

ISSUE: Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations

APPLICANT: Unit Owners Association of Potowmack Crossing Condominium

LOCATION: Old and Historic Alexandria District
1600 – 1734 West Abingdon Dr.

ZONE: RC/High density apartment zone.

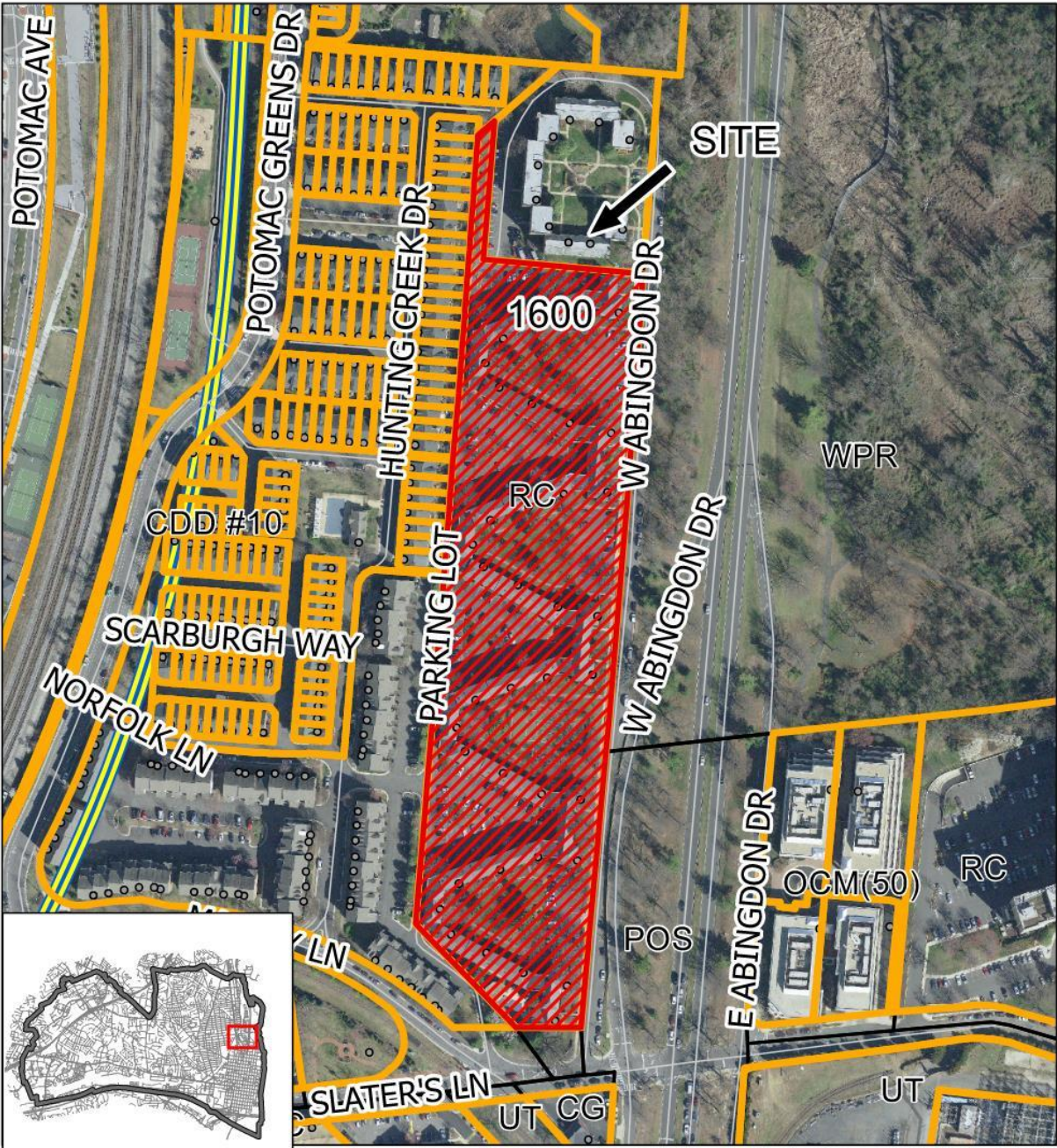
STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

