

Questions and Considerations for the Board of Architectural Review regarding 1126 Prince Street Demolition

Submitted by: Ken Crutchfield, 1118 Prince Street.

The core of my input is to recommend deferring any decision if there is any doubt on agreement of common facts or the implications of decisions. Furthermore, if alternatives to demolition have not been considered, or not recently, I'd ask that the BAR do so.

Demolition may make economic sense for the property owner, and a new structure could raise property values on the block. Economics should be secondary to the consideration of other alternatives, and demolition should be a last resort option.

The 1100 block of Prince Street, between Henry, Fayette, and Duke, has a unique history as a block between two sets of railroad tracks, with industry, single-family dwellings, and tenements at one time. The eclectic building at 1126 is one of the last vestiges of the block's mixed character.

While the back of the structure may have been remodeled mid-century with period materials, the front elevation is similar in style to other wooden elevations on the block, and the structure itself dates to the early 1900s and possibly as early as 1830.

I have read the BAR's March 2010 decision to grant demolition of the structure, but to preserve the back wall and outbuilding. I see no discussion then of alternatives to demolition, and the latest report does not discuss this either.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input and comment on this project. I share this input as a ten-year resident and neighbor on the 1100 block of Prince Street. I care about Alexandria, its history, and preservation. I recognize there will always be change, and there must be balance. The BAR has a hard and thankless role in these proposals.

In the end, my comments and questions are motivated by a desire to understand recommendations with reasonable transparency and process integrity.

Alignment on facts and some questions:

1. What has changed since the BAR approved demolition of 1126 Prince in 2010?

Several points of fact are observed that have changed since 2010. They may or may not be relevant to the current proposal. A) The properties at 1132 and 1126 have been subdivided. B) There is a new owner at 1132. C) The structures are now 16 years older. D) The BAR and the Parker-Gray District have merged administratively. E) There may be additional research and history published publicly in relation to the block that specifically references this property. The copyright on this document is 2008 and 2015, which implies updates after the last meeting.

<https://www.freedmenscemetery.org/resources/families/documents/noland.pdf>

Do any of the prior decisions, which may or may not have relied upon the 2010 recommendation, need to be revisited? Is a fresh review of historical significance in its relationship to Recker's grocery (1132) and the block warranted? This is a unique structure. Newspaper.com articles beginning in 1908 list the address; they also mention an office or point of contact for Mr. Recker. Sanborn maps from 1902 list grocery storage and a residence. 1907 lists a cobbler. 1912 lists a lunch spot and a shoe shop. (The 1896 map has errors, as 1132 isn't on the map, but it lists 1126 as a grocery and a dwelling.) Is there historical significance to the African American experience in Alexandria? Is there historical significance to the oyster industry in Alexandria? Does the property have historical significance when viewed through the lens of a mixed-use block?

Note: There is a disconnect with the real estate records for the property as the town's records suggest the structure's origins date to 1830.

<https://realestate.alexandriava.gov/detail.php?accountno=60022730>

2. What is the position of the BAR regarding the "alley wall", the outbuilding on the back alley at 1126, and the side wall? Are those components historic?

It is noted that the current submission does not include a teardown of the alley wall or outbuilding. The "alley wall" is the wall behind the home, along the property line with the alley. The wall crosses the properties at 1132 Prince and 1126 Prince. The wall also has a common design and elements across the two properties. The outbuilding is along the property line. The "side wall" separates the properties at 1126 and 1124.

What is the BAR's position on this? If a potential follow-on request should be contemplated by the BAR, especially if hardships during construction or permitting were to be raised, would the wall be at risk? Rear elevations and alleys are integral to Old Town's historic character and historic function. This alley has existed since at least 1877, according to fire insurance maps, and has influenced travel and delivery patterns since.

Removal of the wall could set a precedent in several ways (e.g., removal of a common-designed structure that crosses properties). Additionally, the alley wall ensures that water drains down the alley and not into other properties. The side wall occasionally causes water to pool in the backyard of 1126 rather than flow into the yard at 1124. It is desirable to understand potential environmental impacts on

neighboring properties if the removal of the boundary walls and/or outbuilding wall is a future request

3. Demolition vs Preservation

Were alternatives considered or presented that preserve the structure? Were alternatives considered that keep the existing elevation and façade, while allowing development? Is the structure unstable or irreparable? Is it structurally infeasible to rehabilitate or add to the structure? Are there engineering reports? On what basis is demolition being recommended?

