

Docket Item #20
ENCROACHMENT #2006-0001

Planning Commission Meeting
June 6, 2006

ISSUE: Consideration of a request for encroachment into the public right-of-way for ADA complaint ramp, stairs and landing.

APPLICANT: St. Paul's Episcopal Church Alexandria, VA
by Duncan Blair, attorney

LOCATION: 228 S. Pitt Street (400 Block of Duke Street)

ZONE: RM/Townhouse

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends **approval** subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the permit conditions found in Section III of this report.

ENC #2006-0001
228 South Pitt Street

SITE GRAPHIC
AVAILABLE IN THE PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICE

I. DISCUSSION:

REQUEST

The applicant, St. Paul's Episcopal Church Alexandria, Virginia, by Duncan Blair, requests approval of an encroachment into the public right-of-way for an ADA ramp, stairs and landing at 228 South Pitt Street (400 Block of Duke Street).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property is one lot of record with 200 feet of frontage on South Pitt Street, 110 feet of frontage on Duke Street, and a total lot area of just over a half acre. The site is occupied by St. Paul's Episcopal Church and accessory buildings. The proposed encroachment is located on the south side of the property along Duke Street, in front of Wilmer Hall, where the church's offices, classrooms, and meeting spaces are located.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant requests approval of an encroachment to allow the installation of a handicapped ramp, stairs, and landing. The encroachment area extends approximately four feet from the building face and is 33 feet long, totaling 141.9 square feet. The sidewalk width at this location is 12.5 feet (see attached drawing). There is a tree well located three feet from the foot of the proposed ramp.

This proposal is being processed in conjunction with two Board of Architectural Review applications (BAR#2006-0052 and 53) for demolition/encapsulation and addition/alterations. The applicant proposes alterations at Wilmer Hall and an elevator and stair tower addition between Wilmer Hall and Damascus House, a former residence now used for church meeting spaces located at 413 Duke Street. The work is part of a major renovation of those two facilities intended to improve functionality and provide handicapped accessibility. A BAR hearing on the alterations was held on May 17, 2006, where the applicant agreed to defer the request and revise its plans in response to comments received from staff and the BAR. The proposed revisions do not affect the size of the encroachment area for the handicapped ramp. The ramp will have a painted metal railing, ground-level lighting, and have stone work around the base of the ramp.

The proposed improvements exceed 33 and one-third percent of the market value of the building. According to Sections 8-200 (F)(1)(b) and (F)(4)(a) of the Zoning Ordinance, building improvements that exceed 33 and one-third percent of the market value of the building are required to comply with current parking requirements. Therefore, the applicant has applied for a parking reduction, which is being processed in conjunction with this application (SUP#2006-0038).

ZONING/MASTER PLAN

The subject property is zoned RM/Townhouse zone, and is located in the Old Town Small Area Plan.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS:

Staff does not object to the proposed encroachment. The original proposal for the encroachment left only about three feet between the edge of the proposed ramp and a tree well. However, the Linden tree in the well is dead, and scheduled to be removed in July. The well is also located off center from the other two tree wells on Duke Street. The applicant has agreed to fund installation of a new tree well to replace the existing well, and locating it equidistant from the other two existing wells on the block. Staff recommends that the well measure no more than 4' wide which will leave 4'8" for pedestrian passage.

Staff recommends approval of the encroachment subject to the following conditions.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends **approval** subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the following conditions:

1. The applicant (and his/her successors, if any) must obtain and maintain a policy of general liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000, which will indemnify the applicant (and his/her successors, if any) and the City of Alexandria, as an additional named insured, against all claims, demands, suits, etc., and all costs related thereto, including attorney fees, relating to any bodily injury or property damage which may occur as a result of the granting of this encroachment. (P&Z)
2. Neither the City nor any Private utility company will be held responsible for damage to the private improvements in the public right-of-way during repair, maintenance or replacement of any utilities that may be located within the area of the proposed encroachment. (P&Z)

3. The applicant shall maintain a minimum 4 foot wide unobstructed sidewalk. (T&ES)
4. On the final plan, the applicant shall provide the number of treads, rise height, and landing dimensions for the steps. (T&ES)
5. Applicant shall be responsible for replacement and repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way, including any areas damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
6. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
7. The sidewalk shall remain open during construction.(T&ES)
8. On the final plan, the applicant shall provide the ramp slope. The ramp and steps shall comply with ADA requirements. (T&ES)
9. The existing tree well opposite the proposed ramp shall be relocated to be centered between the two existing tree wells. (RP&CA)
10. The dimensions of the relocated tree well shall be a minimum of 4 ft. width (from curb) and a minimum 6 ft. length. (RP&CA)
11. The relocation of the tree well shall be performed by the applicant. The work shall be completed prior to the installation of the handicapped ramp. (RP&CA)(T&ES)

STAFF: Eileen Fogarty, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning;
Richard Josephson, Deputy Director;
Valerie Peterson, Urban Planner.

Staff Note: For commercial properties, the applicant and/or his successors are responsible for payment of an annual charge for such encroachment pursuant to Section 3-2-85 of the City Code.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Transportation & Environmental Services:

- R-1 Applicant shall maintain a minimum 4 foot wide unobstructed sidewalk.
- R-2 On the final plan, provide the number of treads, rise height, and landing dimensions for the steps.
- R-3 Applicant shall be responsible for replacement and repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way, including any areas damaged during construction activity.
- R-4 All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design.
- R-5 Sidewalk shall remain open during construction.
- R-6 Provide the ramp slope. The ramp and steps shall comply with ADA requirements.
- C-1 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES.
(Sec. 5-3-61)

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 The handicapped ramp must comply with the requirements of Chapter 11 of the USBC.
- C-2 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully detail the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.

Health Department:

F-1 No comments.

Police Department:

F-1 The Police Department has no objections to the encroachment of adding an ADA access ramp, stairs, and landing for the church building.

Real Estate Assessment:

F-1 No Comment

Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities:

R-1 The existing tree well opposite the proposed ramp shall be relocated to be centered between the two existing tree wells.

R-2 The dimensions of the relocated tree well shall be a minimum of 4 ft. width and a minimum 6 ft. length.

R-3 The relocation of the tree well shall be performed by the applicant.

F-1 The 7.5" cal. Linden tree located in the existing tree well opposite the proposed ramp is dead and must be removed.

F-2 The City will remove the dead tree.

F-3 The City will provide a replacement tree in the relocated tree well.