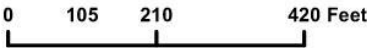
1. The applicant installs inoperable shutters that are constructed of wood or a solid-through-the-core, millable composite material with a smooth finish. The replacement shutters should also be sized to fit the opening and match the existing design. Updated material specifications must be submitted to confirm compliance with the *BAR Policies for Administrative Approval*; **OR**,
2. The applicant removes of the existing shutters without installing new replacement shutters.

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 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 #2022-00041
1600 West Abingdon Drive



I. APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The applicant requests a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the existing shutters with vinyl, inoperable, sized to match shutters, at 1600 West Abingdon Drive.

II. HISTORY

The apartment complex, originally known as the Abingdon Apartments, was constructed between **1942 and 1945**. It was one of many garden apartment type complexes constructed in Alexandria beginning in 1939 and continuing through the war years as the city sought to accommodate the growing population resulting from the buildup in governmental and defense industry employment. The southern, and somewhat later, northern end of Washington Street became the focus of apartment complex development. The northern end of town where the Abingdon was constructed had been characterized by undeveloped land and miscellaneous industrial operations, but rapidly developed into a locus of garden style apartment complexes, including Bashford Hall Apartments (402-418 Bashford Lane, 1942-1943), Harbor Terrace Apartments (1301-1417 East Abingdon Drive and 509-607 Bashford Lane, 1943-1944), Locharbor Gardens Apartments (500-614 Bashford Lane, 1939-1940) and Mason Hall Apartments (1420 West Abingdon Drive, 1949). Alexandria's garden apartments were almost always designed in the Colonial Revival style and many took the names of historic sites in the area. Thus Abingdon, with its red brick, Colonial style door surrounds and cupolas was named for the Abingdon, the 18th century Alexander-Custis Plantation located along the George Washington Memorial Parkway on the grounds of the Reagan National Airport.

The complex was converted from apartments to condominiums in the mid-1980s, at which time it assumed the name Potowmack Crossing. The BAR approved a series of alterations in 1985, including site improvements, signage, installation of new windows, new entry doors and exterior light fixtures (BAR Case #s 85-155, 8/14/1985; 85-54, 5/1/85; 85-139, 7/10/1985). In 1999, the BAR approved the current freestanding sign at the south end of the complex (BAR Case #98-00041, 4/16/1999). In 2007, the BAR approved an application to replace all existing doors and door surrounds, sills, exterior light fixtures and intercom panels (BAR 2007-0094, 6/6/2007).

In 2008, the BAR approved replacement windows in a composite material (Fibrex) in a different light configuration, that would more closely match the original steel casement windows, with a number of conditions (See Attachment 3 for BAR2010-00229, 9/1/2010). In 2018, the BAR approved the installation of replacement fiberglass windows to match the existing multilight light configuration (2018-00453).

III. ANALYSIS

The *Design Guidelines* states that window and door shutters are an important visual detail of the overall composition of the building and serve both functional and decorative purposes. Shutters can be an important means of regulating sunlight and protecting the interior of a structure during severe weather. In addition, shutters serve as a means of clearly defining the openings or voids in a building façade. Inappropriate shutters can detract from the design integrity of a building and create a false impression of the architectural character of a structure.

The applicant proposes to replace the existing vinyl shutters with vinyl, inoperable shutters which do not comply with the *Design Guidelines* and *BAR Policies for Administrative Approval*. The *Design Guidelines* state that shutters should be hinged and operable. It also discourages the installation of inoperable, decorative shutters. The *BAR Policies for Administrative Approval* states that shutters should be constructed of wood or a solid-through-the-core, millable composite material with a smooth finish.

