

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

Board of Architectural Review
Wednesday, July 19, 2023
7:00 p.m., City Council Chamber
City Hall

Members Present:

Andrew Scott
Theresa del Ninno
James Spencer
Bud Adams
Nastaran Zandian
Margaret Miller

Members Absent: Michael Lyons

Secretary: Bill Conkey, AIA, Historic Preservation Architect

Staff Present: Brendan Harris, Historic Preservation Planner

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. MINUTES

Consideration of minutes from the July 6, 2023 meeting.

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Scott and seconded by Ms. Zandian, the Board of Architectural Review approved the July 6, 2023 Meeting minutes, as submitted.

Consent Calendar

3 **BAR#2023-00264 OHAD**
Request for alterations at 1115 Prince Street
Applicant: 1115 Prince Street, LLC

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Scott, and seconded by Ms. Miller, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR2023-00264 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

4 **BAR#2023-00276 OHAD**
Request to utilize a bicycle rack model
Applicant: Sheila McGraw

This item was removed from the consent calendar.

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Ms. Miller, and seconded by Ms. del Ninno, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR2023-00276 as submitted. The motion

carried on a vote of 6-0.

REASON

The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

SPEAKERS

Sheila McGraw was available to answer questions.

DISCUSSION

Ms. Miller asked what the design of the bike racks would look like.

5

BAR#2023-00277 PG

Request for alterations at 415 N Patrick Street

Applicant: Kevin Reamer

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Scott, and seconded by Ms. Miller, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR2023-00277 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

Deferrals Requested

6

BAR#2023-00229 OHAD

Request for alterations and signage at 425 S Washington Street

Applicant: Bloom Tea

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Ms. Miller, and seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board of Architectural Review accepted the request for deferral of BAR2023-00229. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

7&8

BAR#2023-00268 OHAD

Request for alterations at 1315 Duke Street

Applicant: Gretchen M. Bulova, Director, Office of Historic Alexandria

BAR#2023-00282 OHAD

Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 1315 Duke Street

Applicant: Gretchen M. Bulova, Director, Office of Historic Alexandria

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Ms. Miller, and seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board of Architectural Review accepted the request for deferral of BAR2023-00268 and BAR2023-00282. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

Items Previously Deferred

9

BAR#2023-00163 OHAD

Request for signage at 108 N Fairfax Street

Applicant: Sheila McGraw, City of Alexandria Transportation & Environmental Services

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Scott, and seconded by Ms. del Ninno, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR2023-00163 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-1.

REASON

The Board found the signage compatible with the streetscape.

SPEAKERS

Sheila McGraw was available to answer questions.

DISCUSSION

Ms. del Ninno asked if the current signs would remain or be replaced by the new signs. Ms. McGraw explained that the new signs would replace the existing. Two of the three signs would remain in the same location. The sign for 108 N. Fairfax would have to be moved in order to provide electricity.

Mr. Spencer requested clarification as to the proposed location of the sign at 108 N. Fairfax.

Mr. Scott requested validation that all three signs can be dimmed; Ms. McGraw confirmed that.

Ms. Miller expressed concern over the size of the signs and the location of the sign on N. Fairfax. She also felt that this type of sign should not be permitted in a historic district and recommended that the Board defer the cases to allow Ms. McGraw to confer with other historic districts.

Ms. del Ninno asked if the sign on N. Fairfax would be illuminated on both sides. Ms. McGraw confirmed that.

Mr. Spencer requested reverification as to the proposed location of the sign at 108 N. Fairfax.

Ms. Miller recommended deferral to provide the applicant time to research other historic districts.

Mr. Adams understood Ms. Miller's concerns and requested clarification as to which part of each sign would be illuminated.

Ms. Zandian would also appreciate more research.

Ms. del Ninno appreciated the fact that only a small portion of the sign is illuminated and asked if the sign could be located above the garage entrance instead of on the side. Ms. McGraw explained that the proposed locations would make the signs more visible to the driver so the driver could decide whether or not to enter the garage. If the signs were to be located above the entrance, the driver would have to enter to see the parking availability.

Mr. Scott's primary concern was the brightness and he noted that the fact that they are dimmable and can be turned off assuaged that concern. He noted that the Board had approved backlit and illuminated signs in the past. He felt that Ms. McGraw made a strong case and that research into other historic districts, while interesting, would be unnecessary. He expressed support for the applications.

Mr. Spencer asked his fellow Board members how they would vote on this proposal for a private garage. Mr. Adams said he could support it. Ms. del Ninno said that private ownership would not make a difference. Mr. Scott said he would support the application whether it was public or private.

