
Fw: [EXTERNAL]Public Comments for BAR#2025-00373 - Parker-Gray

From Preservation <Preservation@alexandriava.gov>

Date Wed 10/8/2025 11:39 AM

To Ted Alberon <ted.alberon@alexandriava.gov>; Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>

FYI

From: Eric Bodley <ebodley@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, October 8, 2025 11:33 AM

To: Preservation <Preservation@alexandriava.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]Public Comments for BAR#2025-00373 - Parker-Gray

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Hello

I would like to submit the following public comments as it relates to the above referenced BAR application scheduled for October 16, 2025.

Thank you

Eric Bodley

Public Comments for BAR#2025-00373 - Parker-Gray

Hello BAR members

My name is Eric Bodley, and I own the historic property located at 718 N Columbus St. My home is located approximately 1/2 block from the proposed property at 806 N Columbus St. Below is a picture of my property and my neighbor's properties facing north on Columbus St.



I am writing today in opposition to the scale and mass of the proposed properties located at 806. North Columbus Street. I do not believe that a four-story building with a total height of 45 feet is appropriate for this historic neighborhood. This is a street lined with 2- and three-story homes, adding three 4-story homes in a lot between 2 two-story homes is not appropriate for the location. Yes, the Whitley project is wildly transforming our neighborhood, and I can see where the developer feels that it has set a new standard, but I think this committee needs to look at the neighborhood and recognize that this project as proposed is NOT appropriate.

Below is a picture from 724 N Columbus. The location of this project would be at the far right edge of the picture. You can also see in this picture newer townhomes built in this neighborhood in the last 20 years, all three stories and appropriately matched to fit in the historic neighborhood. I believe something like these properties would be appropriate for the neighborhood and project proposed at 806 N Columbus.



The below two pictures are of the current proposed location site for this project. Picture 1 Facing North.



Picture 2 - Facing South



I strongly urge this committee to look at these photos, visit the location site and consider if 3 four-story townhomes are appropriate for this location.

Lastly, I also would like to highlight that I believe the applicants materials may not be entirely accurate in portraying the proposed massing of their project.

For example, the Massing study submission on Sheet No. BAR2 indicates a scale of 1/8" equaling 1 Foot. The existing building as drawn is 31 feet tall, which would be a drawn height of 3.875 inches. The proposed building has a height of 45 Feet, equating to a drawn height of 5.625 inches. While I am limited to working from an electronic submission, the measurements as drawn do not appear to be aligned with the scale defined.

I would strongly encourage the review board to confirm the accuracy in the materials presented before proceeding with decisions on this project.

Respectfully Submitted

Eric Bodley

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[EXTERNAL]Objection to BAR2025-00373

From Todd Kelly <toddchristopherkelly@gmail.com>

Date Fri 10/10/2025 10:08 AM

To Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>

Cc Preservation <Preservation@alexandriava.gov>; Kate Zernes <kate_zernes@yahoo.com>

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I would like to register my objection to the upcoming BAR review of the subject case (BAR2025-00373). The proposed construction is incongruent with both the height and mass of the existing townhomes on the 800 block of North Columbus. The renderings in the Concept Submission show how these new townhouses would tower over the townhomes on this block, especially those immediately adjacent to this proposed construction. Even if there are similarly massive and tall buildings on other blocks in North Old Town, there are none on the existing 800 block of N. Columbus which makes these proposed townhouses beyond the scale of the current neighborhood dwellings. I request the BAR recommend a reduction in size (height, mass, and scale) of this proposal.

Todd Kelly
822 North Columbus St.

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[EXTERNAL]BAR#2025-00373-Parker-Gray

From Lynn Beasley <widget_lmb@yahoo.com>
Date Thu 10/9/2025 4:35 PM
To Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>
Cc Lynn Beasley <widget_lmb@yahoo.com>

 1 attachment (575 KB)
BAR_Concept_2025-00373-ParkerGrey_BEASLEY_Comments.pdf;

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Dear Mr. Cowan,

Attached are my comments on the Request for a concept review at 806 North Columbus Street on October 16, 2025. Unfortunately I will be out of town and unable to attend the meeting.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Lynn Beasley
826 Snowden Hallowell Way
571-276-1794
widget_lmb@yahoo.com

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Luke.Cowan@alexandriava.gov

Dear Mr. Cowan -

The purpose of this email is to provide concerned homeowner opposition to the BAR_Concept #2025-00373-ParkerGrey as was submitted for Alexandria's Board of Architectural Review on October 16, 2025, by Ken Wire for 806 North Columbus Street. The current concept raises several concerns for me, as the property owner of 826 Snowden Hollowell Way, Alexandria, VA 22314.