4. Design and Construction

The designs suggest that a foundation or basement will be dug out on the property. The current designs suggest the new construction will abut 1132. Has there been sufficient engineering review w/respect to the adjacent properties? If prior construction plans were considered when both 1126 and 1132 had the same owner, does anything need to be revisited? Has there been a risk assessment for excavation, for example? It would be problematic if demolition were to occur and construction could not proceed, or if the project were no longer economically viable, leaving a vacant lot for an extended period.

5. Architectural compatibility and streetscape

Are there comparable projects with comparable streetscape in terms of the scale of the proposed new structure that residents can view? Similarly, are there comparable projects where the original building has been preserved?



[EXTERNAL]Comments on BAR Cases BAR2026-00042 & BAR2026-00043 – 1126 Prince Street

From Ivy Kupec <ikupec@yahoo.com>

Date Tue 4/7/2026 9:36 AM

To Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>; William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Cc kupecap@gmail.com <kupecap@gmail.com>; Ivy Kupec <ikupec@yahoo.com>

You don't often get email from ikupec@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Members of the Board of Architectural Review and Planning & Zoning Staff,

We are the owners of the property at 1122 Prince Street, just a few doors from the proposed project at 1126 Prince Street. We are writing to share several concerns regarding the pending application seeking approval to demolish the existing structure and construct a new single-family residence.

We appreciate the Board's responsibility in protecting the architectural integrity of the Old & Historic Alexandria district, and we recognize that reinvestment in historic neighborhoods can be beneficial when it is undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the district's established character. Because demolition within the historic district is irreversible, however, we urge the Board to exercise particular care in evaluating whether the proposed removal of the existing structure is consistent with the preservation principles reflected in the City's historic district ordinance and design guidelines.

As the Board knows, the guidelines emphasize the importance of retaining historic building fabric wherever feasible and evaluating demolition proposals carefully, particularly where the structure contributes to the established scale, rhythm, and visual continuity of the streetscape. While individual buildings may vary in prominence, the cumulative effect of modest structures along Prince Street is a defining feature of the historic district. Once removed, this historic context cannot be reconstructed. These two homes seem to be the last standing 'shucking houses', which were certainly a part of Alexandria's history at the turn of the 20th century. For this reason, we hope the Board will carefully consider whether demolition is truly necessary and whether alternatives—such as rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, or incorporation of elements of the existing structure -- have been fully explored.

These homes are currently very small indeed, but one has to wonder whether they therefore provide a viable option for the city's commitment to ensure 'affordable housing'. With the proposed plan, the outcome will be exactly the opposite -- one enormous home, out of reach for lower-income individuals interested in living in Old Town because they work there. Additionally, it is a shame that once again, we have a developer seizing a lucrative opportunity rather than homeowners building and renovating these historic structures to meet their personal needs.

Directly related to the plans themselves, we are concerned about whether the proposed replacement structure fully reflects the principles in the design guidelines regarding compatibility of new construction with its historic surroundings. In particular, the guidelines emphasize that new buildings should respect the established scale, massing, and proportions of adjacent structures and maintain the visual rhythm of the block. Because Prince Street is characterized by relatively narrow lots and closely spaced buildings, even modest increases in height, depth, or apparent bulk can noticeably alter the character of the streetscape. We therefore ask the Board to carefully evaluate whether the proposed building's massing, footprint, and vertical proportions are compatible with the surrounding historic context.

In addition, we encourage the Board to consider the broader impacts of the proposed design on neighboring properties. The guidelines note the importance of ensuring that new construction does not adversely affect the setting of adjacent historic buildings. In a dense historic environment such as this block of Prince Street, a significantly larger structure may introduce new shadowing conditions in rear yards, alter long-established sightlines, and create privacy concerns due to additional upper-story windows and elevated viewpoints. We hope these contextual effects will be taken into account in assessing the proposal.

We also encourage careful review of the proposed rear elevation and architectural elements to ensure that they remain compatible with the character of the district. While we understand that the guidelines often allow greater flexibility for rear facades, those elevations still form part of the historic environment and can be visible from neighboring properties and public alleys.

Given the significance of the proposed demolition and the potential impacts of the new construction, we respectfully request that the Board consider deferring this application for additional study if there are outstanding questions regarding demolition justification, building massing, or compatibility with the surrounding historic context. Allowing additional time for review and possible refinement of the proposal would help ensure that any eventual project is fully consistent with the preservation goals that the Board is entrusted to uphold.

