

*****DRAFT MINUTES*****

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
Old & Historic Alexandria District

Wednesday, May 15, 2013
7:30pm, City Council Chambers, City Hall
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: Tom Hulfish, Chairman
Chip Carlin
Wayne Neale
Art Keleher
John von Senden
Peter Smeallie

Members Absent: Oscar Fitzgerald

Staff Present: Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager
Joshua Brooking, Senior Planning Technician

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. by Chairman Hulfish.

I. MINUTES

Consideration of the minutes of the public hearing of May 1, 2013.

BOARD ACTION: Approved as submitted, 6-0.

On a motion by Mr. Carlin, seconded by Mr. Keleher, the minutes were approved, as submitted, 6-0.

II. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. CASE BAR2013 0116

Request for alterations at 901 & 903 King St.

APPLICANT: White House Black Market by ARK Sign Services Inc.

BOARD ACTION: Approved on the Consent Calendar, as amended, 6-0.

On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Mr. von Senden, the Consent Calendar was approved, 6-0.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND ITEMS PREVIOUSLY DEFERRED

2. CASE BAR2013-0093

Request for alterations at **101 Princess St.**

APPLICANT: Allen E. Weh

BOARD ACTION: The Board had a vote of 3-3. Therefore, the motion failed and no action was taken.

SPEAKERS

Allen Weh, the applicant, complimented and agreed with the staff findings. He stated that the incomplete items from the previous BAR approval would be finished to staffs satisfaction. Mr. Weh testified that that his property is not a historic house and was not a red brick house, and sits on a monotonous street and therefore felt that painting the exterior would not breach the historical character of Alexandria. He conveyed to the Board that he hoped that the improvements at the property will encourage other neighbors to improve their properties.

John Hynan, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation, stated that the essential color of the Historic District is red brick and applies to all buildings, including 18th thru 21st century buildings. Mr. Hynan and the Historic Alexandria Foundation noted their objection to painting of any red brick structures within the District.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. von Senden stated that all buildings reflect the period during which they were constructed and noted that the subject building will be considered historic and represent the 1970's someday. He stated that he was ambivalent on painting brick of modern construction, even though it may cause maintenance issues and reduce the lifespan of the building. Mr. von Senden made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keleher, to defer the application until all outstanding items identified in the staff report were resolved.

Mr. Smeallie believed that the existing row was not architecturally significant. He opposed painting an older red brick building but, in this instance, was not opposed to painting the orange-yellow brick. Mr. Smeallie made an alternate motion to approve the application with staff recommendations. Due to the lack of a second, Mr. Smeallie's motion failed.

Duncan Blair, the applicant's counsel, asked the Board to consider amending the motion to allow Staff to confirm that the outstanding issues are corrected before issuing the Certificate of Appropriateness for painting the building.

Mr. Keleher preferred the building not be painted and believed it would set a bad precedent.

Mr. Carlin, in this particular case, did not have a problem with painting the masonry.

Mr. Neale stated that while the block was fairly simple, there were some architectural features that gave the building enough merit to not paint. He stated that he was not in favor of painting the building.

After further discussion, Mr. von Senden and Mr. Keleher withdrew their original motion.

Mr. Carlin, seconded by Mr. Smeallie, made a motion to approve the application as submitted. The subsequent vote resulted in a tie, with Mr. von Senden, Mr. Keleher, and Mr. Neale voting against the motion. Therefore, the motion failed and the Board took no action on this case.

REASON

The Board was conflicted about whether the painting of previously unpainted masonry was appropriate for this particular application.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

3. CASE BAR2013-0118

Request for alterations at **1211 Michigan Ct.**

APPLICANT: Amy Smith by Brian Weil

BOARD ACTION: **Denied, 5-1.**

SPEAKERS

Amy Smith, owner and applicant, acknowledged receipt of the annual Real Estate Tax Assessment and apologized that she neglected to receive approval from the City for the window replacement. Ms. Smith believed that she had selected a high quality window, had matched the previous window color, and that it was compatible with the neighborhood. She added that she did receive HOA approval for the replacement windows. Additionally, she stated that these windows were not substantially or reasonably visible from a public right of way. She also told the Board that she had collected 24 signatures from her neighbors supporting the after-the-fact application.

Mr. Hynan stated that the Historic Alexandria Foundation supports the staff recommendation to deny vinyl windows.