Photographic documentation shows that the original shutters were not operable. However, staff also couldn't locate any approval for the installation of the existing vinyl shutters. Given this information, staff supports the installation of inoperable shutters that are constructed of wood or a solid-through-the-core, millable composite material with a smooth finish. The replacement shutters should also be sized to fit the opening and match the existing design. The shutter-style labeled alternate #2 would comply with the design requirement. Updated material specifications must be submitted to confirm compliance with the *BAR Policies for Administrative Approval*. Alternately, because the property consists of Colonial Revival-style buildings and the existing shutters are solely for decorative purposes, staff also supports the removal of the existing shutters without the installation of new replacement shutters.

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

STAFF

Amirah Lane, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Tony LaColla, AICP, Land Use Services Division Chief, Planning & Zoning

III. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Zoning

F-1 The proposed replacement shutters comply with zoning.

Code Administration

F-1 No code comment for scope of work described: replace exterior shutters in-kind.

Transportation and Environmental Services

F-1 After a 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)

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 are connected to the public storm sewer system, if available, by a continuous underground pipe. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate the 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) (T&ES)
- 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-2 No code comment for scope of work described: replace exterior shutters in-kind.

V. ATTACHMENTS

1 – Supplemental Materials

2 – Application for BAR 2022-00041: 1600 – 1734 West Abingdon Dr.

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 1600-1734 W. Abingdon DriveDISTRICT: ☒ Old & Historic Alexandria ☐ Parker – Gray ☐ 100 Year Old BuildingTAX MAP AND PARCEL: 035.04-0AZONING: RCAPPLICATION 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: Unit Owners Association of Potowmack Crossing CondominiumAddress: 1600 W. Abingdon DriveCity: Alexandria State: VA Zip: 22314Phone: 703-540-1414 E-mail: potowmackcrossing@gmail.comAuthorized Agent *(if applicable)*: ☐ Attorney ☐ Architect ☒ EngineerName: Chris Kelley (Thomas Downey, Ltd.)Phone: 540-818-4583E-mail: cjkelley@tdlengineers.com**Legal Property Owner:**Name: Unit Owners Association of Potowmack Crossing CondominiumAddress: 1600 W. Abingdon DriveCity: Alexandria State: VA Zip: 22314Phone: 703-548-1414 E-mail: potowmackcrossing@gmail.com

- ☐ Yes ☒ No Is there an historic preservation easement on this property?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, has the easement holder agreed to the proposed alterations?
- ☐ Yes ☒ No Is there a homeowner's association for this property?
- ☒ Yes ☒ No If yes, has the homeowner's association approved the proposed alterations?

This is a condominium and there is a UOA, but no HOA. The UPA owns the building exteriors and is the entity undertaking the project.

If you answered yes to any of the above, please attach a copy of the letter approving the project.

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

- ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION
☒ EXTERIOR ALTERATION: *Please check all that apply.*

☐ awning
☐ doors
☐ lighting
☐ other _____

☐ fence, gate or garden wall
☐ windows
☐ pergola/trellis

☐ HVAC equipment
☐ siding
☐ painting unpainted masonry

☒ shutters
☐ shed

☐ ADDITION
☐ DEMOLITION/ENCAPSULATION
☐ SIGNAGE

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

Replacement of existing shutters in-kind - see attached documents for details.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

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.*

- ☐ ☒ ^{N/A} 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.*

- ☐ ☒ ^{N/A} 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 or 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.*

- ☒ ☒ ^{N/A} 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 have submitted a filing fee with this application. (Checks should be made payable to the City of Alexandria. Please contact staff for assistance in determining the appropriate fee.)

- ☒ 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.

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: _____

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. UOA of Potowmack Crossing	1600 W. Abingdon	100%
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. UOA of Potowmack Crossing	1600 W. Abingdon	100%
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. UOA of Potowmack Crossing	None	None
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.

