

**ISSUE:** Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations

**APPLICANT:** Old Presbyterian Meeting House

**LOCATION:** Old and Historic Alexandria District  
419 South Royal Street

**ZONE:** RM/Residential Townhouse Zone

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations with the following conditions:

- Any horizontal offset resulting from the removal of the concrete base of the northernmost light be shifted to the west.
- The lights are set to turn off a certain number of hours after sunset and/or have motion detectors installed.

**Minutes from July 6, 2023 hearing:**

**BAR#2023-00244 OHAD**

Request for alterations at 419 S Royal Street  
Applicant: Old Presbyterian Meeting House

**BOARD ACTION:** On a motion by Mr. Lyons and seconded by Ms. Zandian the Board of Architectural Review voted to accept the request for deferral of BAR2023-00244. The motion carried on a vote of 5 - 0.

**REASON**

The Board felt the applicant should consult with neighbors on the proposed design and location.

**SPEAKERS**

Jim Beall represented the applicant and was available to answer questions.

Sean Murphy, 417 N. Royal, expressed concern about safety and peaceful living. He would like to have more time to discuss the various options and problem-solve with the applicant.

Elizabeth Walker, 405 Wilkes, found the design unattractive, too tall, and not historic looking. She said that the light is not necessary because there is no crime here.

Yvonne Callahan, 735 S. Lee, representing Old Town Civic Association, advised the Board to look carefully at what was approved in 2020 and compare it to the current application. She said

that in 2020 the applicant advised that the lights would be Dark Sky certified, but the proposed manufacturer is not Dark Sky certified. She recommended denial, stating that there is no crime in church parking lots.

Steve Milone, 907 Prince, suggested deferring the case so that the applicant may discuss the lights with neighbors.

Mr. Beall responded that they submitted a photo analysis which shows that there will be no light spill. The lights and solar panels are smaller than those elsewhere in the city. The goal is safety, and the applicant is glad to work with the neighbor to adjust.

#### DISCUSSION

Mr. Spencer thought that lowering the light on the west to 15 feet and lowering the light on the north to 12 feet would look odd and suggested moving both to 12 feet. He also asked questions relating to Code, which Mr. Conkey explained.

Ms. Del Ninno asked if the lights are 100% solar and Mr. Beall verified that fact. She noted that she was not on the 2020 Board that approved the lights but respects their approval. However, although she likes that the lights are solar she feels that the pole is too tall and the design is not appropriate.

Mr. Lyons would like to see the parties get together to discuss the lighting and suggested that the case be deferred to allow this.

Ms. Zandian asked why the applicant wants to move the pole. Mr. Beall and Mr. Conkey explained that they are not proposing to move the pole; they are proposing to lower the height. She thought that the poles should both be lowered to the same height and that the design should be more historic with an Old Town look. She didn't feel that it fits the character and agreed that it should be Dark Sky or at least dimmed at night. She recommended talking to neighbors.

Mr. Adams wasn't pleased with the 2020 approval and thought that the existing lighting should be sufficient. He suggested a more sympathetic light fixture or removing the north light completely, leaving only the light on the west side of the lot. He said he would deny any version.

Mr. Spencer remembered the 2020 approval but thought it looked strange. He said the light should definitely be lowered to 12 feet. He recommended a deferral to discuss with the neighbors and more historic looking light fixtures.

**Minutes from June 3, 2020 hearing:**

**BAR #2020-00101 OHAD**

Request for alterations at 419 South Royal Street  
Applicant: Old Presbyterian Meeting House

**BOARD ACTION: Approved, as Amended, 7-0**

On a motion by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Ms. Sennott, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR #2020-00101, as amended. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

1. The intensity of the light is to be reviewed by staff at night in the field to ensure the compatibility of illumination with surrounding residences.
2. Work with staff to find the shortest pole height that will provide the necessary illumination, without adding more poles, that complies with Code requirements.

**REASON**

In general, the Board agreed with staff recommendations, but found that more research is required to establish the minimum pole height that will supply the required light level.

**SPEAKERS**

Mr. Aaron Siirila, Old Presbyterian Meeting House Director of Operations, and Mr. Thomas Moser, member of the Facility Committee, were available to answer questions. Mr. Moser explained that the existing poles lost power a year and a half ago and no one was able to find the power source, thus, they decided to replace them with solar powered poles which won't require cabling. Mr. Moser also said that they are working with the adjacent property owner at 417 North Royal Street to make sure the illumination of the pole is less intrusive. The proposed light fixture has a LED down light that diffuses less than a regular light, thus reducing light spill.

Elizabeth Walker, resident at 405 Wilkes Street, said that the previous lighting on the parking lot was too bright and that she is pleased with the solar powered option. However, she finds the proposed pole height inappropriate. She showed an example of a shorter pole which she thinks would work better at the location and interfere less with adjacent properties.

Kevin Coyne, resident at 418 South Pitt Street, thanked church personnel for working with the neighbors answering their questions. He found that the proposed pole battery enclosure is not aesthetically pleasing, and that the solar equipment could be less accentuated.

J. J. Smith, resident at 401 Wilkes Street, stated that he never really had a problem with the parking lot illumination, but would like to see shorter poles with directed light instead.

