - Material Fiberglass
 - o Lite Pattern Single Lite
- 2 New Windows:
 - Legend Double hung by Windsor
 - Material CPVC
 - Lite Pattern Single Lite

New Skylights:

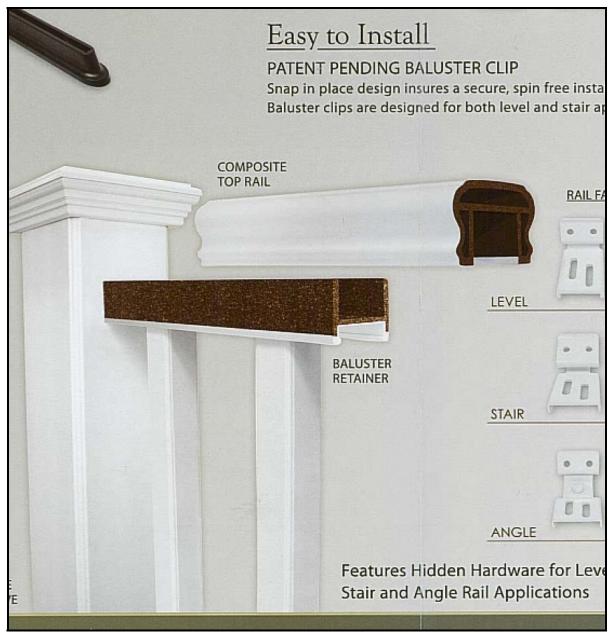
- Velux –FCM (Fixed Curb Mounted Skylight)
- Material Vinyl/wood
- Sola-Tube
- 3 Rear Facade:
 - Hardi plank lap siding
 - White painted aluminum K style gutter & downspouts
- 4 Trim Boards
 - All trim to be Azek
- 5 Rear deck:
 - Dura-Dek Vinyl deck surface
 - Deck railing: composite railing by Fairway with
 5 1/4" posts & square ballusters.



Proposed Fiberglass French Door



Proposed Cellular PVC Window



Proposed Hollow-Core Balustrade