Date Printed Name Signature

January 27, 2022

Historic Preservation Office
301 King Street, Suite 2100
Alexandria, Virginia, 22314

Dear Preservation Staff:

This letter provides a brief background of the request as well as supporting documents.

Property Narrative

Potowmack Crossing I Condominium is a residential community located at the far north end of Old Town. It falls within the Old and Historic preservation district and has elevations that face the George Washington Parkway. The community was developed circa 1942 as apartments, and converted to condominiums in the 1980s. The property is not located within the core historic district, and West Abingdon Drive serves only Potowmack Crossing I and its neighbor property, Potowmack Crossing II. The windows have been replaced twice, most recently in 2018 with Marvin Infinity fiberglass windows, and the cupola at 1700 W. Abingdon recently underwent a large restoration project. Sloped roofs with asphalt shingles are not original. They were originally flat, and presumably converted to sloped roofs to address leak issues.

Shutters

When originally constructed, louvered shutters were installed on select windows facing the George Washington Parkway. These shutters were not hinged and did not have shutter dogs. Without hardware, they would not have been operable and were installed solely for aesthetics. Based on the original construction period, we would assume the shutters were wood.

The shutters were replaced when the property was converted to condominiums in the 1980s with similarly sized vinyl louvered shutters. The vast majority of which have not been replaced since the conversion, with several exceptions for broken shutters. At present, many shutters are damaged, are missing at scattered locations, have peeling paint, and are mismatched where replaced.

The existing shutters are beyond their useful lives, and the Condominium Association desires to replace the 30+ year old vinyl shutters with in-kind materials, sized to match the existing. They explored using a solid composite material, but found it to be cost prohibitive (at least 4.5 times the cost of vinyl) and are seeking a waiver to allow the use of vinyl. In keeping with the property's history, the shutters would not be operable and no additional hardware would be added. Two styles are presented for consideration in

the supporting documents of this application. The property would prefer to use a raised panel style shutter. However, regardless of style approved, all shutters installed would be of the same style.

Refer to the following pages for supporting photographs and product documentation.

Sincerely,

Thomas Downey, Ltd.



Christopher J. Kelley, LEED Green Assoc.
Engineering Associate & Historic Preservation Specialist

Attachments

-Photograph #1-

Potowmack Crossing Condominium
Typical Existing Shutter Conditions



-Photograph #2-

Potowmack Crossing Condominium
Typical Existing Shutter Conditions



-Photograph #3-
Potowmack Crossing Condominium
Typical Existing Shutter Conditions



Mismatched shutters - Style and color
differ from all others on this elevation

Paint peeling from
shutters

-Photograph #4-

Potowmack Crossing Condominium
Typical Existing Shutter Conditions



Fastener failure -
Top of shutter no
longer secured to
wall

Missing shutter

Paint is peeling from
this shutter

-Photograph #5-

Potowmack Crossing Condominium
Typical Original Shutter Conditions
(circa 1942)

The original shutters
were not operable -
see next two photos
for example details

-Photograph #6-

Potowmack Crossing Condominium
Typical Original Shutter Conditions
(circa 1942)

This is a hinge for
the metal casement
window

There is are no
shutter hinges or
shutter dogs.

-Photograph #7-

Potowmack Crossing Condominium
Typical Existing Shutter Conditions

Fastener holes from
wood nailers

Fastener heads

There are no holes
or other evidence on
the brick returns
adjacent to the
windows

Wood nailer used to
fasten shutters to
building walls

-Photograph #8-

Potowmack Crossing Condominium
Proposed New Shutters



Alternate 1

Raised Panel
Sized to match existing shutters

-Photograph #9-

Potowmack Crossing Condominium
Proposed New Shutters

Note the lack of
evidence of previous
shutter hanges



Alternate 2

Louvered with arched top. (Also available with a
straight top)
Sized to match existing shutters