**DISCUSSION**

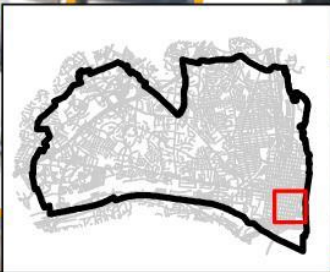
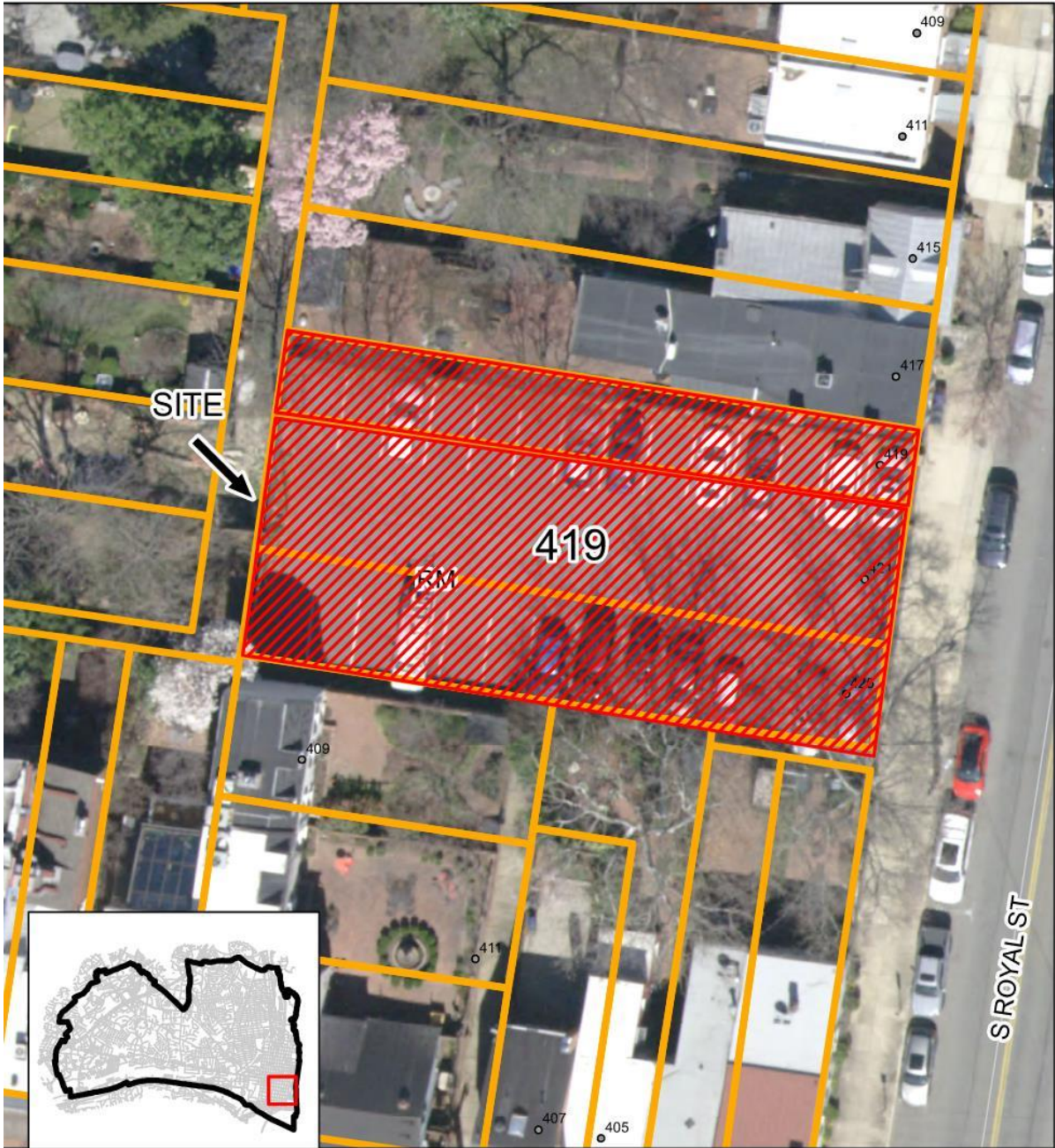
Mr. Moser clarified that the proposed poles are the same height as the existing, 15 feet, the light fixture will be adjustable and dark sky certified. He also clarified that the size of the solar panels is directly related to the number of hours of light provided.

Mr. Spencer stated that the amount of illumination in a parking lot is regulated by code and the reduction in pole height will require adding more poles.

Ms. Roberts suggested that the applicant work with staff to find the shortest pole that complies with the code requirements without adding new poles. The suggestion progressed to a motion and was approved unanimously.

**GENERAL NOTES TO THE APPLICANT**

1. **APPEAL OF DECISION:** In accordance with the Zoning Ordinance, if the Board of Architectural Review denies or approves an application in whole or in part, the applicant or opponent may appeal the Board's decision to City Council on or before 14 days after the decision of the Board.
2. **COMPLIANCE WITH BAR POLICIES:** All materials must comply with the BAR's adopted policies unless otherwise specifically approved.
3. **BUILDING PERMITS:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Department of Code Administration (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-746-4200 for further information.
4. **ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS AND PERMITS TO DEMOLISH:** Applicants must obtain a copy of the Certificate of Appropriateness or Permit to Demolish **PRIOR** to applying for a building permit. Contact BAR Staff, Room 2100, City Hall, 703-746-3833, or [preservation@alexandriava.gov](mailto:preservation@alexandriava.gov) for further information.
5. **EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B), 10-206(B) and 10-307 of the Zoning Ordinance, any Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.
6. **HISTORIC PROPERTY TAX CREDITS:** Applicants performing extensive, certified rehabilitations of historic properties may separately be eligible for state and/or federal tax credits. Consult with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) prior to initiating any work to determine whether the proposed project may qualify for such credits.



**BAR#2024-00040**  
**419 S Royal Street**



0 12.5 25 50 Feet

**UPDATE**

At the June 3, 2020 hearing the BAR approved the installation of two solar-powered light fixtures, one on the west side of the parking lot and one on the north side (BAR2020-00101). These lights were to replace existing lights of the same height that had stopped working. Both of the new lights were installed. There was some ambiguity as to the exact approved location of the north light, but because the installed location of this pole does not match the location approved in the building permit (BLDC2021-01149), the applicant returned to the BAR on July 6, 2023 (BAR2023-00244) for approval of the light in its current location, along with some changes to reduce the light's impact on neighboring property owners. The BAR deferred that case and the applicant returns today with further updates.

**I. APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL**

The applicant requests a Certificate of Appropriateness to approve and modify existing light poles in the parking lot at 419 South Royal Street. This application revises the previously approved BAR2020-00101 and the deferred BAR2023-00244.

Based on Board and neighbor input, the current application proposes reducing the height of both lights to 15' tall. Additionally, the solar panels on the northernmost light will be lowered to the fence line to reduce their visibility from the second story windows of the home at 417 S. Royal. Bollards will be installed in front of each pole to protect them from vehicle impact. The lights have timers that can be set for a particular time period after sunset. Currently they are set to turn off five hours after sunset. The time period can be shortened in the summer, when the sun sets later in the day. See Figure 1 for the existing north light.



**Figure 1: Existing north light**

Three representatives from the Old Presbyterian Meeting House met with neighbors Sean Murphy and Elizabeth Walker, as well as Old Town Civic Association representative, Yvonne Callahan, at 8:30pm on July 29, 2023 to look at light spillage and discuss possible lighting options.

Site context

The subject property serves as a parking lot for the Old Presbyterian Meeting House. It is located on the west side of South Royal Street, abutting the narrow side yard of a residential townhouse to the north and the rear yards of four dwellings on Wilkes Street to the south. A private alley runs along the west side of the lot.

**II. HISTORY**

The existing parking lot consists of three lots, 419, 421, and 425 South Royal Street. Sanborn Maps from 1885 through 1921 show frame dwellings in this location. By 1921, the frame dwellings are gone but there is a small frame “ice service station” at the northeast corner of the property and a frame structure labeled as “Pressing” at the southeast corner. The 1941 map shows the ice station is gone and “pressing” is now two dwellings. Old Presbyterian Meeting House purchased the property in 1942. The 1959 Sanborn Map shows that the buildings are gone, and the property is a parking lot.

*Previous BAR Approvals*

BAR2002-00307 – Nov 19, 2022: approval for parking lot screening (brick wall)

BAR2020-00101 – Jun 3, 2020: approval to replace two non-functioning light poles with two new solar powered poles.