The Conceptual Layout Plan ("the concept") included in the submission labels the street behind the proposed townhomes as "Public Alley." The street is Snowden Hollowell Way which is a private road maintained by the Old Town Commons Homeowners' Association. The applicant must understand that unlike North Columbus Street, it is not a public road.

The concept includes parking areas behind the townhomes which will rely on the private road for access/egress and maintenance – including snow and leaf removal, and paving as required. All other historic homes that back to Snowden Hollowell Way (excepting 802 North Columbus – grandfathered) do not have rear parking. In fact, the "backyards" of those homes are tastefully fenced (see photos 001, 002, 003). I oppose the proposal that would allow for rear parking that is reliant on Snowden Hollowell Way for access. The rear of the properties must include fencing that is consistent with the existing fences of the historical properties that back to Snowden Hollowell Way and not include space for parking.

The height of the proposed townhomes exceeds reasonable expectations for the specific lot(s). The concept indicates that the townhomes will be 4 levels. This is widely out of sync with the existing historical properties along the 800 block of North Columbus Street. The adjacent townhomes are 2 story (see photos 004, 005). The BAR Concept Submission includes neighborhood photos that are misleading in that they are not adjacent to the proposed townhomes, rather they are of the Old Town Commons' properties – of which these homes will not be associated with (i.e., not in the Homeowners' Association) and one (2/3 781 Montgomery Street) is of another condominium building. The condominium building has underground parking that is accessed from Powhatan Street. The Massing Concept Images are also deceptive as they do not portray the true impact of 4 story townhomes wedged between 2 story townhomes.

The front and rear facing roof patios add to the intrusiveness of the properties over the existing 2 story townhomes. The height-to-width ratio of the 4 story townhomes will not be in harmony with their historical and architectural setting and environs (see Article X – Historic Districts and Buildings, Sec. 10-101(G)).

Sincerely,

Lynn Beasley

Attachment: Photos (001, 002, 003, 004, and 005)



