

*******DRAFT MINUTES*******

Board of Architectural Review

Wednesday, May 18, 2022

7:00 p.m., City Council Chamber

City Hall

Members Present: James Spencer, Chair
Christine Roberts, Vice Chair
Laurie Ossman
Purvi Irwin
John Sprinkle
Christine Sennott
Robert Adams

Members Absent:

Secretary: William Conkey, AIA, Historic Preservation Architect

Staff Present: Susan Hellman, Historic Preservation Planner

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Architectural Review hearing was called to order at 7:00 p.m. All members were present.

II. MINUTES

2. Consideration of minutes from the May 5, 2022 meeting.

BOARD ACTION:

On a motion by Ms. Sennott and seconded by Ms. Ossman, the Board of Architectural Review approved the May 5, 2022 minutes as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7 – 0

III. ITEMS PREVIOUSLY DEFERRED

3. BAR #2022-00179 OHAD

Request for amendment to previously approved Permit to Demolish at 699 Prince Street parcel (625 Prince Street building) (Parcel ID 074.02-09-28).

Applicant: J River 699 Prince Street LLC

4. BAR #2022-00178 OHAD

Request for amendment to previously approved plans at 699 Prince Street parcel (625 Prince Street building) (Parcel ID 074.02-09-28).

Applicants: J River 699 Prince Street LLC

BOARD ACTION

On a motion by Mr. Sprinkle, and seconded by Ms. Roberts, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR #2022-00179 and BAR #2022-00178, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-1.

REASON

The Board supported the applicants request to reduce the amount of demolition and alterations

requested by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR), required to receive tax credits for the project. There were certain aspects of the VDHR recommendations that they were disappointed in but supported the application and looked forward to seeing the project completed.

SPEAKERS

Cathy Puskar, Attorney, introduced the project.

Kevin Crosby, Principal Architect, Antunovich Associates, presented the project and outlined changes recommended by VDHR to achieve tax credits for the project.

DISCUSSION

Ms. Irwin asked about the nature of the windows in the new building and Mr. Crosby said that they would be fixed but with a horizontal muntin would appear to be double-hung. Mr. Sprinkle asked about the VDHR process and said that he understood that the project was delayed due to Covid. He said that the tax credit process can be time intensive. Mr. Adams and Ms. Sennott both said that they preferred the previous canopy designs but understood that the changes were necessary for the tax credits. Dr. Ossman suggested that after the tax credits expire the applicant could consider building the previously approved canopies. Ms. Irwin said she disagreed with VDHR's request to make the full-light windows double-hung on the new, modern building.

5. BAR #2022-00185 OHAD

Request for alterations at 116 Gibbon Street.

Applicant: Jolynn Scotch

BOARD ACTION, :

On a motion by Ms. Roberts and seconded by Ms. Irwin, the Board of Architectural Review voted to **defer** the application. The motion carried on a vote of 7 – 0.

REASON

The Board sympathized with the Home Depot representatives who had not read the staff report or were aware of the BAR window replacement policy and Guidelines, but stated that they could modify the non-complying windows to make them compatible with the requirements.

SPEAKERS

Lawrence Page, resident at 3555 Bruce Ct, Alexandria, VA, was representing the applicant and was available to answer questions.

Paul Sutherland, resident at 121 Dogwood St, Vienna, VA, was also representing the applicant and available to answer any questions.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Spencer asked the applicant's representatives if they had read staff's recommendations, Mr. Page stated that they were not aware of a staff report. Mr. Conkey clarified that staff was recommending denial and gave a brief explanation about the BAR window policy and Guidelines.

Mr. Page explained that nowadays most window manufactures are staying away from making all wood windows for several reasons and that the new materials are more resistant and durable. The proposed windows are Andersens, LifeStyle 400 Series which are made of a wooden material and

clad with vinyl on the exterior for weatherproof. He explained that he could replace the windows' sashes to clear glass.

Mr. Conkey explained that vinyl windows are not allowed in the Historic District. Mr. Sutherland explained that Home Depot only offers all vinyl windows or the 400 Series which are very durable and maintenance free, he also explained that what they call vinyl clad windows by Andersen is actually Fibrex, a composite material that can be painted.

Mr. Conkey clarified that there were more issues with the proposed windows than material and Low E level, they were also proposing insert, pocket windows with sandwich muntins. Ms. Roberts asked if the windows were SDL, simulated divided lights. Mr. Sutherland clarified that the muntins in the proposed windows are in-between glass. Ms. Roberts asked staff to explain what was insert windows and why they don't comply. Mr. Conkey explained that insert windows are inserted within the existing frame which makes the actual window and glass area smaller.

Ms. Roberts stated that even though she could approve the Fibrex material since it is paintable, she could not support sandwich muntins, she advised the representatives to talk with the owner and come to a better solution, maybe a sash kit replacement.

Ms. Irwin asked Mr. Conkey if the Fibrex material complies with the policy, Mr. Conkey confirmed that it does but there were other issues to be considered. Ms. Irwin asked the applicant if they would like to ask for deferral, which the representatives agreed upon. There was no further discussion.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

6. BAR #2022-00174 PG

Request for complete demolition at 899 and 999 North Henry Street.

