

\*\*\*\*\***DRAFT MINUTES**\*\*\*\*\*

Board of Architectural Review  
**Wednesday, March 19, 2025**  
7:00 p.m., City Council Chamber  
City Hall

Members Present: Andrew Scott, Chair  
Nastaran Zandian, Vice Chair  
Bud Adams  
Theresa del Ninno  
Michael Lyons  
James Spencer

Members Absent: Margaret Miller

Secretary: Susan Hellman, Historic Preservation Planner

Staff Present: Marina Novaes, Historic Preservation Planner

## 1 **Call to Order**

The March 19, 2025 Board of Architectural Review meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. Chair Scott, Vice Chair Zandian, Ms. del Ninno, Mr. Adams, Mr. Spencer, and Mr. Lyons were present. Ms. Miller was absent.

## 2 **Minutes**

Consideration of the minutes from the March 5, 2025, Board of Architectural Review Public Hearing.

**BOARD ACTION:** On a motion by Ms. Del Ninno, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Board of Architectural Review voted to defer the approval of the minutes of the March 5, 2025 meeting in order for staff to modify the minutes as requested. The motion carried unanimously.

## **Consent Calendar**

- 3 BAR#2025-00020 - OHAD  
Request for signage at 10 Duke Street.  
Applicant: Noe Landini represented by Patience Shaffer, Contractor

**The Board removed this item from the Consent Calendar.**

**BOARD ACTION:** On a motion by Mr. Scott, seconded by Ms. Zandian, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2025-00020 as amended. The motion carried on a vote of 5 to 1, with Mr. Adams opposed.

**SPEAKERS:**

Patience Shaffer, Contractor representing the owner, was available for questions.

**DISCUSSION:**

Donna Degroff, a neighbor, is opposed to the sign because it is humongous, and it will impact the community's quality of life. She is also concerned about the restaurant serving alcohol and having outdoor speakers during events. She said that other restaurants in the area do not have similar blade signs. She thinks the sign will be an eyesore due to its height.

Norman Leader, a neighbor, asked whether the sign will be located on the east side or on the northeast corner. He also said that the size is not in line with the standards of Old Town, as it is five times what the administrative approval guidelines allow. He thinks the sign detracts from the building and makes the area look commercialized. He suggests a sign that fits in better with the historical nature of the district.

Ms. Shaffer responded to the public speakers by saying that Alexandria just approved an updated sign ordinance, and that the proposed signage complies with the ordinance. She also emphasized that the sign will not be illuminated, and that the placement of the sign is meant to be visible from multiple angles. She thinks the sign is appropriate for the size of the building, which is a large event space.

Mr. Scott reminded the public speakers that matters such as music and the uses of the venue are not under the purview of the BAR.

Mr. Lyons recognizes that the building is on a historic site but thinks the sign is not a distraction and fits nicely on the building. He has no problem with the sign and can support it.

Ms. Del Ninno thinks the sign would be better suited in a location further south, rather than on the corner. She doesn't have an issue with the size of the sign.

Mr. Adams said that this restaurant is located a few blocks away from many other restaurants and understands the need for a sign to grab attention. He says that because this is a residential area, the business should be conscious of the neighbors. He suggested looking at other signs on old warehouses in the area, many of which were painted on the brick. He would like to see a less contemporary sign.

Mr. Spencer has no issue with the size of the sign but doesn't like the placement of the sign. He said that a corner placement is not historically appropriate. He suggests placing the sign on a solid wall rather than a blade sign, on the same face where the large open windows are.

Ms. Zandian agrees that the sign would be more appropriate if placed on the wall rather than the corner.

Mr. Scott said he would support the application as submitted, as the Board has approved similar blade signs at the Hotel Heron and Balducci's building. He thinks the scale of the sign is appropriate and is appropriate for a mixed-use area.

Ms. Zandian asked if the illuminated “Open” sign behind the entry doors requires BAR approval. Staff responded that the open sign would require approval if it’s permanent and not temporary.

Mr. Scott moved to approve the application with the added condition that the applicant work with staff to determine the most appropriate type and placement of the sign.