Ms. Miller wondered what would happen if a restaurateur had a digital sign indicating how many crab cakes remained in the kitchen. She was concerned about setting a precedent.

Mr. Adams noted that he has seen signage like this in historic districts all over Europe and that they are very helpful. It is part of modern living.

Mr. Scott asked Mr. Conkey about lighting policies and what can and cannot be approved. He asked if our policies are out of date. He also asked Ms. McGraw how frequently the number changes. She explained that the number changes as cars enter and exit.

Mr. Spencer recommended that the Design Guidelines committee discuss updating the sign policy.

10

BAR#2023-00185 OHAD

Request for signage at 111 S Pitt Street

Applicant: Sheila McGraw, City of Alexandria Transportation & Environmental Services

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Scott, and seconded by Ms. Zandian, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR2023-00185 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-1.

See docket #9 above; this case discussed concurrently with that one.

11

BAR#2023-00186 OHAD

Request for signage at 220 N Union Street

Applicant: Sheila McGraw, City of Alexandria Transportation & Environmental Services

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Scott, and seconded by Ms. Zandian, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR2023-00186 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-1.

See docket #9 above; this case discussed concurrently with that one.

New Business

13&14

BAR#2023-00269 OHAD

Request for reapproval of a previously approved application for alterations and addition at 1113 Prince Street
Applicant: Robert B & Jane J Wallace

BAR#2023-00270 OHAD

Request for reapproval of a previously approved application for partial demolition/encapsulation at 1113 Prince Street
Applicant: Robert B & Jane J Wallace

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Ms. Miller, and seconded by Ms. Zandian, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR2023-00269 & BAR2023-00270 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0. Mr. Adams recused.

REASON

The Board agreed with staff’s recommendation.

SPEAKERS

Robert Wallace, the property owner, was available to answer any questions.

DISCUSSION

There was no discussion.

15

BAR#2023-00273 OHAD

Request for alterations at 222 S West Street
Applicant: Linett Axelsson

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Ms. Miller, and seconded by Mr. Scott, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR2023-00273 as amended, with the conditions that the north windows visible from the street be made of wood and the sill height of the triple window is raised to be in line with that of 224 South West Street. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

REASON

The Board agreed with staff’s recommendation to use wood windows on the north side instead of the proposed aluminum windows.

SPEAKERS

Karen Conkey, the architect, was available to answer any questions.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Adams asked if the applicant would consider moving the triple windowsill height higher to match with the neighboring property.

Mr. Scott asked if the aluminum-clad windows otherwise comply with the design guidelines. He thinks wood all the way around the property would look best.

Ms. del Ninno spoke in support of using wood windows on the north side.

Mr. Spencer expressed his preference for wood windows.

Ms. Miller also recommended the use of wood windows.

The Board added staff's condition to use wood windows on the north side and added a new condition that the applicant raise the triple windowsill height to match the neighboring 224 South West Street.

Other Business

16 EV Car Charging Presentation

17 BAR#2023-00278 OHAD

Request for concept review II at 301 N Fairfax Street

Applicant: 301 N Fairfax Project Owner LLC

SPEAKERS

Cathy Puskar, attorney for the applicant, introduced the project.

Michael Winstanley, project architect, presented the design for the project.

Ellen Mosher, 324 North Saint Asaph Street, presented examples of historic buildings and suggested that the proposed design more closely resemble these examples,

Ann Shack, 501 Tobacco Quay, stated that the proposed design does not comply with the Design Guidelines and wants a reconsideration of the design. She asked that the north wing of the building be moved to the east.

Allen Krinsmen, 314 North Fairfax Street, appreciated the modifications to the design but still felt that the building is overwhelming to its neighbors. He noted that the design is not compatible with the historic district and would be more appropriate in Potomac Yard.

Michael Maibach, 325 Queen Street, reviewed the history of the area and stated that the proposed design is not compatible with the historic district.

Nancy Petit, 103 Quay Street, discussed the importance of the historic district and noted that the proposed design is not compatible with the character of the historic district.

Terry McVenes, 223 Princess Street, appreciated the design changes but still felt that the proposed design is not appropriate. He expressed concern about the impacts on traffic and environmental concerns.

Lisa Martin, 310 North Fairfax, expressed concern about the quality of the ground floor open space.

Jana McKeag, 315 Queen Street, stated that homeowners have complied with design guidelines and that the developer should as well. She expressed a desire for more affordable housing.

John Kingston, 120 South Lee Street, discussed historic preservation in Savannah and how this

relates to the proposed design.

