

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

Board of Architectural Review

Thursday, October 16, 2025

7:00 p.m., City Council Chamber
City Hall

Members Present: Nastaran Zandian, Chair
Bud Adams
Margaret Miller
Theresa del Ninno
Frances Pratt

Members Absent: James Spencer
Michael Lyons

Secretary: William Conkey, Historic Preservation Architect

Staff Present: Susan Hellman, Historic Preservation Planner

1 **Call to Order**

The Board of Architectural Review was called to order at 7:05 p.m. Chair Zandian, Ms. Pratt, Ms. Miller, Ms. del Ninno, and Mr. Adams were present. Mr. Spencer and Mr. Lyons were absent.

2 **Minutes**

Consideration of the minutes of the October 1, 2025 Board of Architectural Review Public Hearing.

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Ms. Pratt, seconded by Ms. Miller, the Board of Architectural Review approved the minutes of the October 1, 2025 meeting as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

Consent Calendar

- 3 BAR#2025-00346 - OHAD
Request for alterations at 923 South Saint Asaph Street.
Applicant: Virginia Horgan

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Adams, seconded by Ms. Miller, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2025-00346 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

REASON: The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

SPEAKERS: None

DISCUSSION: None

- 4 BAR#2025-00366 - OHAD
Request for alterations at 403 South Pitt Street.
Applicant: William Cromley

BOARD ACTION: This item was moved from the Consent Calendar and heard before item 6. On a motion by Mr. Adams, seconded by Ms. del Ninno, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2025-00366 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 4-1, with Chair Zandian voting against.

REASON:

The Board supported the application without staff's recommendations.

SPEAKERS:

William Cromley, representing property owners.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Zandian stated that the Board doesn't consider interiors when reviewing exteriors alterations and would like to see the windows aligned.

Ms. Pratt asked for clarification of closet window.

Ms. del Ninno sees harmony in submitted design and supports it.

Mr. Adams stated the rear elevation is less prominent and minimally visible and support submitted design.

Ms. Miller supports submitted design.

- 5 BAR#2025-00368 - OHAD
Request for alterations at 612 Bashford Lane (Parcel Address: 610 Bashford Lane).
Applicant: Tara Harris represented by Tim Riley/The Neher Group

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Adams, seconded by Ms. Miller, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2025-00368 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

CONDITION OF APPROVAL:

None

REASON:

The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

New Business

- 6 BAR#2025-00329 - Parker-Gray
Request for alterations at 1308 Oronoco Street.
Applicant: Van Soderberg and Megan Dolan

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Adams, seconded by Ms. Miller, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2025-00329 as amended. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

CONDITION OF APPROVAL:

1. That the applicant paint the fence.

REASON:

The Board members agreed that the fence is not appropriate, but that its appearance could be improved by painting and is already constructed; therefore, they are willing to approve it as a one-time case without it becoming a precedent for further use of vinyl.

SPEAKERS:

Van Soderberg, the applicant, presented the application.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Pratt asked the applicant how long they had lived in the neighborhood. Ms. Soderberg responded that they moved to Alexandria in 2022 and bought the house in 2023. He also stated that he reviewed the City's permits website before installing the fence and noted that the fence does not require a building permit because it's under 4 feet in height.

Ms. Pratt said that she is sympathetic to the applicant's position but that by approving this fence, it would be setting a precedent. Mr. Soderberg responded that the guidelines do not prohibit vinyl, they simply recommend wood, masonry, or metal.

Ms. Miller said that the Board typically requires non-vinyl materials, but that she is sympathetic to the applicant's fence, and that it has been thoughtfully done. She notes that the Board can make exceptions, and she would be willing to do so in this case with the written condition that it not set a precedent for the future.

Mr. Adams said that the fence looks good and is not a precedent.