BAR2022-00331 – Jul 14, 2022: signage

**III. ANALYSIS**

Staff appreciates that fact that the applicant has followed BAR recommendations to reduce the height of the poles and to meet with neighbors, making changes to the proposal accordingly. The overall height will be lowered by removing the concrete bases, the solar panels on the north light will be lowered to the fence line, and the lights will be extinguished a certain number of hours after sunset instead of being on all night. The proposed solar panels abide by the Eco-City Alexandria initiatives, which encourage non-incandescent lighting. Another option to reduce light spillage would be to add motion detectors to the lights so that they only illuminate when needed.

The *Design Guidelines* state that “Lighting should be aimed so that it does not reflect into residential buildings or areas.” As indicated in the application materials, the applicant has taken measures to ensure compliance with this guideline. The *Design Guidelines* also state that “Exterior lighting can be an architectural element in and of itself.” Staff does not object to the design of the proposed light poles, as they are simple and this type of pole is found throughout Alexandria. See Figures 2, 3, and 4, three examples of the same type of pole. Note that these poles are adjacent to residences and do not appear to have problems with light spillage.



Figure 2: 300 block of South Pitt



Figure 3: 904 Prince

See also Figure 5, one of the light poles in the parking lot of Saint Mary’s Church at 308 South Pitt Street.



Figure 4: 401 South Lee



Figure 5: 308 South Pitt, Saint Mary’s parking lot



In removing the concrete bases to shorten the poles, the applicant notes that this will result in a two-to-five-foot horizontal offset to east or west for the northern pole, and a two-to-five-foot horizontal offset to north or south for the westernmost pole. Staff recommends that the offset for the northernmost pole be shifted to the west if possible. Staff also recommends that the lights be extinguished a certain number of hours after sunset and/or they include motion detectors.

With the conditions noted above, staff recommends approval of the project.

**STAFF**

Susan Hellman, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning  
Tony LaColla, AICP, Land Use Services Division Chief, Planning & Zoning

**CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

Legend: C- code requirement R- recommendation S- suggestion F- finding

**Zoning**

C-1 Proposed light pole will comply with zoning.

**Code Administration**

F-1 Code has no comment.

**Transportation and Environmental Services**

- R-1 The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition, if a separate demolition permit is required. (T&ES)
- R-2 Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R-3 No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (T&ES)
- F-1 Previously reviewed under [BAR2020-000101] (T&ES)
- F-2 After review of the information provided, an approved grading plan is not required at this time. Please note that if any changes are made to the plan it is suggested that T&ES be included in the review. (T&ES)
- F-3 If the alley located at the rear of the parcel is to be used at any point of the construction process the following will be required:
  - For a Public Alley - The applicant shall contact T&ES, Construction Permitting & Inspections at (703) 746-4035 to discuss any permits and accommodation requirements that will be required.
  - For a Private Alley - The applicant must provide proof, in the form of an affidavit at a minimum, from owner of the alley granting permission of use. (T&ES)
- F-4 Parcel is not within a flood plain, no comments.
- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5,

- Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). (T&ES)
- C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line. (T&ES)
- C-3 Roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation & Environmental Services. (Sec.5-6-224) (T&ES)
- C-4 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3) (T&ES)
- C-5 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-2)
- C-6 All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (Sec. 5-2-1) (T&ES)

**Alexandria Archaeology**

- F-1 No archaeology comments.

**V. ATTACHMENTS**

- 1 – Application Materials*  
*2 – Supplemental Materials*

**BAR CASE#** \_\_\_\_\_  
(OFFICE USE ONLY)

**ADDRESS OF PROJECT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DISTRICT:**  Old & Historic Alexandria  Parker – Gray  100 Year Old Building

**TAX MAP AND PARCEL:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZONING:** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION FOR:** *(Please check all that apply)*

- CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
- PERMIT TO MOVE, REMOVE, ENCAPSULATE OR DEMOLISH  
*(Required if more than 25 square feet of a structure is to be demolished/impacted)*
- WAIVER OF VISION CLEARANCE REQUIREMENT and/or YARD REQUIREMENTS IN A VISION CLEARANCE AREA *(Section 7-802, Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)*
- WAIVER OF ROOFTOP HVAC SCREENING REQUIREMENT  
*(Section 6-403(B)(3), Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)*

**Applicant:**  Property Owner  Business *(Please provide business name & contact person)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Authorized Agent** *(if applicable):*  Attorney  Architect  \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Legal Property Owner:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**NATURE OF PROPOSED WORK:** *Please check all that apply*

- NEW CONSTRUCTION
- EXTERIOR ALTERATION: *Please check all that apply.*
  - awning
  - fence, gate or garden wall
  - HVAC equipment
  - shutters
  - doors
  - windows
  - siding
  - shed
  - lighting
  - pergola/trellis
  - painting unpainted masonry
  - other \_\_\_\_\_
- ADDITION
- DEMOLITION/ENCAPSULATION
- SIGNAGE

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORK:** *Please describe the proposed work in detail (Additional pages may be attached).*

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**SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:**

Check this box if there is a homeowner’s association for this property. If so, you must attach a copy of the letter approving the project.

Items listed below comprise the **minimum supporting materials** for BAR applications. Staff may request additional information during application review. Please refer to the relevant section of the *Design Guidelines* for further information on appropriate treatments.

Applicants must use the checklist below to ensure the application is complete. Include all information and material that are necessary to thoroughly describe the project. Incomplete applications will delay the docketing of the application for review. Pre-application meetings are required for all proposed additions. All applicants are encouraged to meet with staff prior to submission of a completed application.

**Demolition/Encapsulation :** *All applicants requesting 25 square feet or more of demolition/encapsulation must complete this section. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.*

- N/A
- Survey plat showing the extent of the proposed demolition/encapsulation.
  - Existing elevation drawings clearly showing all elements proposed for demolition/encapsulation.
  - Clear and labeled photographs of all elevations of the building if the entire structure is proposed to be demolished.
  - Description of the reason for demolition/encapsulation.
  - Description of the alternatives to demolition/encapsulation and why such alternatives are not considered feasible.

**Additions & New Construction:** Drawings must be to scale and should not exceed 11" x 17" unless approved by staff. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- <sup>N/A</sup> Scaled survey plat showing dimensions of lot and location of existing building and other structures on the lot, location of proposed structure or addition, dimensions of existing structure(s), proposed addition or new construction, and all exterior, ground and roof mounted equipment.
- FAR & Open Space calculation form.
- Clear and labeled photographs of the site, surrounding properties and existing structures, if applicable.
- Existing elevations must be scaled and include dimensions.
- Proposed elevations must be scaled and include dimensions. Include the relationship to adjacent structures in plan and elevations.
- Materials and colors to be used must be specified and delineated on the drawings. Actual samples may be provided or required.
- Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- For development site plan projects, a model showing mass relationships to adjacent properties and structures.

