

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

Board of Architectural Review
Wednesday, September 21, 2022
7:00 p.m., City Council Chamber
City Hall

Members Present: James Spencer, Chair
Christine Sennott
Robert Adams
Theresa del Ninno
Margaret Miller

Members Absent:

Secretary: Bill 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.

II. MINUTES

2. Consideration of minutes from the July 20, 2022 meeting.

BOARD ACTION:

Approved as submitted. On a motion by Ms. del Ninno and seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board of Architectural Review approved the July 20, 2022 minutes, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5 – 0.

III. DEFERRED FROM THIS HEARING

The Board of Architectural Review did not vote on the deferrals.

3. BAR #2022-00300 OHAD

Request for demolition/ encapsulation at 410 Jefferson Street.
Applicant: Shirley F. Carroll

4. BAR #2022-00396 OHAD

Request for alterations at 712 Wilkes Street.
Applicant: John Pontecorvo

5 & 6. BAR #2022-00397 OHAD

Request for alterations at 308 North Columbus Street.
Applicant: Peter Henry

BAR #2022-00398 OHAD

Request for demolition/ encapsulation at 308 North Columbus Street.
Applicant: Peter Henry

IV. NEW BUSINESS

7. BAR #2022-00008 OHAD

Request for demolition/ encapsulation at 709 South Lee Street.

Applicant: Clare and Jen Little

BOARD ACTION:

On a motion by Ms. Miller and seconded by Ms. Sennott, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR #2022-00008, with staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

REASON

The Board found the new proposal acceptable and agreed with staff's recommendations.

SPEAKERS

Mr. Kurt West, the project architect, was available to answer any questions.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Adams had a question about the difference in the amount of demolition previously proposed and the new proposal. Mr. West explained that the new proposal addition does not touch the main building's roof which was the Board's concern on the previous proposal. The new proposal is practically identical to the initial proposal approved in 2020.

Mr. Conkey clarified that the project was deferred for restudy because of the amount of demolition being proposed, approximately 2/3 of the rear slope of the main building's roof. The Board then asked the applicant to come back with a different proposal that would preserve the main building's roof, which was addressed in this new proposal.

Ms. Sennott had questions about the addition visibility. Mr. Conkey clarified that the previous proposal was larger than the actual and that staff had determined then that even the bigger addition would not be visible from any public way.

The Board had additional questions about the addition's height, roof material, and its connection to the main building. There was no further discussion.

8 & 9. BAR #2022-00399 OHAD

Request for alterations at 705 Devon Place.

Applicant: Patricia McAllister

BAR #2022-00400 OHAD

Request for demolition/ encapsulation at 705 Devon Place.

Applicant: Patricia McAllister

BOARD ACTION:

On a motion by Ms. Sennott and seconded by Ms. del Ninno, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR # 2022-00399 and BAR # 2022-00400, with staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

REASON

The Board agreed with staff's recommendations

SPEAKERS

Ms. Patricia McAllister, the property owner, was available to answer questions.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Adams had a question about the gap between the proposed addition and the south property line. Ms. McAllister stated that the reason for the gap is an existing chimney that they did not want to encapsulate. There was no further discussion.

10 & 11. BAR #2022-00402 OHAD

Request for alterations at 508 North Washington Street.

Applicant: Anne Toth

BAR #2022-00403 OHAD

Request for demolition/ encapsulation at 508 North Washington Street.

Applicant: Anne Toth

BOARD ACTION:

On a motion by Ms. del Ninno and seconded by Ms. Sennott, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR 2022-00402 and BAR 2022-00403 with the condition that the applicant work with staff on the final material selection and on the configuration of the windows.

REASON

The Board expressed concern regarding the material selection for the belt course and the masonry cap below the pyramidal roof. They also noted that the windows on different elevations include different muntin configurations.

SPEAKERS

Bill Cromley, 426 North Columbus, represented the owner and was available to answer questions from the Board

DISCUSSION

Ms. Miller complimented the applicant on the design.

Ms. del Ninno noted that a simplification of the Washington Street elevation could help to make the building read more as a secondary element to the historic building. She noted that the removal of the proposed wood belt would simplify the design and give the building more vertical proportions. She commented that if the belt remains it may be better for the material to be precast in lieu of wood to maintain continuity with the nearby masonry. The applicant responded by saying that they considered the elimination of the belt and found that the vertical proportion competed with the historic building. He further responded by noting that a wood belt trim in a masonry wall is a detail found on historic buildings throughout the district. He agreed to study a potential change to the proposed material.

Ms. del Ninno question the use of brick on the top of the structure and at the base, noting that 119 South Washington Street used limestone on the entire structure. The applicant noted that the design

is not meant to resemble an art deco design and that the use of a brick base is typical on historic buildings. The applicant agreed that the use of brick at the top could be re-studied.

Mr. Adams expressed support for the design and asked the applicant about the portion of the west elevation clad in siding. The applicant responded that this portion of the addition is cantilevered over the open ground floor and that a similar detail can be found on overhanging sections on historic buildings.

Ms. Sennott appreciated the design and noted that the belt trim is a reference to similar details on the proposed ADU.

12 & 13. BAR #2022-00404 OHAD

Request for alterations at 119 South Columbus Street.