Pamela Callahan, 317 Queen Street, stated that the architectural vocabulary of the proposed design is not appropriate.

Yvonne Callahan, 735 South Lee Street, appreciated the changes to the design but expressed concern about the proposed density and the use of fiber cement.

Gail Rothrock, representing HAF, appreciates the building setbacks but felt that the design is missing an expressed base, middle, and top. She requested additional building breaks and supported the revised design for the Queen Street elevation.

Tom Foley, 315 Queen Street, stated that the proposed design is not compatible with the historic district. He expressed concern about the usage of upper levels to meet the required open space and requested additional affordable housing units.

Anna Bergman, 300 Queen Street, expressed concern about the proposed size and character of the building and stated that the design should more closely reflect historic architecture.

Scott Corzine, 300 Queen Street, stated that the proposed building is too large for the neighborhood. He expressed concern about the rooftop decks and felt that the building should meet the zoning ordinance.

Joel Newman, 519 Princess Street, noted that homeowners are required to comply with design guidelines and this developer should as well.

Raymond Eresman, 230 North Royal Street, stated that the proposed building is not compatible with the existing two story residential buildings. He noted that the existing office building is more compatible with the existing buildings than the proposed design.

Cathy Puskar, attorney for the applicant, noted that the applicant is not requesting a variance for the extent of open space. She noted that the zoning ordinance does not allow new curb cuts and that the location of the proposed one is related to the existing curb cut. She reminded the Board that direct copies of historic buildings have been discouraged and that the design was modified to better relate to neighboring properties. She noted that the project site is not within the waterfront zone.

DISCUSSION

Ms. Miller noted that the blocks surrounding the project site are all residential in nature and that Queen Street is important to the community. Given that the buildings on the other corners of the street are two stories, the south west corner of the proposed building should be lowered. She asked the architect to consider relocating the garage entrance off of Queen Street. She stated that the Fairfax Street elevation is too massive and asked that the north and east elevations include windows. She stated that the scale of the building could be improved with a greater level of detailing and that the architectural character is improving from previous iterations.

Mr. Adams did not have any issue with the proposed height and appreciated the location of the entrance on Queen Street. He suggested adding a greater level of variety to the Fairfax Street elevation.

Ms. del Ninno stated that the proposed building is too large for the surrounding structures. She expressed concern regarding the location of the transformers at the Queen Street side of the building. She suggested that crenelations located only at the middle section of the Queen Street elevation could be effective. She stated that the proportions of the bays facing North Fairfax Street and the overall detailing are appropriate but was concerned that the overall building is too large.

Mr. Scott appreciated the changes made to the design since the last BAR hearing. He expressed concern regarding the massing of the south west corner of the building in relation to the buildings on the opposite corners. He suggested that additional variation in the design of the north building could help to differentiate it from the southern block. He appreciated the intent of the chamfer at the edge of the roof at the south end of the building but felt that instead of reducing the visual height, it actually draws attention to the top of the building.

Mr. Spencer appreciated the rhythm and structure of the Fairfax Street elevation and noted that additional variation within this framework could add interest to the design. He noted that additional setbacks could lead to a wedding cake effect and that additional detailing will help to reduce the visual scale of the building.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Architectural Review adjourned at 10:45 pm.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

BAR#2023-00267 PG

Request for front door, stoop and front window replacement at 1014 Queen Street

Applicant: Jeff Larrick

BAR#2023-00275 OHAD

Request for alterations at 1115 Prince Street

Applicant: Matthew S Gray

BAR#2023-00280 OHAD

Request for window and door replacement at 19 Keiths Lane

Applicant: Karlen Murray/ Renewal by Andersen

BAR#2023-00281 OHAD

Request for roof replacement at 708 Day Lane

Applicant: Patricia and Mendal Livezey

BAR#2023-00283 OHAD

Request for partial fence replacement at 420 S Pitt Street

Applicant: Arthur Thomas

BAR#2023-00285 OHAD

Request for window replacements at 302 N Saint Asaph Street

Applicant: Reba Jean Whalen

BAR#2023-00289 OHAD

Request for window replacements at 110 Queen Street
Applicant: The Window Man

BAR#2023-00291 OHAD
Request for brick paver walkway at 716 Gibbon Street
Applicant: Luis Lugo

BAR#2023-00292 OHAD
Request for in-kind exhaust duct replacement at 815 King Street
Applicant: Old Town #1 LLC

BAR#2023-00296 OHAD
Request for partial siding replacement at 718 Wolfe Street
Applicant: James Beattie