**Signs & Awnings:** One sign per building under one square foot does not require BAR approval unless illuminated. All other signs including window signs require BAR approval. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- <sup>N/A</sup> Linear feet of building: Front: \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary front (if corner lot): \_\_\_\_\_.
- Square feet of existing signs to remain: \_\_\_\_\_.
- Photograph of building showing existing conditions.
- Dimensioned drawings of proposed sign identifying materials, color, lettering style and text.
- Location of sign (show exact location on building including the height above sidewalk).
- Means of attachment (drawing or manufacturer's cut sheet of bracket if applicable).
- Description of lighting (if applicable). Include manufacturer's cut sheet for any new lighting fixtures and information detailing how it will be attached to the building's facade.

**Alterations:** Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- <sup>N/A</sup> Clear and labeled photographs of the site, especially the area being impacted by the alterations, all sides of the building and any pertinent details.
- Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- Drawings accurately representing the changes to the proposed structure, including materials and overall dimensions. Drawings must be to scale.
- An official survey plat showing the proposed locations of HVAC units, fences, and sheds.
- Historic elevations or photographs should accompany any request to return a structure to an earlier appearance.

**ALL APPLICATIONS:** *Please read and check that you have read and understand the following items:*

- I understand that after reviewing the proposed alterations, BAR staff will invoice the appropriate filing fee in APEX. The application will not be processed until the fee is paid online.
- I understand the notice requirements and will return a copy of the three respective notice forms to BAR staff at least five days prior to the hearing. If I am unsure to whom I should send notice I will contact Planning and Zoning staff for assistance in identifying adjacent parcels.
- I, the applicant, or an authorized representative will be present at the public hearing.
- I understand that any revisions to this initial application submission (including applications deferred for restudy) must be accompanied by the BAR Supplemental form and revised materials.

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The undersigned hereby attests that all of the information herein provided including the site plan, building elevations, prospective drawings of the project, and written descriptive information are true, correct and accurate. The undersigned further understands that, should such information be found incorrect, any action taken by the Board based on such information may be invalidated. The undersigned also hereby grants the City of Alexandria permission to post placard notice as required by Article XI, Division A, Section 11-301(B) of the 1992 Alexandria City Zoning Ordinance, on the property which is the subject of this application. The undersigned also hereby authorizes the City staff and members of the BAR to inspect this site as necessary in the course of research and evaluating the application. The applicant, if other than the property owner, also attests that he/she has obtained permission from the property owner to make this application.

**APPLICANT OR AUTHORIZED AGENT:**

Signature: Sam Seer

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**OWNERSHIP AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

Use additional sheets if necessary

1. Applicant. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than three percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1.		
2.		
3.		

2. Property. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the property located at \_\_\_\_\_ (address), unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than three percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1.		
2.		
3.		

3. Business or Financial Relationships. Each person or entity listed above (1 and 2), with an ownership interest in the applicant or in the subject property is required to disclose **any** business or financial relationship, as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance, existing at the time of this application, or within the 12-month period prior to the submission of this application with any member of the Alexandria City Council, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals or either Boards of Architectural Review.

Name of person or entity	Relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance	Member of the Approving Body (i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, etc.)
1.		
2.		
3.		

**NOTE: Business or financial relationships of the type described in Sec. 11-350 that arise after the filing of this application and before each public hearing must be disclosed prior to the public hearings.**

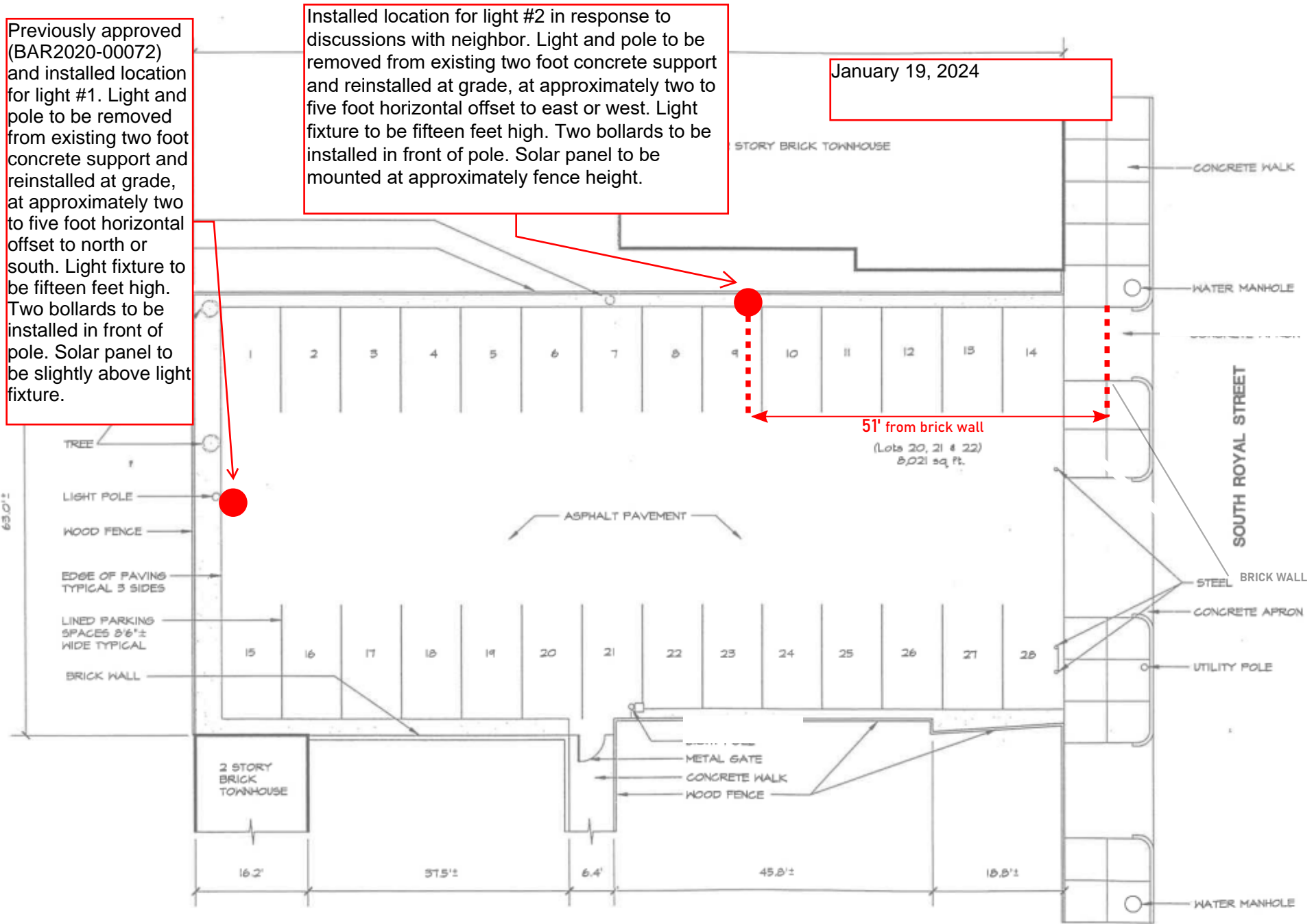
As the applicant or the applicant's authorized agent, I hereby attest to the best of my ability that the information provided above is true and correct.

