

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

Board of Architectural Review
Wednesday, May 15, 2024
7:00 p.m., City Council Chamber
City Hall

Members Present: James Spencer
Andrew Scott
Nastaran Zandian
Bud Adams
Margaret Miller
Theresa del Ninno
Michael Lyons

Members Absent: None

Secretary: Bill Conkey, Historic Preservation Architect

Staff Present: Brendan Harris, Historic Preservation Planner

1 **Call to Order**

The Board of Architectural Review Public Hearing was called to order at 7:03 p.m. p.m. All members were present.

2 **Minutes**

Consideration of Minutes from the May 2, 2024 Meeting

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Lyons, and seconded by Mr. Scott, the Board of Architectural Review approved the May 2, 2024 Meeting minutes. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Consent Calendar

3 **Applicant has requested withdrawal of this item.**

BAR#2024-00156 OHAD

Request for signage at 825 S Washington Street

Applicant: ABC Store

4 **BAR#2024-00158 OHAD**

Request for signage at 106 N Lee Street

Applicant: Founders Hall, LLC

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Scott, and seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Board of

Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2024-00158 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0. Ms. del Ninno recused herself.

REASON The Board found the signage to be appropriate.

SPEAKERS

None.

DISCUSSION

None.

5 BAR#2024-00169 OHAD

Request for alterations at 319 Cameron Street
Applicant: Maginnis + del Ninno Architects

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Scott, and seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2024-00169 with staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 5-1. Ms. del Ninno recused herself.

REASON

The Board found the project appropriate.

SPEAKERS

None.

DISCUSSION

None.

New Business

6&7 BAR#2024-00137 OHAD

Request for additions and alterations at 209 Gibbon Street
Applicant: Marks-Woods Construction Services

BAR#2024-00138 OHAD

Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 209 Gibbon Street
Applicant: Marks-Woods Construction Services

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Ms. Miller, and seconded by Ms. Zandian, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2024-00137 and BAR#2024-00138 with staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

REASON

The Board agreed with staff recommendations.

SPEAKERS

Peter Gabrielli, the property owner, introduced the project.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Scott asked how much of the addition would be visible from a public right of way. Mr. Conkey responded that only a very small part of the visible roofline would be altered.

8 BAR#2024-00160 OHAD

Request for new construction at 301 N Fairfax Street
Applicant: 301 N Fairfax Project Owner LLC

BOARD ACTION: Ms. del Ninno made a motion, seconded by Ms. Miller, to approve BAR#2024-00160, with an amendment to increase the setback on Queen Street by five feet. The motion failed on a vote of 3-3. Ms. Zandian recused herself.

On a motion by Mr. Scott, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR#2024-00160 with staff recommendations and amendments to return to staff for the design of the main entrance, window patterns, and terrace dividers, to use Ceraclad where fiber cement is indicated in the plan, and to provide staff further information on the fading of the pre-cast material. The motion carried on a vote of 4-2. Ms. Zandian recused herself.

REASON

The Board found that the proposed design complies with the Zoning Ordinance criteria for new construction in the historic district.

SPEAKERS

Cathy Puskar, attorney representing the applicant, introduced the project and noted that the applicant would be comfortable using the Ceraclad product in lieu of the Hardie fiber cement panels on the courtyard facing elevations.

Leejung Hong and Michael Winstanley, architects for the project, presented the revisions to the design since the last concept review hearing.

Ms. Miller asked the applicant if a continuous height for the setback was explored. The applicant noted that a variation in the roof line is similar to block faces within the historic district.

Ms. Miller asked about the lifespan of the proposed Ceraclad material and if brick had been proposed in these locations. The applicant responded by indicating that the Ceraclad panels carry a 20 year warranty and can be field painted. The applicant further noted that these panels are being proposed in order to allow for a greater variation in the depth of this area.

Ms. del Ninno asked about the setback of the building from the sidewalk on the Queen Street elevation. The applicant explained that the proposed set back aligns with the existing townhouses in the 300 block of Queen Street.

Mr. Scott asked about the materials for the terrace dividers. The applicant indicated that they would be wood stained to be a similar finish as the adjacent bricks.

Mr. Spencer asked the applicant about the potential for a dark colored cast stone to fade over time.

The applicant noted that they would explore options to prevent this from occurring.

Mr. Spencer asked about the proposed building entrance, requesting that the door pulls be of a unique design to help the entrance stand out. The applicant described the alignment of the door head and nearby stone course and agreed to explore options for decorative door pulls.

Ms. del Ninno asked about the slope of the proposed grade at the building entrance. The applicant responded that the main entrance would be flat and accessible.

Raymond Eresman, 230 N Royal Street, expressed concern that the proposed design is not compatible with the historic district. He noted that there should be a similar requirement for developers to comply with Guidelines as for homeowners.

Scott Corzine, 300 Queen Street, stated that during the concept reviews, the public and Board had expressed concern regarding the size of the proposed project but that no changes had been made to address these concerns.