Paul Hertel, a neighbor residing at 1217 Michigan Court, stated that approving vinyl windows would have significant implications for the Nethergate community, adding that only 10 of the 140 units in the development lie outside of the district boundaries. He identified two critical failings with the windows; as an insert window there is a decrease in the glass area and the muntins are flatter than a historic glazed muntin. Mr. Hertel concurred with the staff recommendations.

Brian Weil, the contractor who installed the windows, confirmed for Chairman Hulfish that he was licensed in Alexandria, stated that these were custom windows that he designed for this application. Additionally, he noted that there are other vinyl windows installed in the Nethergate community. Mr. Weil presented a window sample of the installed window, stating that it is a SDL, triple grid window.

Carol Smith, neighbor to the subject property, stated that she felt that Ms. Smith selected windows that were architecturally compatible with the neighborhood and provided proficient energy efficiency. She supported the application as submitted.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Neale stated that the property was hard to find and located at the edge of the historic district. Based on his site visit, he felt that the material of these windows was indistinguishable from the public sidewalk and that it would be punitive to make the applicant replace the windows. Additionally, he added that if the Board did approve the after-the-fact approval of vinyl windows in this instance, it would not be an endorsement by the Board for vinyl windows in other locations.

Mr. Keleher stated that the windows should be replaced with windows compatible with Board adopted policies. He added that if the Board approved vinyl windows in this location, it would create a precedent for the entire Nethergate community to install vinyl windows.

Mr. Smeallie agreed with Mr. Keleher, adding that vinyl was an inappropriate material throughout the Old & Historic Alexandria Historic District. Mr. Smeallie stated that he could not support the application for vinyl windows.

Mr. von Senden stated that he generally evaluates after-the-fact approvals from the perspective of how the Board would evaluate the application were the applicant asking permission rather than seeking forgiveness. Noting that the guidelines for window replacement materials were relaxed in 2010 when the Board and community updated the Window Policy, and that this policy allowed a variety of modern energy efficient windows for a building this age, he could not support vinyl windows.

Mr. Carlin made the motion, seconded by Mr. Smeallie, to deny the application. The Board denied the application 5-1, with Mr. Neale voting against the motion.

REASON

The Board found that the applicant was aware they were in a historic district and that BAR approval was required for window replacement, and found that the contractor was licensed and had a professional responsibility to obtain a building permit. In addition, the window policy had recently been reviewed and expanded to allow a variety of modern and energy efficient materials but that the adopted policy specifically excluded vinyl windows.

4. CASE BAR2013-0121

Request to partially demolish & capsulate at **206 S Lee St.**

APPLICANT: Robert & Sabine Bisson by Thomas French, II

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as submitted, by a roll call vote, 6-0.**

Items 4 and 5 were combined for discussion purposes.

5. CASE BAR2013-0097

Request for an addition & alterations at **206 S Lee St.**

APPLICANT: Robert & Sabine Bisson by Thomas French, II

BOARD ACTION: **Approved as submitted, by a roll call vote, 6-0.**

SPEAKERS

Thomas French, representing the applicant, stated that the proposed application does not pose any negative impacts to the Historic District. Additionally, he stated that he is working with Code Administration and the neighbor at 130 Prince St. to gain an easement for the window abutting the two properties.

BOARD DISCUSSION

On a motion by Mr. von Senden, seconded by Mr. Carlin, the Board voted to approve the application as amended, 6-0.

REASON

The Board found the proposal to be appropriate and consistent with the *Design Guidelines*.

6. CASE BAR2013-0123

Request for demolition (garage) at **217 N Columbus St.**

APPLICANT: Andrew MacDonald

BOARD ACTION: Approved as amended, by a roll call vote, 6-0.

SPEAKERS

Ann Peterson, residing at 217 N Columbus St., represented the applicant and stated that the applicant was in favor of staff recommendations.

BOARD DISCUSSION

On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Mr. von Senden, the Board voted to approve the application as amended, 6-0.

REASON

The Board found the garage did not have historic or architectural significance and that the proposal was appropriate and consistent with the *Design Guidelines*.

7. CASE BAR2013-0124

Request for alterations & signage at **605 Franklin St.**

APPLICANT: Amanda Mertins by Margaret Guryan, Robert Bentley Adams & Associates P.C.

BOARD ACTION: Approved as amended, by a roll call vote, 6-0.

Items 7 and 8 were combined for discussion purposes.

8. CASE BAR2013-0141

Request to partially demolish at **605 Franklin St.**

APPLICANT: Amanda Mertins by Margaret Guryan, Robert Bentley Adams & Associates P.C.