Our intent in submitting these comments is not to oppose thoughtful improvements to the property. Rather, we ask that the Board apply the full set of considerations outlined in the historic district guidelines -- particularly those relating to demolition, compatibility of scale and massing, and the preservation of the established streetscape -- before granting approval for this proposal.

We are grateful for the Board's continued stewardship of Alexandria's historic resources and for the care with which you evaluate projects that shape the long-term character of our neighborhood. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Anthony & Ivy Kupec
[1122 Prince Street](#)
[Alexandria, Virginia](#)

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[EXTERNAL]Comments & Requested Conditions: Adjacent Property Owner at 1124 Prince (BAR2026-00042 & BAR2026-00043)

From Yarbrough,Joanna,CH-Vevey <Joanna.Yarbrough@nestle.com>

Date Mon 4/6/2026 1:00 PM

To Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>

Cc Yarbrough,Joanna,CH-Vevey <Joanna.Yarbrough@nestle.com>; Tallotte,Anthony,CH-La Tour-de-Peilz <Anthony.Tallotte@nestle.com>

You don't often get email from joanna.yarbrough@nestle.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Members of the Board of Architectural Review and Planning & Zoning Staff,

We are writing as the **owners of the adjacent property at 1124 Prince Street** regarding the applications for **1126 Prince Street (BAR2026-00042 & BAR2026-00043)**. While we are currently residing abroad and unable to attend the April 8th hearing in person, we would appreciate that the following comments and questions be entered into the public record and considered as part of your review.

We recognize the potential benefits of thoughtful reinvestment and new construction within the district when it is appropriately designed and executed in a manner that protects adjacent properties and historic context.

Our primary concerns relate to demolition justification, proposed massing, and—most importantly—construction-related risks, including excavation and drainage impacts on our property.

1. Demolition Justification

The application does not appear to clearly demonstrate that demolition is the only feasible option. Could additional information be provided regarding:

- The structural condition of the existing building?
- Alternatives to demolition that were considered and why they were not pursued?

Given the preservation-first intent of the Old Town Historic District, we respectfully request that demolition be carefully evaluated against feasible rehabilitation options.

2. Excavation and Structural Risk

The proposed introduction of a basement where none currently exists raises concerns due to the proximity of our home (1124 Prince), which has a crawl space and a shallower foundation.

We request clarification on the following:

- What is the proposed depth of excavation relative to adjacent foundations?

- What shoring and/or underpinning methods will be used to protect neighboring structures?
- Has a geotechnical analysis been completed, and if so, what are its findings regarding soil stability?
- What measures will be implemented to prevent soil movement, settlement, or structural impact to adjacent properties?
- Will vibration monitoring be conducted during demolition and excavation activities?

3. Drainage and Stormwater Management

As noted above, our property includes a crawl space rather than full basement, which makes it more sensitive to changes in drainage patterns and subsurface moisture conditions. The introduction of a new basement and associated foundation and drainage systems at 1126 Prince raises concerns about how stormwater and groundwater will be managed during and after construction.

We request additional information on:

- How post-construction grading and drainage will compare to existing conditions
- How stormwater runoff will be managed on-site to ensure no increased flow toward adjacent properties
- Whether the proposed basement includes footing drains and/or a sump pump system
- If so, where sump discharge will be directed and how it will be prevented from impacting neighboring properties
- Whether a formal drainage or stormwater management plan has been reviewed by the City

4. Potential for Water Intrusion

Given the proposed excavation and new foundation system, we are concerned about potential changes to subsurface water movement.

- Has any assessment been conducted regarding groundwater behavior or subsurface drainage impacts?
- What measures will be taken to prevent increased moisture or water intrusion into adjacent properties, particularly those with crawl spaces?

5. Construction Management and Protections

Given the scale of demolition and excavation, we request that the following points be confirmed:

- Requirement for a construction management plan to be prepared and reviewed
- Clarification of the protections to be put in place for adjacent structures during construction
- Requirement for the applicant to maintain appropriate insurance and assume responsibility for any damage to neighboring properties

6. Requested Conditions of Approval

Given the above concerns, we respectfully request that the following conditions be considered should the application move forward, all of which at the responsibility and expense of the applicant:

- A pre-construction condition survey of 1124 Prince Street
- Vibration monitoring during demolition and excavation
- A detailed drainage and stormwater management plan demonstrating no adverse impact on adjacent properties
- A construction management plan including structural protection measures
- Documentation and repair of any damage to adjacent properties resulting from construction

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns. We appreciate the Board's careful review of projects within the Old Town Historic District and your attention to potential impacts on neighboring properties. We look forward to the outcomes of the public hearing and next steps on this matter.