\_\_\_\_\_                      \_\_\_\_\_                      Sam Seer  
 Date                                  Printed Name                                  Signature

Previously approved (BAR2020-00072) and installed location for light #1. Light and pole to be removed from existing two foot concrete support and reinstalled at grade, at approximately two to five foot horizontal offset to north or south. Light fixture to be fifteen feet high. Two bollards to be installed in front of pole. Solar panel to be slightly above light fixture.

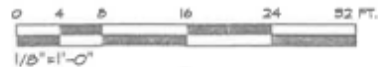
Installed location for light #2 in response to discussions with neighbor. Light and pole to be removed from existing two foot concrete support and reinstalled at grade, at approximately two to five foot horizontal offset to east or west. Light fixture to be fifteen feet high. Two bollards to be installed in front of pole. Solar panel to be mounted at approximately fence height.

January 19, 2024



Old Presbyterian Meeting House  
 Parking Lot  
 419 S Royal St, Alexandria, VA 22314

EXISTING PARKING LOT SITE PLAN




NOTE  
 THIS SITE  
 REAL E  
 HMM AN



**Revised location for pole & light**



Old Presbyterian Meeting House  
419 S Royal St  
View of North side of lot, facing north

Luminaire Schedule					
Symbol	Qty	Label	Description	Arrangement	Lumens/Lamp
	2	20W TYPE III	SL12 15FT	SINGLE	2866

Numeric Summary							
Label	CalcType	Units	Avg	Max	Min	Avg/Min	Max/Min
SITE	Illuminance	Fc	0.26	2.0	0.0	N.A.	N.A.

Pole as supplied is 15 feet. Both poles will be removed from concrete base and re-installed on footing at grade so approximate height of light will be 15 feet above grade. Solar panel on north side light (light #2) will be set at approximate fence height. Solar panel on west side light (light #1) will be set above light fixture.



<p>THE OLD PRESBYTERIAN MEETING HOUSE</p>	<p><i>Solar Illuminations</i>  5611 Halifax Avenue  Fort Myers, FL 33912  TELEPHONE: 239-461-5522  EMAIL: sales@solarilluminations.com</p>
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NOTES & DISCLAIMER: The photometric data, rendering, plan, information and lighting distribution shown in these documents is a design. It is to be used as an example and guide only as to the typical performance of the luminaire specified. Any change made to the site plan may affect the information shown. In addition, other known and unknown factors may affect the performance of the luminaire resulting in changes to the information shown. In all circumstances, it is assumed that the buyer, installer or project manager is a capable professional, fully conversant with solar and LED technologies and capable of conducting electrical and civil works. Consideration must be given to the power generation of the solar panel which must be of an appropriate Wattage. The solar panel (if adjustable) must be installed at the correct angle (subject to geographic location), facing South and not subjected to any shade or part shade during the day. Solar Illuminations is not qualified to determine the structural appropriateness of their designs and is not responsible and cannot be held liable for any improper engineering, construction, installation or handling methods or for any improper use of structures or equipment that may be employed to realize the design. It is the responsibility of the buyer, installer or project manager to ensure that (if applicable) the design complies with local fire, health & safety and any other codes, standards or regulations etc. In the event that this design is found not to comply, Solar Illuminations may adjust the design in consultation with the buyer, installer or project manager to ensure that it does comply with such regulations. Solar Illuminations accepts no responsibility or liability by the provision of this document and the information contained herewith. If you have any questions, please contact Solar Illuminations for further information. E&OE.

419 S Royal Street- BAR Application for revised light pole location.

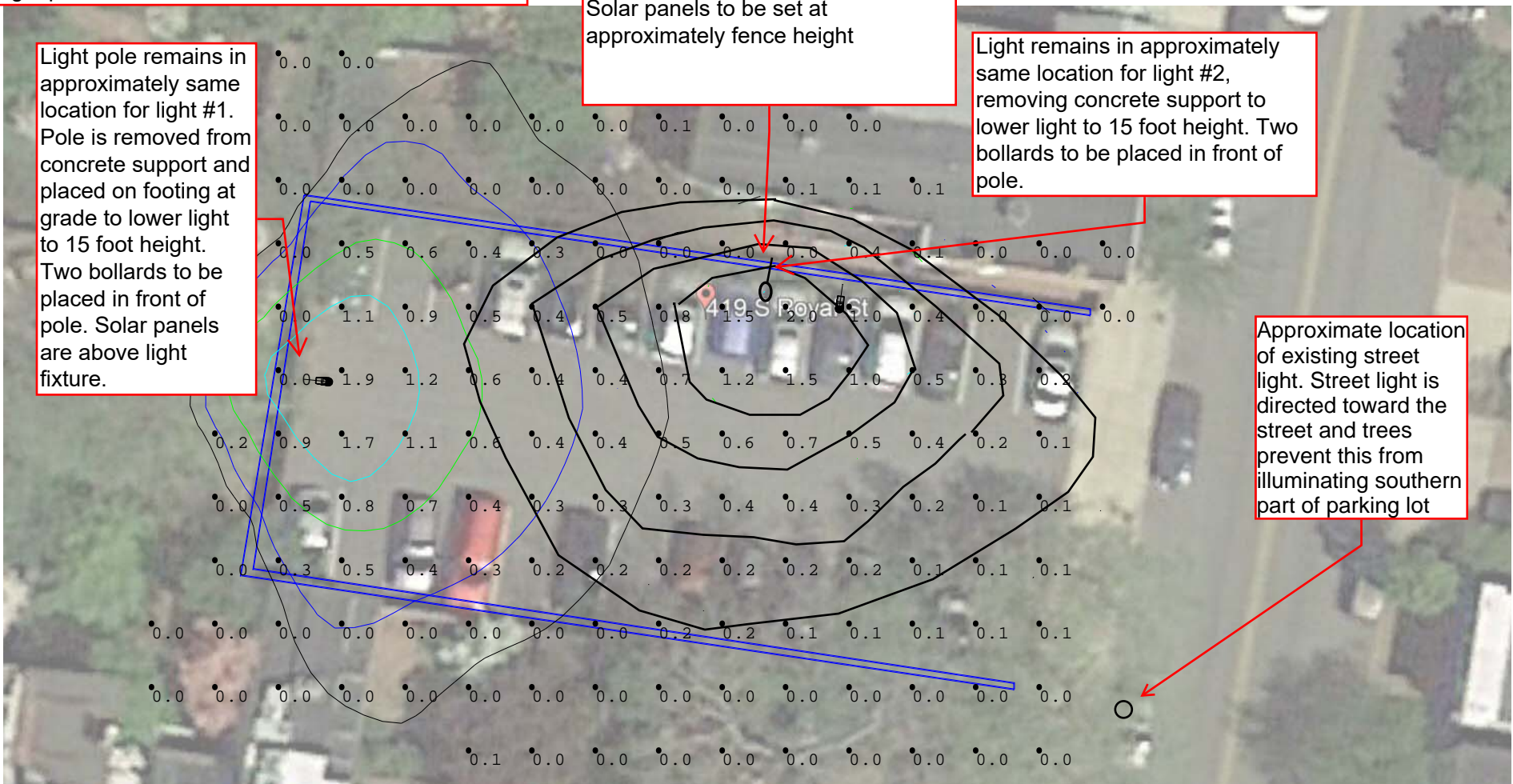
Text (numbers) indicate approximate light levels for proposed light pole locations.

