

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: AUGUST 31, 2018

TO: GLORIA SITTON, CITY CLERK  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK AND CLERK OF COUNCIL

THRU: KARL W. MORITZ, DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

FROM: PURVI IRWIN, CHAIR  
PARKER-GRAY DISTRICT  
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

SUBJECT: FY 2018 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARKER-GRAY DISTRICT  
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

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I am pleased to present this Annual Report for the Parker-Gray District Board of Architectural Review (PG BAR) for Fiscal Year 2018, extending from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, as required by City Code Section 2-4-7(i)(1). The attached record of membership and attendance shows that all members attended more than 75% of the meetings, or had an excused absence in advance, as required.

### **PG BAR Officers**

There were no changes in the membership of the PG-BAR for FY 2018. However, with election of officers in July 2017, Ms. Purvi Irwin became Chair and Mr. James Spencer became Vice Chair by a unanimous vote of the Board.

### **BAR Regulatory Activities**

The level of activity in the PG-BAR District during FY 2018 showed 35 public hearing cases, similar to the number of FY 2017 public hearing cases. Two PG BAR meetings were cancelled in FY 2018 due to a lack of cases, up from FY 2017 when only one meeting was cancelled. In addition to the 35 public hearing cases, 35 cases (50%) were approved in FY 2018 by staff through the administrative process. This is a decrease of 9 cases from FY 2017 when 44 administrative cases were approved by staff. Eligible applicants are taking advantage of the administrative review process, recognizing that changes and amended design guidelines adopted by the PG-BAR in 2012 have substantially reduced the time and cost for most minor alterations, while maintaining all the original historic materials on street-facing elevations. Additionally, a number of minor alterations that previously required BAR approval, such as changes below the level of the second floor in the rear yard, now no longer require BAR review.

The following pages contain examples of approvals and denials by the PG-BAR in FY 2018.

Examples of Approved BAR Cases for Certificates of Appropriateness and Permits to Demolish:

***601 & 603 North Alfred Street***

*BAR 2017-00211/12/13*

The Parker-Gray District BAR approved demolition of a Later (post-1932) one-story detached Ranch Style house at 603 North Alfred Street and the construction of two new semi-detached Art Deco style townhouses on the two existing parcels.

***699 North Patrick Street***

*BAR 2016-00406*

The Parker-Gray District BAR approved updated details and materials related to the new four-story multifamily building on the site of the Ramsey Homes for the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority. The updates included final approval of materials, signage and design details for construction of the new building.

***204-206 North Patrick Street***

*BAR 2017-00483/84/85/86*

The Parker-Gray District BAR approved an application to make major alterations to the two Early, mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, semi-detached townhouses at 204 and 206 North Patrick Street that were in extremely poor condition. The BAR approved replacement of the brick foundation and elevation of the building by 1'- 4" to recreate the original first floor relationship with the sidewalk. Other alterations included replacement of siding, doors, windows, roofing, gutters, and framing with both restored original and modern materials.

***424 North Henry Street***

*BAR 2017-00376*

The Parker-Gray District BAR denied a request to paint the unpainted masonry of 424 North Henry Street. The BAR noted that the townhouse was one of eleven townhouses in a row and would have been the only one painted, thus disrupting the visual appearance of this larger collection of Later period (1939) red brick rowhouses that shared a common design approach. The BAR also noted that painting a building not originally intended to be painted can trap moisture in the wall and accelerate deterioration.

***323 North Henry Street***

*BAR 2018-00045/46*

The Parker-Gray District BAR approved an after-the-fact permit to demolish historic siding and other alterations at the Early, mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, townhouse at 323 North Henry Street, with conditions. The applicant agreed to all conditions, including replacement of inappropriate new replacement siding and inappropriate new windows and shutters.

(2) Denied Cases involving After-the-Fact Requests Related to Historic Siding:

***1109 Queen Street***

*BAR 2017-00332 & 306*

The Parker-Gray District BAR denied a request for after-the-fact approval of demolition of existing historic siding and the installation of new siding with a different design at the Early, mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, townhouse at 1109 Queen Street. The historic siding was previously determined by staff in the field to be in good condition and reasonably salvageable and repairable. Because of this finding, and in addition to the fines proscribed in the Zoning Ordinance for performing work without BAR approval or building permits, the BAR also required the applicant to install siding made from reclaimed old-growth wood, matching the design and profile of the demolished siding, within six months. The Board noted that the policies and guidelines in the historic district should be uniformly applied and upheld.