Katie King, 317 N Royal Street, expressed concern that the developer was not being held to the same standards as typical homeowners and encouraged the Board to reject the proposed design.

Anna Bergman, 300 Queen Street, noted that the retention of the historic district is important to the future of Alexandria and that the proposed development is too large and not compatible with the historic district.

Tom Foley, 315 Queen Street, was concerned that no meaningful changes had been made to the design since the final concept review. He noted that required open space is being provided at the roof level and was concerned about the character of the design.

Wayne Fisher, 215 S Royal Street, opposed the scale of the project and asked the Board to request a physical model be made of the project for public review.

Yvonne Callahan, 735 S Lee Street, expressed support for the proposed building height but was concerned about size of the building. She also expressed concern regarding the use of fiber cement panels on the building.

Ellen Mosher, 324 N St. Asaph, expressed concern that the penthouses would be visible from the street. She noted that the proposed design is not compatible with the historic district.

Ann Shack, 501 Tobacco Quay, stated that the building is critical to the historic district and that the proposed design does not fit into the historic district.

Gail Rothrock, representing HAF, stated that the mission of HAF is to preserve the historic character of the district and that the proposed design is not appropriate for the existing context. She expressed concern that the proposed building will overwhelm the nearby historic structures.

Ms. Puskar, attorney for the applicant, stated that the design has been modified in response to Board comments, including the relocation of setbacks and relocating the tallest sections to the north end of the site. She noted that there are many instances where modern buildings have added to the historic character and that the proposed design is consistent with others of a similar density.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Lyons thanked the members of the public for their comments and interest in the case. He noted that while change in a neighborhood is difficult, he could support the proposed design and felt that it is compatible with the historic district.

Mr. Adams noted that recent new buildings along the waterfront have successfully been integrated into the existing historic fabric. He stated that the Queen Street portion of the building appeared to be similar to a historic civic building. He would like the applicant to explore ways in which the main entrance could be more prominent and potential window configuration variations.

Ms. Miller clarified her position that the project site is in the heart of the historic district. She referred to other large developments which included significant building breaks to reduce the overall scale of the building. She suggested that the language of the Queen Street elevation wrap around to the east and west elevations and would prefer to see brick used in areas currently proposed to be Ceraclad. She noted that the Fairfax Street elevation is disjointed and would prefer a setback that is a consistent height across the length of the building. She asked the applicant if the five foot space at the north end of the building could be enlarged to ten feet.

Ms. del Ninno appreciated the softening of the visibility of the upper levels. She suggested that the Queen Street elevation should be pushed five to six feet further from the sidewalk. She felt that the proposed materials are appropriate for the design and suggested that the language of the Queen Street elevation wrap around the east and west elevations. She noted that the applicant could explore the colors for the Ceraclad to find colors that are more similar to the proposed brick.

Mr. Scott noted that the Board is not more lenient on developers than homeowners and often holds them to higher standards. He appreciated the applicant's proposal to use the Ceraclad material on the courtyard elevations in lieu of the previously proposed Hardie panels. He stated that the disagreements related to the proposed design are based more on taste than on the compatibility of the project to the Design Guidelines. He would support the project with a commitment to use the Ceraclad material and for the applicant to work with staff on the finish of the terrace dividers.

Mr. Spencer asked the applicant to explore ways in which the fading of the dark colored cast stone could be prevented. He was previously concerned about the height of the building but felt that the changes to the design have reduced the perceived height to an acceptable level. He stated that the Fairfax Street elevation successfully recalled historic buildings without replicating them directly.

Ms. del Ninno made a motion to approve the design with a condition that the Queen Street elevation be moved five feet further from the sidewalk. The motion was seconded by Ms. Miller and failed on a vote of 3-3.

Mr. Scott made a motion to approve the design with conditions. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lyons and was approved by a vote of 4-2.

14 Adjournment

The Board of Architectural Review adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Administrative Approvals

BAR2024-00150 OHAD

Request for roof replacement at 704 Rose Square

Applicant: David M. and Shari N. Thiede

BAR2024-00153 OHAD

Request for installation of accessory structure at 112 King Street

Applicant: Daniel O'Connell's Irish Restaurant, LLC

BAR2024-00167 PG

Request for trim replacement and front stair repair at 523 N Patrick Street

Applicant: Navarro Construction

BAR2024-00168 OHAD

Request for window and door replacement at 1123 Michigan Ct

Applicant: Matthew Bigman

BAR2024-00171 OHAD

Request for handrail installation and trim replacement at 1209 Duke Street

Applicant: Daniel Stendeback - Valer Builders

BAR2024-00172 PG

Request for fence replacement at 409 N West Street

Applicant: Anna Marie Bena

BAR2024-00175 OHAD

Request for wall repair at 433 S Fairfax Street

Applicant: Creighton Construction