Ms. Del Ninno said that the vinyl is not encouraged because of the joints shown and because it's not a natural material that is in harmony with the existing buildings. She says that it will set a precedent and is on the fence. Mr. Soderberg responded that other houses on the block have many vinyl features. Ms. Del Ninno responded that those vinyl features start to become a precedent. Mr. Soderberg responded that the rules should be clearly enforced so that there's no way to set a precedent.

Ms. Del Ninno asked what the guidelines say about fence materials.

Ms. Zandian said that the staff report says that according to the guidelines, fences and walls should be made of wood, metal, and/or masonry. The Board discourages using poured-in-place concrete or synthetic materials such as fiberglass or vinyl. She said she would not approve it because of the precedent and because vinyl has always been discouraged in the historic district. Mr. Soderberg responded that there are existing buildings with vinyl on the exterior, and if it became a precedent it should be enforced equally across the neighborhood. Ms. Zandian responded that the vinyl probably never came to the Board's attention.

Mr. Adams proposed that the applicant paint the fence to improve the appearance and make it look more like wood.

Ms. Zandian stated for the record that if the case is approved, it should not set a precedent and that staff should look at the guidelines to make them more clear.

7&8 BAR#2025-00355 - OHAD

Request for alterations at 229 South Payne Street.

Applicant: Mark Boswell represented by Christopher Lyon, architect.

BAR#2025-00403 - OHAD

Request for partial demolition and encapsulation at 229 South Payne Street.

Applicant: Mark Boswell represented by Christopher Lyon, architect.

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Ms. Miller, seconded by Chair Zandian, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2025-00355 and BAR#2025-00403 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

CONDITION OF APPROVAL:

None

REASON:

The Board agreed with staff's recommendation.

SPEAKERS:

Christopher Lyon, the project architect, gave a brief project explanation and was available to answer questions.

DISCUSSION:

There was no discussion.

9 BAR #2025-00367 - OHAD

Request for partial demolition and encapsulation at 112 & 114 North Columbus Street.

Applicant: William Cromley

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Ms. Miller, seconded by Ms. Pratt, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2025-00367 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

CONDITION OF APPROVAL:

None.

REASON:

The Board found the proposed demolition and encapsulation appropriate.

SPEAKERS:

William Cromley, applicant, was available to answer any questions.

DISCUSSION:

None.

10&11 BAR #2025-00370 - OHAD

Request for alterations at 301 King Street and 108 North Fairfax Street.

Applicant: City of Alexandria represented by Lisa Lettieri, architect

BAR #2025-00371 - OHAD

Request for partial demolition and encapsulation at 301 King Street and 108 North Fairfax Street.

Applicant: City of Alexandria represented by Lisa Lettieri, architect

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Chair Zandian, seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board of Architectural Review voted to accept the applicant's request for deferral of BAR#2025-00370. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0. On a motion by Chair Zandian, seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2025-00371 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

REASON:

The applicant requested a deferral in order to address comments from the Board

SPEAKERS:

Jeremy McPike, representing the City of Alexandria, introduced the project

Michael Bjornberg, project architect, presented the historic preservation approach

Irena Savakova, project architect, presented the project

Paul Beckman, 214 E Mt. Ida, encouraged the applicant to continue revisions to the design with a continuity between the building detailing and design.

John Patrick, HARC, appreciated the scope of restoration on the building. He prefers the new design for the building entrance but opposes the use of full height glazing at the hyphens, preferring a solid wall in this location. He also expressed concern regarding the extent of glazing at the fifth floor.

Melissa Kuennen, NOTICE, recommended that the design team continue to revise the design similar to proposals made by members of the public, stating that the proposed design for the central portion of the south elevation is not consistent with the overall building design. She noted that the

entrance is awkward and that the glazed hyphens are incompatible with the overall building design.

Bill Cromley stated that the 1961 addition should not have been approved and that the proposed changes are an improvement to the original design. He asked that the plaza be activated through the introduction of some retail function.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Miller noted that the Market Square entrance has become the main building entrance and as such should be of a prominent design.