Light pole remains in approximately same location for light #1. Pole is removed from concrete support and placed on footing at grade to lower light to 15 foot height. Two bollards to be placed in front of pole. Solar panels are above light fixture.

Solar panels to be set at approximately fence height

Light remains in approximately same location for light #2, removing concrete support to lower light to 15 foot height. Two bollards to be placed in front of pole.

Approximate location of existing street light. Street light is directed toward the street and trees prevent this from illuminating southern part of parking lot



THE OLD PRESBYTERIAN MEETING HOUSE

Solar Illuminations

5611 Halifax Avenue  
Fort Myers, FL 33912  
TELEPHONE: 239-461-5522  
EMAIL: sales@solarilluminations.com



NOTES & DISCLAIMER: The photometric data, rendering, plan, information and lighting distribution shown in these documents is a design. It is to be used as an example and guide only as to the typical performance of the luminaire specified. Any change made to the site plan may affect the information shown. In addition, other known and unknown factors may affect the performance of the luminaire resulting in changes to the information shown. In all circumstances, it is assumed that the buyer, installer or project manager is a capable professional, fully conversant with solar and LED technologies and capable of conducting electrical and civil works. Consideration must be given to the power generation of the solar panel which must be of an appropriate Wattage. The solar panel (if adjustable) must be installed at the correct angle (subject to geographic location), facing South and not subjected to any shade or part shade during the day. Solar Illuminations is not qualified to determine the structural appropriateness of their designs and is not responsible and cannot be held liable for any improper engineering, construction, installation or handling methods or for any improper use of structures or equipment that may be employed to realize the design. It is the responsibility of the buyer, installer or project manager to ensure that (if applicable) the design complies with local fire, health & safety and any other codes, standards or regulations etc. In the event that this design is found not to comply, Solar Illuminations may adjust the design in consultation with the buyer, installer or project manager to ensure that it does comply with such regulations. Solar Illuminations accepts no responsibility or liability by the provision of this document and the information contained herewith. If you have any questions, please contact Solar Illuminations for further information. E&OE.

# Letters Received

# 419 S. Royal Parking Lot Lights

Non-historic Lights Creating Issues for Neighbors and Sacrificing  
Architectural Nature of Old Town

# Straightforward Question; Straightforward Answer

- BAR should decide on the merits whether the lights and solar panels are “**architecturally and historically appropriate.**”
  - Cost, crime deterrence and environmental factors are not a part of the consideration.
- **The question is: Are two lights with 4 solar panels on 15-foot poles (depicted to the right) “architecturally and historically appropriate?”**
- **The answer is NO.**
  - These lights are not historically or architecturally appropriate as compared to surrounding area.
  - The OPMH is aware other historically appropriate options exist.
- **BAR approval has SERIOUS precedential implications.**

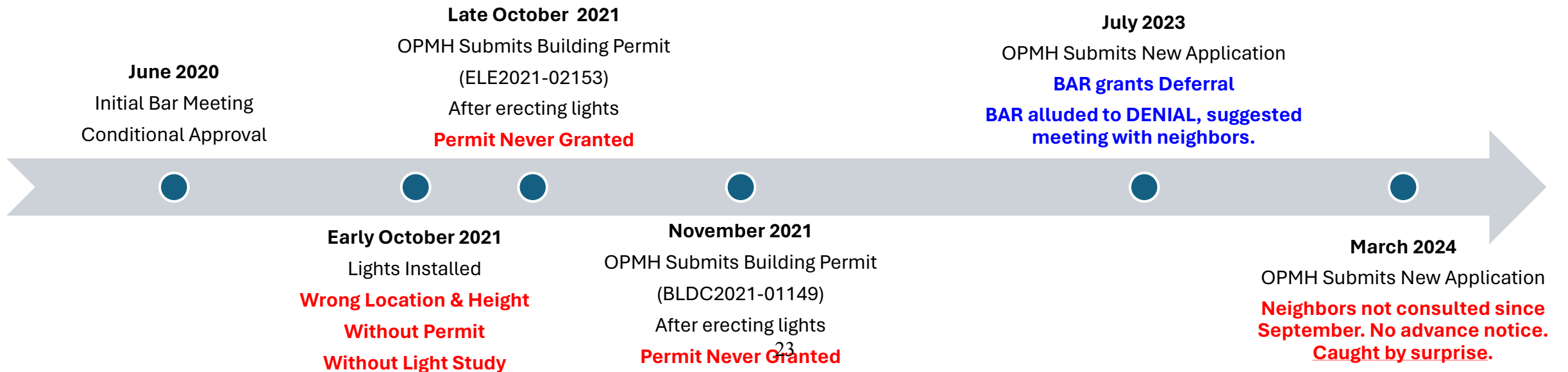
## BAR Policy on Lighting

<b>Lighting</b>	New and replacement light fixtures that are architecturally and historically appropriate.
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# Procedural Status – No Prior Approval; New Review Required

- Any prior approvals have expired; review by BAR must be *de novo* and NOT prejudiced by prior reviews.
- Lights were **NOT** “previously approved” and even if they were, that approval is not valid.
- Confirmed by City Attorney and BAR Staff
  - “2020 BAR approval has expired and is no longer valid.”
- Lights were installed:
  1. Inconsistent with the plans presented to the BAR (incorrect location, height and with additional solar panels 2 vs 1);
  2. Without City building permit; and
  3. Without satisfying the conditions of the BAR (work with city engineers0.



# “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Matthew 22:37–39

- The OPMH would not want the Basilica of St. Mary to put similar lights directly outside the windows of the OPMH overlooking the 18<sup>th</sup> century cemetery.
- OPMH misrepresented discussions with neighbors in current application.
- OPMH has proven unwilling to be considerate to **past 3 property owners**.
- **Lights are 8 ft from adjacent house.**
- I and others have offered multiple other options
  - Power easement; fence level lighting; parking bollard lighting.
- Manufacturer light chart shows intrusion of light.





# Light Intrusion on 417 is in Some Areas the Same/Greater than the Lot



- Note also, this is directly from the manufacturer's light diagram from the current BAR materials but dated 2020.
- This is NOT an independent light analysis. Indeed, the manufacturer has reason to show a depiction favorable to the OPMH.
- The OPMH has not provided a light study as requested by the BAR during 2020 meeting.

