

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

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
Parker-Gray District

Wednesday, January 23, 2013
7:30pm, City Council Chambers, City Hall
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: William Conkey, Chairman
Robert Duffy, Vice-Chairman
Theresa del Ninno
Matthew Slowik
Purvi Irwin
Brendan Owens
Philip Moffat

Staff Present: Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager
Stephanie Sample, Historic Preservation Planner

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Chairman Conkey.

I. MINUTES

Consideration of the minutes of the public hearing of December 12, 2012.

BOARD ACTION: Approved as submitted, 7-0.

On a motion by Mr. Duffy, seconded by Ms. del Ninno, the minutes were approved, 7-0.

II. CONSENT CALENDAR

Items on the Consent Calendar are those where the applicant has agreed to all conditions of approval shown in the staff reports. Without objection, the staff recommendation for these cases will be approved as a group by unanimous consent of the Board at the beginning of the meeting. When announced by the Chairman, any member of the Board or of the public may ask that one of these cases be removed for full discussion.

CASE BAR2012-0414

Request for alterations at 1610 Suter St.

APPLICANT: Carolyn Brown

BOARD ACTION: Approved, as submitted, on the Consent Calendar, 7-0.

On a motion by Mr. Duffy, seconded by Mr. Owens, the Consent Calendar was approved, 7-0.

CASE BAR2012-0416

Request for revisions to a previously approved plan at 114 N Patrick St.

APPLICANT: Jorge & Lorie Nevares by Carter Jones, AIA

BOARD ACTION: Approved, as amended, on the Consent Calendar, 7-0.

On a motion by Mr. Duffy, seconded by Mr. Owens, the Consent Calendar was approved, 7-0.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Work Session: an informal work session with public testimony regarding the proposed development at 813 Princess Street.

SPEAKERS

Wayne Neale, 405 North Alfred Street, spoke in support of the project and said that he had many conversations with the applicant as the design of the project progressed.

Kelley Litzer, 426 North Alfred Street, spoke in support of the project and asked questions about the approval process and how the construction of the project would impact traffic and parking.

Jessica Rapier, 420 South Washington Street, spoke about her possible purchase of the adjacent house at 809 Princess and her concern about access to the rear yard of the property. She suggested replacing the proposed brick wall on the east property line with landscaping so that access could be maintained.

Barbara Sumner, 400 block of North Alfred Street, spoke about parking and safety concerns.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

Ms. del Ninno said that she liked the massing and width of the townhouse bays, as well as architectural style of the new development. She encouraged the architect to make the buildings stylistically consistent and utilize the same quality of materials on all elevations. She said that she supports the waiver for rooftop HVAC.

Mr. Moffat said he would like more contextual drawings so that he could determine if the new townhouses were compatible and meet the ordinance requirements. He said that he was concerned about the scale of the new development in relationship to the north end of the block and the adjacent historic house facing Princess Street. He said that he thought the development should be reoriented to be compatible with 809 Princess Street. He said he wasn't in favor of a Richardson Romanesque style for the townhouses and thought they were inconsistent with the historic district.

Mr. Slowik said that he thinks the mass and scale of the project are appropriate. He said that he is concerned about the brick wall proposed next to the historic house, but that the material and colors are appropriate with the immediate context.

Mr. Duffy said that he finds the site plan, scale and mass to be appropriate because it reinforces the North Alfred Street streetscape and corner. He said that he encourages the applicant to work

to make the new project more compatible with 809 Princess Street. He asked about the location of historic alleys on the block. He said that he would like to see more information about the fence on the east property, as well as a landscape plan. He said that he thinks this project sets a precedent for the future redevelopment of the surface parking lot across Princess Street.

Ms. Irwin said that she thought the mass and scale of the project was appropriate, but that she also wanted to see a larger context. She said that the design of the townhouses is good but that she would like to see something more innovative and modern. She encouraged the applicant to look at Society Hill in Philadelphia for good examples of infill.

Mr. Owens echoed Ms. Irwin's comments about innovative design but said that he understands the limitations of the real estate market. He said that the design needs to reinforce 809 Princess Street and that the applicant should reconsider the wall proposed adjacent to the Princess Street house.

Mr. Conkey said that he thought the site, mass and architectural character were appropriate, but that he continues to be concerned about new projects in the district which seem to mimic historic buildings, which has the effect of diluting the historic buildings.

Mr. Duffy found that the project was generally appropriate as to size and mass, and supported the modifications discussed in the staff memo (HVAC rooftop waiver, potential fence height waiver). He said that the applicant should further review the corner at Princess Street in order to reinforce the streetscape relationship with the historic building at 809 Princess Street. Although it is beyond the BAR scope, he recommended that the applicant consider working with the neighbor to allow them access to the rear of 809 Princess. He also encouraged the applicant to explore some more contemporary materials and details as the project moved forward. Mr. Owens seconded the finding. The BAR voted to approve Mr. Duffy's finding by a vote of 6-1 (Mr. Moffat voted no).

BOARD FINDING:

The BAR found the proposed development generally appropriate in terms of height, scale, mass, general architectural character, and site layout, and indicated support for potential waivers for rooftop HVAC screening, vision clearance, front yard setback and fence height, subject to further design development. The Board suggested that the applicant restudy the Princess Street elevation to better relate to the adjoining historic property at 809 Princess Street and also encouraged the applicant to work with that owner in order to resolve any potential rear yard access issues, if possible. Finally, the Board asked the applicant to restudy more contemporary architectural details for the townhouses, making them compatible with yet subtly distinguishable from nearby historic properties.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Update on the progress since the adoption of the Parker Gray District Residential Reference Guide at the December 12, 2012 meeting.

Ms. Sample updated the Board on refinements to the Residential Reference Guide that the BAR approved on December 12, 2012. Refinements included the creation and use of an *interim* Residential Reference Guide which will be used until the zoning ordinance changes can be approved by Planning Commission and City Council. She also discussed the cases that were approved since the Board's last meeting, including the two cases that were approved under the new policy.

V. 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 BAR2012 0412

Request for a fence at 1610 Suter St.

APPLICANT: Carolyn Brown

This was approved through the administrative approval process per the December 12, 2012 Parker Gray BAR adopted policy, Residential Reference Guide.

CASE BAR2012 0413

Request for window replacement at 518 N Columbus St.

APPLICANT: Aron Kansal

This was approved through the administrative approval process per the December 12, 2012 Parker Gray BAR adopted policy, Residential Reference Guide.

CASE BAR2013 0004

Request for a storm door at 401 N Fayette St.

APPLICANT: Aron Kansal

In the future, after the text amendment, per the adopted Residential Reference Guide this will not be reviewed by the BAR or staff.

CASE BAR2013 0007

Request for a roof replacement at 1100 Princess St.

APPLICANT: Booth McCaffery Properties LLC

This type of request remains a staff level review after the adoption of the Residential Reference Guide.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Conkey adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:55pm.

Minutes submitted by,

Stephanie Sample, Historic Preservation Planner
Boards of Architectural Review