## **New Business**

4 & 5 BAR#2025-00031 – OHAD

Request for alterations at 400 King Street

Applicant: AB/FH Alexandrian Hotel represented by James Pandula, Architect

BAR#2025-00049 – OHAD

Request for a partial demolition and encapsulation at 400 King Street.

Applicant: AB/FH Alexandrian Hotel represented by James Pandula, Architect

**BOARD ACTION:** On a motion by Mr. Spencer, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Board of Architectural Review accepted the applicant’s request for deferral of BAR#2025-00031 & BAR#2025-00049. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 0.

### **SPEAKERS:**

James Pandula, architect, was available for questions.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Ms. del Ninno expressed support for ADA entrances and asked for clarification on the proposed ADA entrance. Asked questions about the awning on King St. and the vestibule.

Mr. Scott asked about the type of existing and proposed windows.

Mr. Spencer asked if all the replacement windows will be aluminum.

Mr. Spencer and Mr. Lyons expressed difficulties with following the application.

Ms. del Ninno asked if the applicant investigated insulated windows. She also stated that she supported an alternative window configuration including horizontal elements because it is a retail space.

Mr. Adams original design was to mimic Philadelphia townhouse. Agrees with Ms. del Ninno about the horizontal window elements. Also, he stated that he would prefer the use of wood windows over aluminum and would like to see alternate studies.

Mr. Scott stated that aluminum windows are appropriate for modern buildings and the proposed design should fit in with the rest of the building. He also stated that using wood windows would be appropriate.

Ms. Zandian agrees with staff recommendations and comments from other board members. She also supported the use of wood windows in the new design.

6 & 7 BAR#2025-00041 - OHAD

Request for alterations at 418 N. Union Street.

Applicant: John C. Cruden, represented by Gregory Stephenson, Architect

BAR#2025-00042 - OHAD

Request for partial demolition and encapsulation at 418 N. Union Street.

Applicant: John C. Cruden, represented by Gregory Stephenson, Architect

**BOARD ACTION:** On a motion by Ms. Zandian, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2025-00041 and BAR#2025-00042. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:**

None.

**REASON:**

The Board agreed with the staff's recommendation

**SPEAKERS:**

Gregory Stephenson, the project architect, provided a brief summary of the project and was available to answer any questions.

**DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Scott asked the architect if he would consider adding a surrounding trim to the garage door, which is under the proposed bay window, so the vertical alignment would be visually improved. Mr. Stephenson explained that the owners would not accept the suggestion since the goal is to allow more light inside the room and that there are other bay windows just like the proposed in the neighborhood, he also said that the cost of adding the surrounding would be unfeasible. There was no further discussion.

8 & 9 BAR#2025-00044 - OHAD

Request for alterations at 619 S. Royal Street.

Applicant: Susan Alexander

BAR#2025-00052 - OHAD

Request for a partial demolition and encapsulation at 619 S. Royal Street.

Applicant: Susan Alexander

**BOARD ACTION:** On a motion by Mr. Lyons, seconded by Mr. Scott, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2025-00044 and BAR#2025-00052. The motion carried on a vote of 5-1, with Mr. Spencer opposing.

**REASON:**

The Board agreed with the staff's recommendation

**SPEAKERS:**

Susan Alexander, Applicant, was available to answer questions.

**DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Adams excused that the arch transom are often more complex to build. Expressed that it would be nice if the proposed transom was in-line with the sidelites.

Ms. Nastaran asked if it was possible to make the door wider to be in-line with the transom.

Mr. Scott stated that the proposed changes will barely be visible.

10 BAR2025-00045 – OHAD

Request for partial demolition at 722 S. Fairfax Street.

Applicant: Stephen and Laura Sweeney, represented by Patrick Camus, Architect

**BOARD ACTION:** On a motion by Mr. Spencer, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR2025-00045. The motion carried unanimously.

**SPEAKERS:**

Patrick Camus, Architect, was available to answer questions.

**DISCUSSION:**

There was no discussion.

**Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

10 **Adjournment**

The Board of Architectural Review meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.