Photo 001



Photo 002

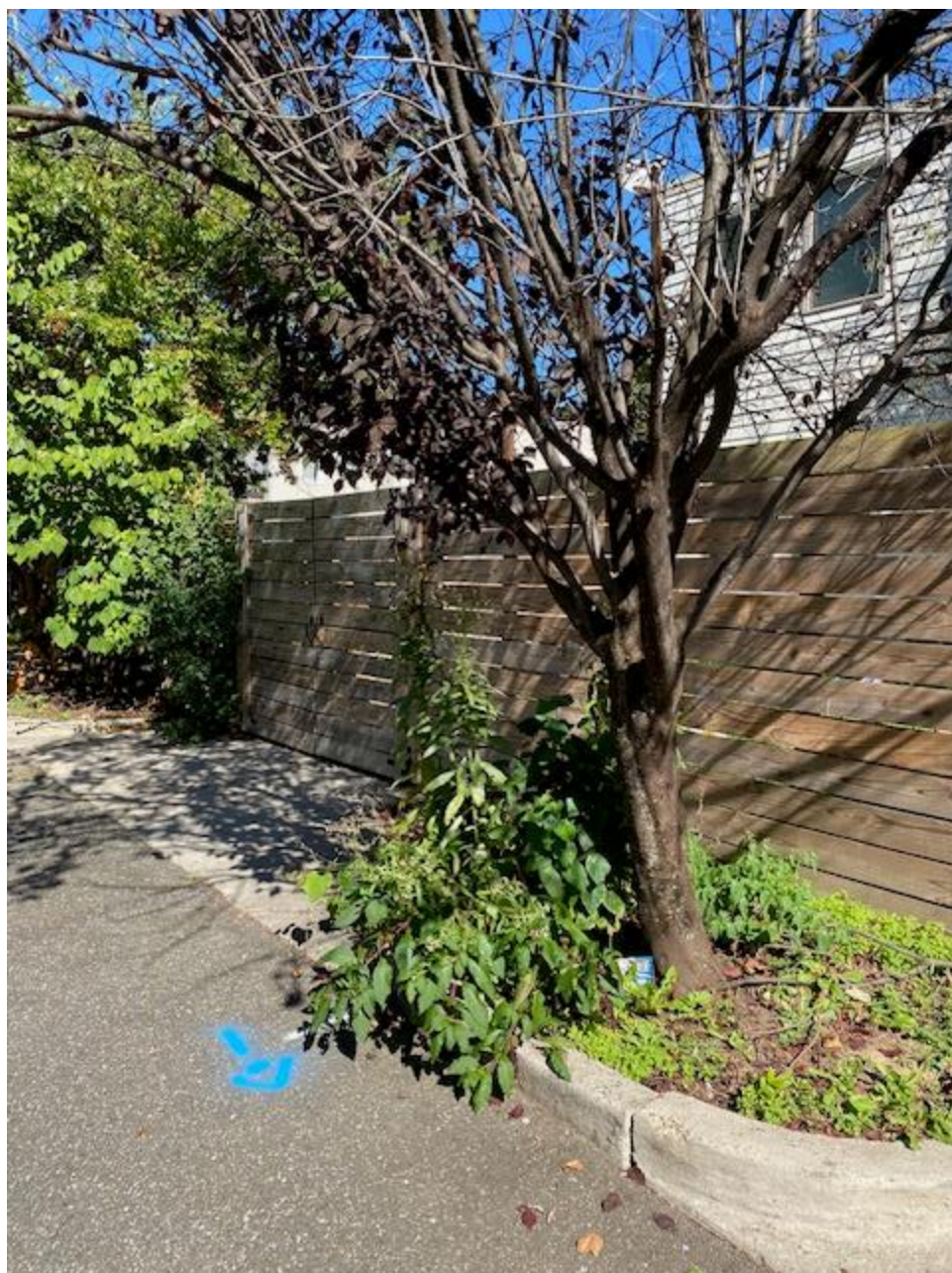


Photo 003



Photo 004



Photo 005

[EXTERNAL]806 North Columbus Street Project

From David Marrin <davemarrin@gmail.com>

Date Fri 10/10/2025 5:15 PM

To Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>

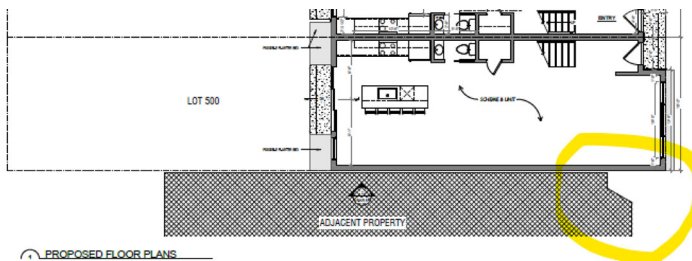
Cc Paige Marrin <Pfoley801@gmail.com>

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Luke - Hope you are doing well! My name is David Marrin, I am the owner of 804 N. Columbus Street. We are neighbors with the 806 N Columbus lot, where PT Bloom is proposing to build the three townhomes. We're excited something is going in that lot - think it will be great for the neighborhood. Certainly a bit of construction fatigue on our end, not a pity party but we do have a 17 month old and one more due later this month and have lived next to a construction site for over a year now.

In terms of the project PT Bloom is presenting to the BAR, we do have a few things we would like to take into consideration:

- The house juts out to the property line, which is inconsistent with where both my house , my neighbors house, and the house on the other side of the lot sits. As a result, my bay window, illustrated below from the submitted drawings (Page BAR 9), is going to be staring at a brick wall. That bay window is on the first floor and the upper floor. In my conversation with Patrick, he indicated that the BAR strongly prefers building to the property line. I would ask that you review / make an exception in this case, where it is not consistent with the houses next door. It's going to look very very very odd that I have a window staring at a brick wall.

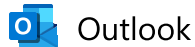


- Secondly is the height - I would like you all to consider making the house of similar height to the houses on the block. It's goign to look funky in the front, but especially ridiculous in the back, where my house slopes down from 33 feet down to 28. I think their building is close to 45 feet

- Construction Start Time - I don't know if this is in your wheelhouse. But we are very fatigued of waking up to the construction every day. We'd ask that you push the start time back from 7AM to 8AM.

Thank you for your consideration. See you Thursday,

David



[EXTERNAL]Objection to the Concept Submission under BAR2025-00373

From Kate Zernes <kate_zernes@yahoo.com>

Date Mon 10/13/2025 11:11 PM

To Luke Cowan <luke.cowan@alexandriava.gov>

Cc William Conkey <william.conkey@alexandriava.gov>

1 attachment (1 MB)

Objection BAR 2025_00373 10.10.2025.pdf;

You don't often get email from kate_zernes@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi Bill and Luke,

Please see attached my written submission objecting to the Concept Submission under BAR2025-00373 in advance of Thursday's meeting.

Please confirm receipt; I've tried to compress the file size (there are photos) by using PDF.

Best,
Kate

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I hereby register my objection to the BAR Concept Submission under BAR2025-00373 (the Concept Submission), specifically with regard to the height and lack of harmony with the historical and architectural setting and environs (*see* Article X Sec 10-201(F)).¹

While the Concept Submission purported to supply precedent photos (Concept Submission Sheet BAR-5), these photos selectively avoid North Columbus Street itself. Currently, there is an architecturally cohesive path running over a mile, starting at the shops at the end of Powhatan Street (e.g, Buzz Bakeshop), then flowing into North Columbus (including the affected 800 block), all the way into Old Town. The proposal for the three proposed townhouses at 806 North Columbus would provide a jarring interruption to this architectural cohesion.