## Lights Should be Removed

- The OPMH has put up lights without BAR approval.
- The OPMH has put up lights without a building or electrical permit.
- **The lights are not “architecturally or historically appropriate.”**

## No Disparate Treatment

- If a private citizen erects a structure without BAR approval that is inconsistent with BAR requirements, they **must remediate**.
- **The same is true here.**
- **There has been no remediation since 2020 when erected in violation of BAR and City requirements.**

## Cost is NOT a Factor for BAR Consideration

- The OPMH is concerned about sunk costs of the construction of lights that were not approved by the BAR or the City.
- This should not be a factor in the BAR's consideration.
- This should not be a factor in the same way it is not a factor when a private citizen puts up an offensive railing or a business paints its exterior incorrectly and without BAR approval.

# Environmental Matters are NOT a Factor for BAR Consideration

- If environmental factors were a consideration, old windows would be required to be replaced with energy efficient alternatives!
- The real reason for solar panel powered lights is that the OPMH is reluctant to incur cost of running electricity to the parking lot.
  - From discussions with neighbors, OPMH is concerned about sunk costs and potential cost of running power. **Not a consideration for the BAR.**
  - I offered alternatives, including an electric easement to my property
- There have been **no studies** as to environmental impact. March 2023 proposal is first indication as to a factor for the OPMH.

# Crime Prevention is NOT a Factor for BAR Consideration; Even if it were Considered ... Cuts Against the OPMH

- Alexandria Police records show no history of crime in the parking lot.
- Crime prevention IS a *righteous* issue, but NOT an issue for the BAR.
- In any case:
  - Given the history of no crime, there are myriad less obstructive means to accomplishing any crime deterrence goals.
  - Many alternatives have been presented to the OPMH -- options that would not be a nuisance to neighbors while increasing light to the lot to seek to address safety concerns.



Sean Murphy &lt;srmurp@gmail.com&gt;

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## 419 S Royal OPMH lights

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**Susan H. Hellman** <susan.hellman@alexandriava.gov>

Tue, Aug 8, 2023 at 9:19 AM

To: Sean Murphy &lt;srmurp@gmail.com&gt;, "kcoyne01@hotmail.com" &lt;kcoyne01@hotmail.com&gt;, Liz Walker &lt;liz@liz-walker.com&gt;

Cc: Preservation &lt;Preservation@alexandriava.gov&gt;, William Conkey &lt;william.conkey@alexandriava.gov&gt;

Good morning,

Bill Conkey and I met with Christina Brown of the City Attorney's Office yesterday afternoon to discuss this. She determined that the 2020 BAR approval has expired and is no longer valid. Per Christina, Preservation staff and Code Administration will meet with church representatives to determine what lighting will be in compliance with Code. Transportation & Environmental Services will also be involved in the discussion, which I expect to take place shortly. Please note that this particular discussion will address footcandles and light spillage only – not style. It will also not be open to the public. After this meeting, the church will return to the BAR for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Best,

**Susan Hellman** (she/her)

Urban Planner - Historic Preservation

City of Alexandria

Department of Planning &amp; Zoning

703.746.3818

[www.alexandriava.gov](http://www.alexandriava.gov)



Sean Murphy &lt;srmurp@gmail.com&gt;

## OPMH lot

Sean Robert Murphy <srmurp@gmail.com>  
 To: "Susan H. Hellman" <susan.hellman@alexandriava.gov>

Wed, Aug 2, 2023 at 10:54 PM

Hi Susan,

As a lawyer by training, I couldn't resist giving regulation below a parse. In short, there are several independent grounds on which it should be determined that the June 3, 2020 approval should be considered expired.

What's more, the regulation does not take into account the concept of "approved, in part" (*i.e.*, one BAR request that includes multiple independent sub-approvals). Accordingly, it cannot be said that the BAR approved, for example, the "form" of the light separate from the location. The approval should be taken as a whole. Of course, the location of a particular project (whether a light, a deck or a pool) dictates what "form" is appropriate and vice-versa - they cannot be approved independently.

Logically, if the prior approval had not expired, then the OPMH would not need the current BAR request. Yet, they have requested a new approval.

Logic aside, please see my specific commentary below in [blue](#) regarding why the June 6, 2020 BAR approval has expired in totality (*e.g.*, with respect to form, type, location and design of light).

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,  
 Sean

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### *Expiration.*

Any certificate of appropriateness issued pursuant to section 10-106(A) and any permit to move, remove, capsulate or demolish in whole or in part in the Old and Historic Alexandria District issued pursuant to section 10-106 (B) shall expire of its own limitation 12 months from the date of issuance [[Note, here the approval was on June 3, 2020. With the Covid extension, the general expiration \(subject to the exceptions below, would be approx. June 3, 2022.\)](#)]

if the work authorized thereby is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of such 12 month period;

[\[Here, the work performed by the OPMH need to be \(i\) diligently pursued and \(ii\) substantially pursued.](#)

[With respect to "diligently pursued" -- this has not happened. The work was performed \(a\) without a permit, \(b\) with the incorrect equipment \(pole too high, a light with an additional solar panel then presented to the bar\), \(c\) in the incorrect location, \(d\) without proper oversight of contractors; and \(e\) without satisfying either condition of the actual BAR authorization.](#)

[With respect to "substantially pursued" this too has not happened. To be sure, the authorization had two conditions, neither of which were met. In addition, the OPMH has still not received the adequate permits which one would typically receive in advance of construction. The OPMH may say they have substantially pursued the project given that the poles were installed, but an objective incorrect installation should not be looked on favorable.](#)

[Even if it is acknowledged that the OPMH "substantially pursued" the authorized project due to the installation of the poles prior to receiving permits or meeting conditions, the regulation requires both diligent and substantial pursuit. Here there was at least not diligent, and likely not substantial, pursuit by June 3, 2022, the Covid extended expiration date.\]](#)

and further, any such certificate and permit shall also expire and become null and void if such authorized work is suspended or abandoned for a period of 12 months after being commenced and diligently and substantially pursued.

[The lights were installed without permit, at the incorrect height and in the wrong location in October 2021. Since October 2021, the lights have remained in the wrong location. The condition of the BAR approval to perform a light study was not met by June 3, 2022. In addition, per city permitting records on APEX, the OPMH submitted a building permit on November 12, 2021. I understand that the City denied the permit and required a resubmit. The resubmit was not made until March 2023, just short of three years after the BAR approval (reference permit: BLDC2021-01149). The electrical permit was requested on October 18, 2021 (reference permit: ELE2021-02153). I understand it was denied and nothing has been resubmitted since.

Assuming the work "commenced" in early-October 2021. The project has been suspended for over 12 months as evidenced by a failure to correct the construction and failure to submit or resubmit the necessary permitting.]

Any period or periods of time during which the right to use any such certificate or permit is stayed pursuant to this article X shall be excluded from the computation of the 12 months.

[There was no stay on any BAR certificate or permit.]

In the case of a certificate or permit for a project that requires a development special use permit or site plan under section 11-400 of this ordinance, the period of validity shall be coincident with the validity of the development special use permit or site plan as determined pursuant to section 11-418 of this ordinance.

