

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 4, 2018

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE OLD AND HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

FROM: HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAFF

SUBJECT: REVISIONS TO THE OHAD BAR ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL POLICY TO INCLUDE WINDOWS AND GAS METERS

Please find attached a revision to the recently adopted OHAD Administrative Approval Policy to include a section on windows and a stand-alone document on Gas Meters. These will be considered under Other Business at the April 4, 2018 hearing.

Based on recent OHAD BAR action to permit modern windows on buildings constructed after 1935, staff was able to significantly condense the existing policy, dated 1/3/18, and include it in the chart. The window policy is the last section in the chart and the new text is shown underlined. There are no changes to the use of various materials and the revisions are primarily related to the simplifications allowed by the new “period-of-significance” based date rather than the old “when these materials became commercially available” date. The Performance Specifications of the old ordinance are unchanged. They are generally of interest only to the trade and will become a stand-alone document that is linked in the policy to the preservation web page.

The draft Administrative Approval of Gas meters policy was provided to the board for comment at the March 7 OHAD BAR hearing and staff recommends approval of this document if there are no comments. It will also be a stand-alone document that is simply referenced and linked in the Administrative Approval Policy. Proposals for meters that do not comply with these four types will be brought to the BAR for review.

BAR POLICIES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL IN THE OLD AND HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT

Adopted 3/2/2011
Amended 2/21/2018

The primary purpose of the BAR is to preserve historic material, which in many cases can be retained and repaired, rather than replaced.

THE BAR PROCESS

There are three different levels of BAR approval in the Old and Historic Alexandria District (OHAD)ⁱ

- No BAR approval
- BAR staff administrative approval (as outlined in the attached table)
- BAR approval at a public hearing

Please contact BAR staff to determine what type of approval your project requires. BAR staff can be reached at preservation@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-3833.

I. No BAR Approval

The items listed below do not require BAR approval:

- Art (as defined in the zoning ordinance)
- At-grade paving not used for alleys, drives or parking
- Removable chimney caps
- Door hardware, mailboxes and house numbers
- Play equipment (not including playhouses)
- Plant materials
- Retaining walls under 2 feet in height
- Storm windows
- Storm doors (full view)
- Small dish antennae less than 2 feet in diameter on nonstreet-facing elevations
- Security cameras measuring less than one cubic foot each
- Security light fixtures (no more than two) on each nonstreet-facing elevation
- Portable planters, as defined in the City Code
- Free Little Libraries
- Seasonal holiday decorations
- Below-grade features, such as basement stairs and window wells on private property
- Roof drainage elements such as snow guards, gutters and downspouts

II. BAR Staff Administrative Approval

1. The policies in the attached table identify the alterations and/or repairs that may be administratively approved by BAR staff and are also used by the BAR when evaluating requests at a public hearing.
2. BAR staff must visit the subject property to determine whether the proposed alteration is visible from a public right-of-way and whether it is eligible for administrative approval. **Any proposal to remove historic material that staff believes can be reasonably repaired and preserved will not be approved administratively.** A link to the BAR administrative approval application may be found [here](#).
3. Historically appropriate repair and in-kind replacement of materials, such as repointing and siding repair, requires a written finding by staff that it is in compliance with the criteria found in Zoning Ordinance section 10-109. There is no fee associated with a repair, but the standard [BAR administrative approval application](#) form must be completed for tracking purposes.
4. Administrative approvals must comply with all City codes and ordinances and may require separate approval of permits from other City departments. It is recommended that the applicant obtain BAR administrative approval prior to applying for a building permit to avoid possible delays at the [Permit Center](#).
5. These policies may be amended by the BAR at any time but will be reviewed and updated at least every five years.

III. BAR Approval at a Public Hearing

Proposed projects not in compliance with these adopted policies, or not architecturally compatible or historically appropriate in the opinion of staff, require review and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the BAR at a public hearing. The City's historic preservation website www.alexandriava.gov/preservation has links to the BAR application.

Please contact BAR staff with any questions or for help completing the BAR application at preservation@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-3833.

BAR POLICIES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL

The following alterations can be approved administratively by BAR staff. If not specifically listed below, the alteration may require approval by the BAR at a public hearing or may not require BAR approval (see list on page 1). For help, contact BAR staff at preservation@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-3833.

Accessibility structures (residential)	Temporary ramps/lifts which are easily removable and are not located on a permanent foundation, provided that they are on a nonstreet-facing elevation, do not permanently alter the building and are constructed of wood, metal or a millable, solid-through-the-core, paintable composite material.
Antennae	Replacement or new co-located antennae meeting the original BAR conditions and the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penthouse Wall mount: may not project above the wall on which they are mounted and must be painted to match the adjacent wall surface • Flat Roof mount: must be on a freestanding tripod set back a minimum of 10 feet from the building face
Accessory structures (sheds and playhouses)*	New and replacement accessory buildings used as tool/storage sheds or playhouses not requiring a building permit and limited to 50 square feet and 7 feet maximum height, provided they meet the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are not located on a permanent foundation and may be easily removed • They are located within a fenced side or rear yard of an interior lot or behind a six-foot-tall solid fence on a corner lot <p>A plat is needed to confirm compliance with zoning requirements.</p>
Awnings	Retractable wall mounted awnings (without legs or supports), provided that they are located on nonstreet-facing elevations and are retracted when not in use.
Doors (pedestrian)	Wood doors on buildings or portions of buildings constructed before 1935 on street-facing elevations. If historically and architecturally appropriate, may include glass panels (must comply with the window performance specifications for glass). <p>Fiberglass or metal doors, in the appropriate architectural style and detailing on buildings or portions of buildings constructed after 1934, and on nonstreet-facing elevations for buildings constructed before 1935, meeting the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have a smooth finish