This uninterrupted stretch, used by both residents and visitors, showcases the unique, historic architectural styles of both Parker-Gray and Old Town, and includes respectfully integrated new-build structures, along with historic residences. The proposed design in the Submission would tower above existing structures, both old and new, providing significant visual and aesthetic disruption.

Unlike the Concept Submission, the developers of Old Town Commons (OTC) recognized the unique frontage of 800 North Columbus Street. The photos of taller OTC buildings included in the Concept Submission are on side streets not visible from the North Columbus artery flowing from Parker-Gray into Old Town. Noticeably, and conversely to the jarring height of the proposed design in the Concept Submission, the Old Town Commons neighborhood thoughtfully and deliberately decreases in height from four stories on the side streets to two stories in the relevant area - the 800 block of N Columbus - in order to reflect the character and architectural cohesion of the neighborhood (*see* photo of 828-836 North Columbus St, built in 2012).

Likewise, the photos below show over a mile of thoughtful and cohesive design, flouted by the proposed design in the Concept Submission.

Of particular note:

As currently proposed, the Concept Submission for 806-810 North Columbus Street is grossly out of keeping with:

¹ The City of Alexandria seeks, through the establishment of the Parker-Gray District, to protect community health and safety and to promote the education, prosperity and general welfare of the public through the identification, preservation, and enhancement of buildings, structures, settings, features and ways of life which characterize this nineteenth and early twentieth century residential neighborhood. To achieve these general purposes the City of Alexandria seeks to pursue the following specific purposes...To assure that new structures, additions, landscaping, and related elements be in harmony with their historical and architectural setting and environs.

- (1) The height of historic structures on North Columbus, as well as current new-build structures. As demonstrated in the photos herein, new-build structures, when situated next to one of the shorter historic homes along the entire length of North Columbus from Powhatan to North Columbus Street, are not only in keeping with the home next to it, but are often shorter than other historic homes further along the block. As proposed, 806 North Columbus Street is located next to the shortest home on the block, but towers above even the tallest historic and new-build homes on the 800 block.²
- (2) The distance from the sidewalk to existing structures. The Concept Submission is in noticeable opposition to historic and currently new-build structures along the entire length of North Columbus. As demonstrated in the photos herein, the length of North Columbus Street consistently demonstrates the architectural character of homes recessed from the road, full of old growth, unique gardens, and historical aesthetic. As proposed, 806 North Columbus Street would protrude out far beyond the adjacent historic homes and the others on the 800 block and certainly far beyond those on North Columbus as it moves into Old Town.

The ultimate irony, given the mission and purpose of the Board of Architectural Review, is that the proposed development of 806 North Columbus renders the historic homes on the 800 block of North Columbus Street as the architectural anomaly: small buildings dwarfed by new structures designed to consume every inch of available space rather than respect and align with the standards established by Chapter 10 and overseen and safeguarded by the Bureau of Architectural Review.

It is possible to develop new construction in continuity with height, scale, and mass, and in harmony with the existing, protected historic and architectural environment. The Concept Submission for 806 North Columbus Street, however, demonstrates little to no consideration for the historic environment and the character of the neighborhood. As demonstrated in both the photos and narrative herein, a building height of two stories and a commensurate set-back with existing structures in distance from the sidewalk would align with the highly walkable and character-rich length of North Columbus from Parker-Gray to Old Town.

² Chapter 10-205 - Matters to be considered in approving certificates and permits - (A)(2)Standards. The board of architectural review...shall consider the following in passing upon the appropriateness of proposals within the Parker-Gray District:(a)(1)Height of the roofline along the street or public way; (2)Scale and mass of the building on the site; (3)Placement of the building on the site...(8)Hierarchy of building elevation based on the location of the new construction on the front (street facing), side (non-street facing) or rear elevation.

Precedent Photos

Photo A below: Current view of the 800 block of North Columbus Street – historic homes



Photo B below: Current view of the 800 block of North Columbus Street, including EYA Old Town Commons new-build from 2012 at similar/equal height next to historic buildings



Photos D and E below: Views of both sides of the 600 block of North Columbus with both historic and new-build at equal height and set-back



Photos F and G: Views of the 700 block of North Columbus with both historic and new-build at equal height and set-back



Photos H, I, and J : Views of the 900 block of North Columbus and beyond with both historic and newer build sympathetically at equal height over several decades, spanning over a century, none exceeding two stories, equal set-back, also featuring green space



Objection to BAR2025-00373

806 North Columbus Street