BOARD ACTION: Approved as amended, by a roll call vote, 6-0.

SPEAKERS

Bud Adams, the applicant's architect, stated that he has worked with staff and the neighbors and agrees with the staff recommendations.

Mr. Hynan, stated that the Historic Alexandria Foundation was not opposed to the application because lime wash is reversible as opposed to painted masonry.

BOARD DISCUSSION

On a motion by Mr. von Senden, seconded by Mr. Carlin, the Board voted to approve the application as amended, 6-0.

REASON

The Board found the proposal to be appropriate and consistent with the *Design Guidelines*.

9. **CASE BAR2013-0125**
Request to partially demolish at **101 & 107 N Union St.**
APPLICANT: The Waterfront Market, LLC by Rich Markus
BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended, by a roll call vote, 6-0.**

Items 9 and 10 were combined for discussion purposes.

10. **CASE BAR2013-0126**
Request for alterations & signage at **101 & 107 N Union St.**
APPLICANT: The Waterfront Market, LLC by Rich Markus
BOARD ACTION: **Approved as amended, by a roll call vote, 6-0.**

SPEAKERS

Jody Manor, applicant and owner of the existing Bittersweet restaurant, presented the design. He stated that the commercial waterfront is not utilized by the residents of Alexandria and that the proposed Waterfront Market is an innovative and needed venture. Mr. Manor added that the only condition he did not agree with was removing the decal signage from the south elevation.

Mr. Hynan, expressed that the Historic Alexandria Foundation was in support of the application and staff recommendations.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Smeallie stated that he agrees with the staff recommendation, and thinks that there is a lot of signage in the proposal.

Mr. Manor asked for a point of clarification, why the removal of the decals from the southern elevation needed to be removed.

Mr. Neale stated that he was fine with the proposed signage on the south elevation because the street face is empty.

Mr. von Senden stated his only concern was removal of park benches on the waterfront. Mr. Manor responded that he is working with staff to relocate the benches.

Mr. Cox clarified that staff was not asking the applicant to remove the signage on the south elevation. Staff recommended that the applicant remove the frosting from the south elevation to allow pedestrians to see into the space.

On a motion by Mr. Neale, seconded by Mr. Carlin, the Board voted to approve the application as submitted, 6-0.

REASON

The Board found the proposal to be appropriate and consistent with the *Design Guidelines*.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

11. Update on the recent Charles M. Goodman House listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register and recommendation by VDHR for the National Register of Historic Places.
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The Board noted that the Charles M. Goodman House was listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and had been nominated to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, the Board recognized and appreciated Alexandria resident Margaret Grubiak's volunteer work to compile the nomination.

12. Update on installation of parking meters in Old Town.

The Board noted the expansion of the multi-space parking meters in front of ground floor retail uses on the streets perpendicular to King Street in Old Town.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

The following items are shown for information only. Based on the Board's adopted policies, these have been approved by Staff since the previous Board meeting.

CASE BAR2013-0128

Request for window & door replacement at **1109 Duke St.**

APPLICANT: Richard Downs

CASE BAR2013-0142

Request for roof trim & gutter replacement at **517 S Royal St.**

APPLICANT: Robin & David Marquis

CASE BAR2013-0143

Request for door replacement at **540 Second St.**

APPLICANT: Tesfray & Genet Berayes-Haymanot by Robert Poleman, Old Town Windows & Doors LLC

CASE BAR2013-0144

Request for signage at **1219 King St.**

APPLICANT: Fibre Space/Knit-a-gogo, Inc.

CASE BAR2013-0145

Request for signage at **114 S Royal St.**

APPLICANT: Maggie Jones

CASE BAR2013-0148

Request for window replacement at **413 S Saint Asaph St.**

APPLICANT: Renewal by Anderson

CASE BAR2013-0153

Request for a vent at **729 Ford's Landing Way.**

APPLICANT: Beth & Curt Nothstine by Timothy Fink, Giroux Plumbing

CASE BAR2013-0154

Request for window replacement at **207 N Columbus St.**

APPLICANT: Ann Begeman by Robert Poleman, Old Town Windows & Doors LLC

CASE BAR2013-0156

Request for signage at **110 S Washington St.**

APPLICANT: Citibank by Atlas Signs Industries

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Hulfish adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:35pm.

Minutes submitted by,

Joshua Brooking, Senior Planning Technician
Board of Architectural Review