Applicants: Samuel Madden Fairstead Developer, LLC and MCRT Old Town LLC

BOARD ACTION :

On a motion by Ms. Roberts and seconded by Ms. Irwin, the Board voted unanimously to accept the deferral of the application.

REASON

The Board wanted more information regarding potential alternatives to demolition, the protection status of any Alexandria buildings designed by Joseph Saunders, the impact to the historic district of the project, and the percentage of World War II housing remaining in the City. They also wanted to add conditions.

SPEAKERS

Steen Kulik represented the applicant, gave a presentation, and answered questions. He was assisted by architects Stephanie Farrell and Sherief Elfar. Mr. Kulik agreed with staff recommendations.

DISCUSSION

Ms. Roberts complimented staff on the incredibly detailed staff report and agreed that the buildings do not meet the demolition criteria and that Alexandria has many Colonial Revival buildings and many building designed by Saunders. She noted that the applicant can mitigate the loss of the

buildings with extensive research and documentation.

Ms. Irwin agreed with staff but suggested adding laser scanning of the entire site as a condition, as the layout of the buildings is important. In regards to condition #3 which requires interpretive signage, she wanted to add a condition that there be proper oversight for the final product.

Ms. Sennott agreed with staff recommendations.

Mr. Adams agreed with staff recommendations and with Ms. Roberts' and Ms. Irwin's comments.

Mr. Sprinkle requested more information on alternatives to demolition and asked if any of the Saunders buildings have some level of protection, such as a preservation easement. He wanted to know the impact to the historic district of the area and space, as well as the percentage of extant World War II housing. He noted that HABS/HALS drawings must go to the Library of Congress, and suggested adding a condition to include a component of oral history.

Dr. Ossman felt that although the BAR purview is over buildings, this is a long-standing community and the "better future" for residents was poorly defined. She was therefore ambivalent about the demolition.

Mr. Spencer agreed with Dr. Ossman, struggling with the demolition for similar reasons.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

7. BAR #2022-00175 PG

Request for concept review at 899 and 999 North Henry Street.

Applicants: Samuel Madden Fairstead Developer, LLC and MCRT Old Town LLC

SPEAKERS

Steven Mikulic, attorney representing the applicant, introduced the project

Sherief Elfar, project architect, presented the project

Stephanie Farrell, project architect, presented the project

DISCUSSION

Ms. Roberts asked if additional outdoor space could be included along Montgomery Street to create a similar siting as the current buildings. The applicant responded that the public park at the north end of the site will be the largest open space on the site.

Mr. Spencer noted his concern about the location of the public park at the north end of the site.

Ms. Roberts reiterated her request for additional open space on either side of Montgomery Street, the applicant agreed to explore possibilities.

Ms. Irwin stated that she lives across the street from the site and recommends that the applicant visit the site at differing times of day to understand the pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns. She further noted that the small interior courtyards will get little sunlight and will not be effective in terms of being useful open space. She noted that the impression of the current site is an abundance

of open space and wondered how this use could be accommodated in the new design.

Ms. Roberts discussed the use of small insets into the building massing to create open space.

Ms. Irwin recommended that the applicant look at the relationship between the alley and internal courtyard near the lost dog as a successful space.

Ms. Roberts suggested that the outdoor space could serve a community building function.

Mr. Sprinkle suggested that the building be pushed north and create a gateway element in this location.

Mr. Spencer agreed that the north side of the site is an inappropriate location for the public open space.

Dr. Ossman agreed that the northern point of the building is an opportunity for a gateway element. She noted that if there was open space between the buildings, this could act as a unifier to the two buildings. She suggested that the design for the two buildings could be different and could be a bridge from the historic district to the more modern context to the north and west.

Mr. Adams asked if it would be possible to save one of the existing buildings. He suggested that the north part of the building could be a sculptural element.

Ms. Irwin discussed the architectural character of the buildings to the west of the site and noted that their modern character should be the context for the proposed buildings.

Mr. Spencer asked if a lumberyard had been located on the site and if so, could that be an inspiration for an architectural expression.

Ms. Sennott noted that the open space of the current site is important and asked if this could be included in the proposed design in some way. She further noted that she would like to see additional setbacks in the building on sides facing the historic district.

Ms. Irwin stated that the massing felt too tall but changes in the massing could alleviate this. She also noted that the buildings to the south are small scale buildings.

Mr. Spencer stated that this building is an opportunity to be better than the existing nearby multi-family buildings.

Mr. Sprinkle suggested that the applicants determine a defined style for the buildings.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Architectural Review hearing was adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

The following projects were administratively approved since the last BAR meeting:

BAR #2022-00238 OHAD

Request for window replacement at 104 King Henry Court.

Applicant: Sarah Bobbin

BAR #2022-00224 OHAD

Request for new shed at 734 South Royal Street.

Applicant: Campbell & Ferrara

BAR #2022-00058 OHAD

Request for roof replacement at 19 Franklin Street.

Applicant: Harry Frazier Roofing & Sheet Metal LLC