Ms. del Ninno asked the applicant about the extent of glazing at the fifth floor, noting her concern that interior lighting at night would detract from the historic Cameron Street elevation.

Mr. Adams asked if the corners at the Market Square elevator enclosure are curved. The design team indicated that they are rounded.

Ms. Zandian asked about the relationship of the stairs to the hyphen and how this area will be lit. The design team described the stair as a decorative element that will not be attached to the glazing wall. They further noted that the internal lighting will be focused on the historic interior wall and will not become a lantern from the exterior.

Ms. del Ninno appreciated the progress on the design and the careful restoration of the historic section of the building. She stated that the proposed fifth floor should be a background to the historic building with limited glazing that is visible from the street. She noted that the design for the south elevation has progressed and now reinforces the importance of the main entrance. She stated that the bump out at the roof needs additional study but that the bump out at the central section is successful. She preferred the use of limestone at the building entry. She appreciated the removal of the arcades as a way to enhance the importance of the central section. She asked the design team to continue developing the shade structures and expressed a preference for rectilinear planters.

Mr. Adams noted that the historic portion of the building includes indications at the upper levels showing where the building entrances are located. He stated that the chimneys on the south elevation are character defining features and that they should be included in the final design. He did not like the bumped out roof and prefers the hip roof form adjacent to the glazed hyphens. He asked the design team to explore the use of arches at the main building entrance.

Ms. Miller stated that the south elevation is missing the majesty appropriate for a building of this importance. She asked if the hyphens could be solid walls clad in metal or slate in lieu of glazing. She supported the retention of the chimneys in the design.

Ms. Pratt expressed a preference for option 4 without the arcades and liked the idea of arches at the entrance doors.

Ms. Zandian stated a preference for the quoins to be of alternating sizes and for the dormers to be smaller. She supported option 4B without the arcade. Regarding the plaza, she supported the use of rectilinear planters and a more traditional design for the shade structures.

- 12 BAR #2025-00373 – Parker-Gray
Request for a concept review at 806 North Columbus Street.
Applicant: Ken Wire

BOARD ACTION: The Board of Architectural Review received a presentation and heard public testimony on the proposed concept review of 806 North Columbus Street.

SPEAKERS:

Ken Wire, attorney for the applicant, introduced the project

Jonathan Kuhn, project architect, presented the design

Graeme Douglas, 808 Snowden Holloway Way, was opposed to the project and indicated that the drawings do not correctly show the proposed building height. He further questioned the inclusion of 5 parking areas at the rear of the site.

Kate Zernes, 814 N Columbus, stated that the proposed design is not compatible with the other properties on this block or blocks further to the south.

David Maron, 804 N Columbus, said that the proposed buildings should be more similar to adjacent buildings in terms of massing and location relative to the front property line. He also noted that the proposed building will be in front of the bay window on his house.

Paige Maron, 804 N Columbus, noted that the block mostly consists of historic townhouses instead of the modern development to the west of the project site. She felt that the proposed buildings are too tall for the block and should not include the fourth floor.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. del Ninno stated that if the proposed buildings were two stories with a setback third floor and the front edge of the building were aligned with the neighboring structures, that would be more compatible with the neighboring buildings. She suggested that the proposed design align with the cornices on the historic structures. She also stated that historic structures are typically either brick or siding and not a combination of the two.

Ms. Miller suggested that the overall building height should be lower and that it should be set back to align with the neighboring structures.

Mr. Adams asked about the interior ceiling heights and suggested that these may be lowered to reduce the overall building height. He also praised the variation in widths in the proposed townhouses.

Ms. Pratt suggested that given the predominance of siding on the block that siding may be a better exterior choice than brick.

Ms. Zandian said that the building should be set back to align with the neighboring structures and the overall height should be lowered.

Other Business

No other business was discussed

13 Adjournment

The Board of Architectural Review Public Hearing was adjourned at 10:45 p.m.