Applicant: Kari and Paul Steinberg

BAR #2022-00405 OHAD

Request for demolition/ encapsulation at 119 South Columbus Street.

Applicant: Kari and Paul Steinberg

BOARD ACTION:

On a motion by Ms. Sennott and seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR2022-00404 and BAR2022-00405 with the conditions that the applicant work with staff to explore the option of removing the chimney if there are no negative historical implications of doing so and that the applicant follow the recommendations of Alexandria Archaeology:

- Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-746-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
- The applicant should not allow metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
- The above statements must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

REASON

The Board thought that removing part of the chimney would look odd and that it would be better to remove it if it is not original or historic.

SPEAKERS

Bill Cromley, project manager, represented the applicant and answered questions.

DISCUSSION

Ms. Sennott requested an explanation of the chimney, which Mr. Cromley provided.

Ms. del Ninno asked Mr. Cromley if he had considered retaining the chimney. Mr. Cromley explained that he had but that it would not work with future changes. Also, it is highly unlikely that the chimney is original. There have been many changes to this elevation.

Mr. Adams agreed that a chimney without a base is counter-intuitive, suggesting that the applicant remove it and build a faux chimney elsewhere on the building using the same bricks.

Mr. Spencer asked staff if the chimney was original. Staff said probably not, based on the 2009 permit discussed in the staff report.

Ms. del Ninno suggested removing the entire chimney and asked about the width of the doorway. She asked what precedents had been set in the past for the removal of this much historic material. Mr. Conkey advised that there are many, many instances of such removal, and that this particular project is actually fairly minor and is on a highly modified building.

Ms. Miller noted that these kinds of openings are all over the southeast quadrant of OHAD; there are plenty of precedents. She enthusiastically supported the design. She felt the chimney could stay or go.

Ms. Sennott appreciated the attention to detail, noted that the partial chimney would look odd but would not be visible from a public right of way. She asked if the Board could give the applicant some leeway as to whether or not to retain all or part of the chimney. Mr. Conkey explained options.

Mr. Spencer felt that the chimney looks odd and should be removed. He preferred the option that the applicant work with staff to determine a final solution.

14. BAR #2022-00407 OHAD

Request for alterations at 610 Montgomery Street.
Applicant: Mark Mitchell, Jr.

BOARD ACTION:

On a motion by Ms. Sennott and seconded by Ms. del Ninno, the Board of Architectural Review voted to deny BAR2022-00407. The motion carried on a vote of 5 – 0.

REASON

The Board disapproved of painting unpainted masonry, regardless of the age of the brick.

SPEAKERS

Julia Battocchi, Director of Sip Coffee, Inc., represented the applicant and answered questions.

DISCUSSION

Several Board members asked for a description of the proposed mural. Mr. Conkey reminded them that they have no purview over content or color; they may only consider the painting of unpainted masonry.

Ms. Sennott asked if approval would permit painting the entire building. Mr. Conkey noted that the staff report indicates that only the west wall would be painted.

Ms. del Ninno expressed concern about setting precedent for approval of painting unpainted masonry. Mr. Conkey pointed out examples in the staff report of prior BAR approval of painting unpainted masonry.

Ms. Sennott asked the architects on the Board if the staff report was correct in stating that paint would not damage newer brick. Ms. del Ninno stated that paint can be removed from later brick. Ms. Sennott noted that this building is a newer building on the outskirts of the historic district.

Mr. Spencer expressed disapproval of painting any unpainted brick, regardless of its age.

Mr. Adams agreed with Mr. Spencer, stating it would set a bad precedent.

Ms. del Ninno thought the mural may be inappropriate.

Ms. Miller thought that this would be a good location for artwork and said she favored approval.

Ms. Sennott was conflicted, noting that the building is in poor condition.

Mr. Spencer again expressed disapproval.

Mr. Adams agreed with Mr. Spencer and recommended cleaning the brick and adding signage. He also pointed out that the fact that this building is unpainted makes it stand out and therefore special.

Ms. del Ninno supported signage over some removable material. She also asked if the art could be freestanding.

Mr. Spencer asked Ms. Battocchi if she would like to defer the case and think of an alternative prior to returning. She could wait up to a year. Ms. Battocchi would prefer a denial. She does not want to put a decal on the wall or do anything else that would not be environmentally friendly.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Architectural Review hearing was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

16. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

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

BAR #2022-00395 OHAD

Request for window replacement at 405 South Lee Street.

Applicant: Ken Brown

BAR #2022-00410 OHAD

Request for mortar repair at 601 Wilkes Street.

Applicant: Rachel Tancredi

BAR #2022-00415 OHAD

Request for door replacement at 18 Wolfe Street.

Applicant: Pinehurst Design Build

BAR #2022-00420 OHAD

Request for porch repair at 14 Wolfe Street.

Applicant: Edward and Joan Muhl

BAR #2022-00422 OHAD

Request for signage at 229 Strand Street.

Applicant: Han Kim

BAR #2022-00426 PG

Request for window replacement at 708 North Columbus Street.

Applicant: Denise L. Tennant

BAR #2022-00427 OHAD

Request for electrical meter installation at 411 South Saint Asaph Street.

Applicant: Evan Cass