[While the project does require a development permit, none has been issued. Accordingly, there is no permit period for the BAR approval to be coincident to.]

[Quoted text hidden]



Susan, you have received comments in the past from me on the lighting application for the parking lot on 419 S. Royal street that is behind my house (405 Wilkes Street). I am sending you the note I sent you before with a picture of a solar light used at the housing development off Wilkes street by the Waterfront, I think called Harbor Terrace. This light can be designed to be below the fence line. I have reviewed the most recent application and oppose the new location the Church purposes for the light for these primary reasons:

- In that location at the front of the lot, the light is unnecessary, there is a street light right at the front of the lot, that provides ample lighting, and I have observed the city places lighting much further apart.
- The city Street light is directed away from the homes, whereas the proposed Church light will face the houses on my side of the lot, and will negatively impact my rear windows, especially those on the second level where I have a bedroom.
- The Led light the church proposes is too bright to be placed this close to historic homes. It will still impact the windows only a few away at Sean Murphy's home on 417 S. Royal. Lighting below the fence line would be more appropriate, if needed or desired by the church. see attached photo.
- The light that is currently in the back of the lot provides sufficient lighting for a large part of the lot, and the city street light covers the lighting for the front of the lot, so again the additional light the church proposes is unnecessary.
- The light is not historical in design, and is not attractive with large solar panels and should not be approved in the historical district.
- It is inequitable to require homeowners that pay high taxes to live in the historic district, to abide by historical design rules, and then allow the Church that does not pay into the tax base to violate the same historic district rules. This includes not paying fines for failing to remove a fixture that is not permitted, or violates permitting rules. Homeowners would be required to pay fines if they refused to remove a fence or structure that violated historical design rules and regulations.
- Also, a parking lot larger than the Royal Street parking lot, owned by the catholic church that abuts the OPMH has no lights. Lights in that church lot would have a very bad impact on the surrounding historical homes. And there are many small parking lots in Old town that don't have lights next to homes, including the lot about the same size as the S. Royal lot, that is across N. Columbus Street and Queen Street next to the Library.
- It sets a very bad precedent to put huge unattractive lights next to historical homes that pay high taxes.

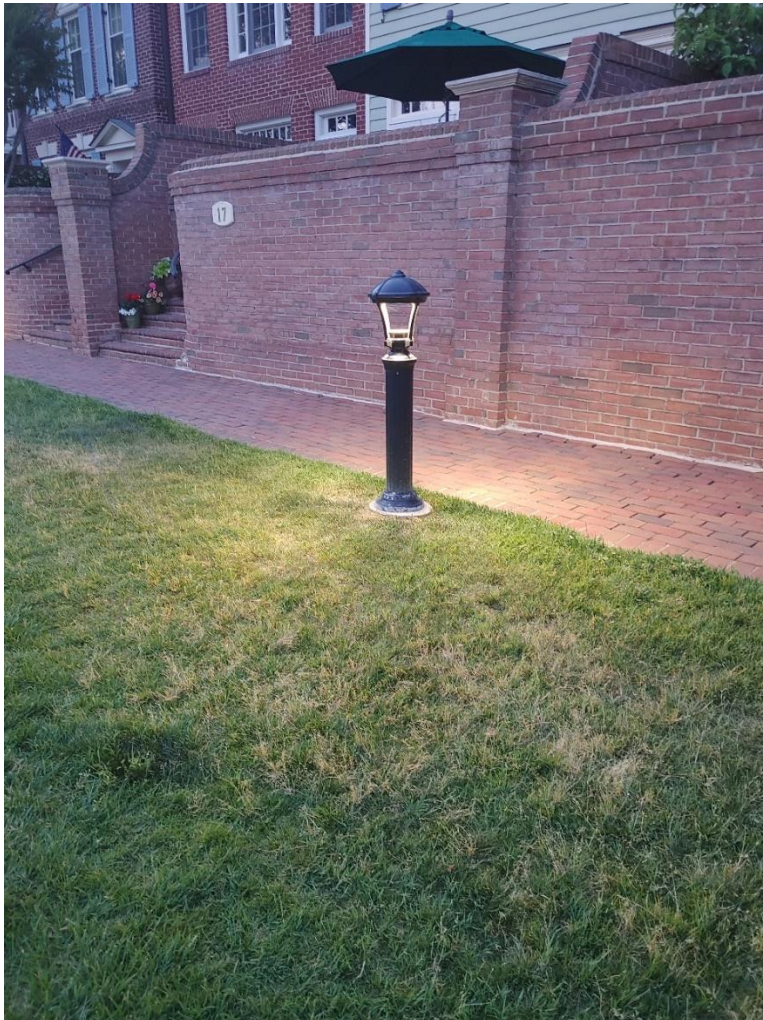
Thank you for your review of my comments opposing the OMPH application for a lighting structure in the S. Royal Street Parking lot that is contiguous to my lot. I would like you to circulate my comments and the attached picture to the BAR for their review, before the OPMH application is presented at their upcoming meeting on March 6, 2024. If you need to reach me please call my cell no. below.

please send this picture to the board. this light is on the walk that is at Union street and wilkes, that goes to the water front for the housing community there, think that community called harbor terrace. these can be taller to the fence line, but they are solar, and more attractive and historical looking and the example I used at the last hearing that was ignored. But I would like to know

Letter 2 - Combined from two separate emails and photograph - Docket Item #4

why this property was required to have more attractive lighting, and the church property was not. to me if these lights that could be taller but stayed below the fence line, would produce adequate lighting for such a small parking area, and not impact neighbors historic houses so close to the church lot.

Liz Walker  
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Alexandria, Virginia 22320  
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[www.liz-walker.com](http://www.liz-walker.com)



Good Afternoon,

Please accept this email as a formal objection to the above-referenced BAR application for lighting in the parking lot located at 419 S Royal Street. My family and I live at 418 S Pitt Street, which abuts the west side of the parking lot. Below are some comments for your consideration:

1. Following submission of the original BAR application (BAR #2020-00101 OHAD) for the parking lot lighting, the lighting was installed without the necessary permits and in breach of the BAR approval terms. For example, the light installed on the west side of the parking lot includes two solar panels instead of one as represented in the original BAR application (please see attached photograph showing view of west light from our property).
2. We understand that the City Attorney has determined that approval for the original BAR application has expired in its entirety. While the current application suggests otherwise, we understand that the BAR will be considering all aspects of the subject lighting application (i.e., form/design - not just location and height).
3. The parking lot owner solicited feedback from the adjacent property owners in August/September 2023. It does not appear that the current BAR application incorporates any of the feedback provided (e.g., installing historically-appropriate lights, bollard lights, etc.).
4. The OHAD Design Guidelines state, "The above grade elements of a parking garage or lot such as fences, walls, gates, lighting, signage, bollards and chains should not detract from the architectural character of the surrounding buildings..." We believe that the subject lighting design detracts significantly from the architectural character of the surrounding historic homes and should not be approved.

Thank you,

Kevin Coyne