***420 North Payne Street***

*BAR 2017-00380/81*

The Parker-Gray District BAR denied a request for after-the-fact approval of the capsulation of historic siding and installation of replacement synthetic siding with a different design at the Early, late 19<sup>th</sup> century, townhouse at 420 North Payne Street. The BAR required the applicant to remove the inappropriate siding within two years, or when the house is listed for sale or seeks any building permit for major alterations, whichever occurs first, and to either restore the historic siding if feasible, as determined by staff in the field, or replace siding with wood or composite siding to match the historic siding profile.

**Policy/Administrative Changes**

*(1) Administrative Approval Policies*

The Parker-Gray District BAR reviewed and updated the new and replacement window performance specifications policy, the policy related to the administrative approval of signs and the shed policy. In response to an effort by Washington Gas to relocate several hundred gas meters onto street-facing façades in both historic districts, the BAR also adopted a policy related to the administrative approval of relocated gas meters.

*(2) Design Guidelines*

The Parker-Gray District BAR continues to update design guidelines for the Parker-Gray District that more clearly reflect the Residential Reference Guide adopted in 2012. In FY 2018, the BAR reviewed masonry design guidelines but focused less on design guidelines than policy updates. The BAR plans to refocus efforts to update the design guidelines in FY 2019.

**Training**

There were no new BAR members in FY '18, so there was no Legal Procedures and Processes work session by the City Attorney's Office this year.

Chair Purvi Irwin attended Preservation Month activities and the Ramsey Homes Deconstruction Tour and Section 106 meetings.

BAR member Theresa del Ninno participated in the keynote panel discussion at the City's 2018 Contemporary Architecture Symposium.

## **Outreach**

A primary community outreach for both Boards of Architectural Review was joint programming with the Office of Historic Alexandria celebrating National Preservation Month this past year in May. Activities included tours, a preservation happy hour and tour of the Murray-Dick-Fawcett house, lectures and a masonry paint removal workshop with local restoration masons, design professionals and industry experts.

As part of the Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement related to the demolition of the Ramsey Homes, the applicant was required to allow for staff to further document the buildings prior to demolition and to offer "Deconstruction Tours" to the community to better understand the unique concrete panel construction technology of these innovative buildings. Tours and an informal presentation were offered to the community on two days in February 2018.

Another major community outreach effort in FY 2018 was the City's second two-day Architecture Forum on June 8 and 9 to which both Boards of Architectural Review were invited, others from architectural and historic organizations, the development community and the general public. Friday night included a reception and a program at the Patent and Trade Office and Saturday included bus tours to explore recently constructed projects in different areas of the City.

Additionally, this past year, efforts continued to increase awareness of the Historic District requirements through annual spring mailings to all property owners. Moreover, staff continued to make regular presentations to local real estate offices to explain the BAR review process.

## **Goals for the Coming Year**

In the next year, the case load for the District is anticipated to remain consistent with the last year. Efforts for BAR member training and continued public outreach will continue to be high priorities. The BAR will also focus on reviewing and approving updated design guidelines, consistent with recently adopted policies.

At the request of City Council in April 2018, staff initiated a study to consolidate the two Boards of Architectural Review into a single Alexandria Board of Architectural Review that would oversee the two separate historic districts. The Parker-Gray District BAR is attending community outreach meetings, is providing feedback and generally supports the proposed consolidation into a single BAR.

ATTACHMENT

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA  
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS  
MEETINGS ATTENDANCE REPORT**

**JULY 1, 2017 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2018**

**COMMISSION:** Board of Architectural Review, Parker-Gray District  
**CHAIRPERSON:** Purvi Irwin

MEMBER NAMES	2017					2018			
	Jul 26	Sept 27	Oct 25	Nov 29	Dec 13	Jan 24	Feb 28	Apr 25	May 23
Theresa del Ninno	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	E	X
Purvi Irwin	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
James Spencer	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	E	X
Bill Conkey	X	X	X	X	X	E	X	X	X
Matthew Slowik	X	X	E	X	X	X	X	X	X
Aaron Karty	X	E	X	X	X	E	X	X	X
Robert Duffy	X	X	X	E	X	E	E	X	X

\* March 28, 2018 and June 27, 2018 hearings were cancelled due to lack of cases.

**INDICATE: X - FOR PRESENT    E - FOR EXCUSED    U - FOR UNEXCUSED**

**LIST OF THOSE WHO DID NOT ATTEND 75% OF MEETINGS:**

- The absences of Mr. Duffy and Mr. Karty were excused absences and therefore not counted per Section 2-4-7(i)(2) of the City of Alexandria’s Charter and Code.

**(FORM MUST BE SIGNED BY CHAIRPERSON)**

**APPROVED:**   
Purvi Irwin, Chair