Please feel free to contact us if any additional information would be helpful.

Sincerely,
Joanna Yarbrough & Anthony Tallotte
Owners, 1124 Prince Street
Joanna.yarbrough@nestle.com
Anthony.tallotte@nestle.com
571.216.5253 (J. Yarbrough)
571.344.8719 (A. Tallotte)


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FW: [EXTERNAL]Comments & Requested Conditions: Adjacent Property 1126 (BAR2026-00042 & BAR2026-00043)

From William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

Date Wed 4/8/2026 12:17 PM

To Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>; Ashley Casimir <ashley.casimir@alexandriava.gov>; Kendra Jacobs <Kendra.Jacobs@alexandriava.gov>

 1 attachment (8 MB)

1. 1130 Prince Window Pic.jpeg;

Please see the attached letter from the public regarding the proposed project at 1126 Prince Street.

Bill Conkey, AIA
Historic Preservation Architect
City of Alexandria, Virginia
Dept of Planning & Zoning
703.746.3854
alexandriava.gov

From: LAMBE, SEAN R Col USAFR AFRC RIO/DET 3 CC <sean.lambe@us.af.mil>

Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 12:10 PM

To: William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>; Amirah Lane <amirah.lane@alexandriava.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]Comments & Requested Conditions: Adjacent Property 1126 (BAR2026-00042 & BAR2026-00043)

Importance: High

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sean.lambe@us.af.mil. [Learn why this is important](#)

TO: Board of Architectural Review and Planning & Zoning Staff

FROM: Sean R. Lambe, owner of 1130 Prince Street, Alexandria VA 22314

I would like to respectfully request the full consideration of the Board of Architectural Review and Planning & Zoning Staff regarding the proposed project 1126 BAR2026-00042 & BAR2026-00043. If this project is approved, its future structure would significantly and negatively affect our rich history of Alexandria and have an unintended affect on my property at 1130 Prince Street, Alexandria VA.

1126 Prince holds significant historical context to the African American community in Virginia and their contributions to the oyster industry in Alexandria. If this project is approved, this history and the additional historical context of my building, 1130 Prince, listed below would be altered and erased from our community forever:

- 1902 Recker's grocery
- 1907 lists a cobbler
- 1912 lists a lunch spot and a shoe shop

- 2016 - 2026 Zion Baptist Church of Alexandria Harambee Books & Artworks specialized in hard-to-find classic literature and art by and about people of African descent

I am proud of this history of my building, a building that I purchased as a Combat Veteran with two Bronze Star Medals (received in Iraq and Afghanistan respectively) alongside an Army Combat Action Badge. As a proud 100% Disabled Veteran, I was able to purchase this historic property with my Veteran Administration Home Loan Entitlement. The VA loan program, established in 1944 as part of the GI Bill, has provided millions of veterans with access to home financing, significantly impacting homeownership in the United States. I am just one of these Veterans; however, as we all know, the context of history is important.

In addition, if this project is approved, four windows of my building in total would be walled in, blocking any and all natural light, and rendered completely useless. The first window impacted is one of three windows in a living room; the second window is the one and only window in a kitchen; the third window is the only window in a bathroom (you can't see it in the attached picture; it is in the very small section between structures), and the fourth window is the sole window in a common stairwell, all of which will be removed from my property without my consent. This is a significant loss of natural lighting and this change would negatively shape the architectural integrity of my property and this historic neighborhood that I cherish. Please see the attached photo for reference.

This building, 1130 Prince Street's facade has not been dramatically altered since at least 1907 (possibly 1830), and has existed in a historic alley that has been in existence since 1877 as best as available records can document. Too much of our valued history will be lost if this 1126 (BAR2026-00042 & BAR2026-00043) project is approved. I respectfully request a careful review of the proposed rear elevation and architectural elements to ensure that they remain compatible with the character of the district as those elevations still form part of the historic environment and can be visible from neighboring properties and public, historic alleys.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input and comment on this project.

V/r,
Sean R. Lambe
Owner 1130 Prince Street
908-770-6772

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