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If glass panels are architecturally appropriate the glass must comply with the <i>Alexandria Replacement Window and Door Performance Specifications</i>.
Doors (garage)	<p>Original side-hinged or side-sliding wood doors on historic garages must be repaired or replaced in the original material and style.</p> <p>Garages constructed after 1934 may have overhead sectional doors and may use a pressed steel or composite material, provided they have a smooth finish.</p> <p>Glazing on garage doors must be stylistically appropriate.</p>
Fences and gates*	<p>New and replacement rear and side yard fences up to 6 feet in height and constructed of wood, metal or masonry.</p> <p>New and replacement front yard fences (3 ½ feet in height and 50 percent open) provided they are historically appropriate in design and constructed of wood, metal or masonry.</p> <p>BAR approval is required for any fence located in a vision clearance areaⁱⁱ or if a fence requires a waiver of fence heightⁱⁱⁱ.</p>
HVAC*	Minimally visible ground mounted condenser units in side and rear yards. If a unit is visible, screening may be required.
Lighting	New and replacement light fixtures that are architecturally and historically appropriate.
Masonry repointing	Paint removal and repointing must protect existing masonry and new mortar must match the historic mortar color, composition, texture and profile.
Shutters	<p>Shutters, provided the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They are historically and architecturally appropriate, sized to fit the opening and operable They are constructed of wood or a solid-through-the-core, millable composite material with a smooth finish
Siding and trim	<p>For buildings or additions constructed prior to 1935, the applicant must, working with staff, undertake the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If multiple layers of siding exist, remove at least one test patch a minimum size of 2 feet by 2 feet on each elevation in order to reveal the first layer of siding BAR staff must visit the site to determine whether any extant historic siding can be retained and be reasonably repaired and patched

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If staff finds that the existing historic siding is beyond reasonable repair, new siding must match the profile, exposure and design of the original. If historic siding is not present, historically appropriate wood siding must be used. <p>Buildings and additions constructed after 1934 may use fiber cement (e.g. HardiePlank) or composite (e.g. Boral) siding and trim with an architecturally appropriate profile, provided it has a smooth finish.</p> <p>Composite trim in certain limited locations on buildings constructed before 1935, such as the fascia board behind gutters or a water table, where wood trim is consistently exposed to moisture.</p>
Stoops, steps and railings	<p>New stoops, provided that they are constructed with historically appropriate materials and design.</p> <p>New handrails if they are visually minimal (post and rail without balusters), and guardrails required by the building code, provided they are constructed in a historically appropriate style.</p>
Utilities	<p>Electrical utility meters on nonstreet-facing elevations, provided they are painted to match the adjacent wall surface. For gas meters, see the Board’s adopted policy for <i>Administrative Approval of Gas Meters</i>.</p>
Vents	<p>Vents measuring less than one cubic foot, provided that the color matches the adjacent surface.</p> <p>Requests for vents on street-facing elevations must include documentation that there is no reasonable alternative.</p>
<u>Window replacement</u>	<p><u>Buildings or portions of buildings constructed before 1935 with previously replaced windows (not having wood-pegged mortise and tenon sash joinery or cylinder “wavy” glass), or historic windows too deteriorated to repair, as determined by staff:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Historically appropriate multi-light sash must be single-glazed wood windows on street facing elevations (energy panels may be used). On nonstreet-facing elevations, wood windows may be double-glazed (insulated).</u> <u>Historically appropriate one-over-one and two-over-two windows may be replaced with double-glazed wood windows on any elevation.</u> <u>Original window frames and trim must be preserved and repaired.</u> <p><u>On buildings or portions of buildings constructed after 1934, modern window materials, such as aluminum-clad wood, wood composite or fiberglass (no hollow vinyl), as well as double-glazing, may be used.</u></p>

	<p><u>Aluminum clad and fiberglass windows may generally replace steel sash windows on any building when using the same light configuration and operation.</u></p> <p><u>Replacement windows must comply with the <i>Alexandria Replacement Window and Door Performance Specifications</i>.</u></p>
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* Must comply with the [Zoning Ordinance](#). Zoning staff can be reached at pczoning@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-4333.

ⁱ In the Parker-Gray District, refer to the 2012 [Residential Reference Guide](#) and adopted Design Guideline chapters instead of this policy.

ⁱⁱ BAR [Waiver of Vision Clearance](#) Requirement:

ⁱⁱⁱ BAR [Waiver of Fence Height](#) Requirement: