

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

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
Old & Historic Alexandria District

Wednesday January 7, 2014
7:30pm, City Council Chambers, City Hall
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: Oscar Fitzgerald, Chairman
John von Senden, Vice-Chairman
Chip Carlin
Kelly Finnigan
Margaret Miller
Wayne Neale
Christine Roberts

Staff Present: Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, Historic Preservation Manager
Mary Catherine Collins, Historic Preservation Planner

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Chairman Oscar Fitzgerald.

I. MINUTES

Consideration of the minutes from the December 17, 2014 public hearing.

BOARD ACTION: Approved as submitted, 7-0.

On a motion by Mr. von Senden, seconded by Ms. Roberts, the OHAD Board of Architectural Review approved the minutes of December 17, 2014, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

II. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. CASE BAR2014-00412

Request for alterations and waiver of rooftop mechanical screening at **212 King St.**
Applicant: Georgetown KICS, LLC

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. von Senden, seconded by Mr. Carlin, the OHAD Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR Cases #2014-00412 and #2014-00413, as submitted and on consent. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

2. CASE BAR2014-00413

Request for alterations at **1124 Prince St.**
Applicant: Jeannine Mantz

BOARD ACTION: On a motion by Mr. von Senden, seconded by Mr. Carlin, the OHAD Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR Cases #2014-00412 and #2014-00413, as submitted and on consent. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

3. CASE BAR 2014-00416

Request for alterations at 619 N Columbus St.

Applicant: Corinne and Walter Marlowe

BOARD ACTION: This item was removed from the consent calendar. On a motion by Mr. Neale, seconded by Mr. von Senden, the OHAD Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR Case #2014-00416 as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

SPEAKERS

Gail Rothrock, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF) asked that in future staff reports that staff more clearly identify why references to the policies of the Parker-Gray District are made. She suggested that the words, “at the request of the OHAD BAR members...” be included in such references.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Chairman Fitzgerald responded that the OHAD Board had asked to be kept abreast of what policy changes were occurring in the neighboring historic district and that the references were strictly for informational purposes only, with no present intent to implement these changes within the OHAD. The Chairman confirmed with staff that Ms. Rothrock’s suggestion would be implemented in future reports.

On a motion by Mr. Neale and seconded by Mr. von Senden, the Board voted to approve the application, as submitted.

III. NEW BUSINESS

4. CASE BAR2014-00414

Request to partially demolish and capsulate at **204-206 S Union St.**

Applicant: 204-206 S Union, LLC

This case was combined with CASE BAR 2014-00359, below, for discussion purposes.

5. CASE BAR2014-00415

Request for alterations at **204-206 S Union St.**

Applicant: 204-206 S Union, LLC

BOARD ACTION: On a motion made by Mr. von Senden, seconded by Ms. Roberts, the OHAD Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR Case #2014-000414 and #2014-00415, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

SPEAKERS

The applicant was present to answer questions.

Gail Rothrock, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF) suggested that tax credit information be included on the BAR application so that applicants are more aware of historic preservation incentives and to avoid the necessity for after-the-fact SHPO review, such as occurred in this case.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Chairman agreed that this was a good suggestion and asked staff to add it to the BAR application. Mr. von Senden made a motion to approve staff's recommendation for approval, as submitted. Ms. Roberts seconded the motion which passed, 7-0.

REASON

The Board found the proposal to be appropriate and consistent with the *Design Guidelines* and Criteria for a Permit to Demolish.

6. CASE BAR2014-00417

Request to partially demolish and capsulate at **223 N Royal St.**

Applicant: Christopher and Eileen Montoni

This case was combined with CASE BAR 2014-00417, below, for discussion purposes.

7. CASE BAR2014-00418

Request for an addition at **223 N Royal St.**

Applicant: Christopher and Eileen Montoni

BOARD ACTION: On a motion made by Mr. von Senden, seconded by Mr. Carlin, the OHAD Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR Case #2014-00417 and #2014-00418, as amended. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

1. The applicant provide the correct lot area to the City's Office of Real Estate Assessments prior to submission of the building permit.

SPEAKERS

Cathleen Curtin, the architect for the project was available to answer questions.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board had no discussion on the application and Mr. von Senden made a motion to approve staff's recommendation. Mr. Carlin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

REASON

The Board found the proposal to be appropriate and consistent with the *Design Guidelines* and Criteria for a Permit to Demolish.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

8. CASE BAR2014-00038

A work session to discuss the proposed development project at **513-515 N Washington St.**

SPEAKERS

Brandon Lenk, project architect, gave a brief presentation of the revisions to the annex and responded to questions.

Art Jenopolis, 512 North Washington Street, expressed concern about appropriate notice of the public meeting, as he received the written letter late. Staff explained the informal work sessions process and noted that the applicant is strongly encouraged to notify abutting property owners but that it is not required by the zoning ordinance because this is an informal, advisory process. The Chair noted that no formal action would occur this evening and encouraged Mr. Jenopolis several times to provide comments on the proposed design. He declined.

Gail Rothrock, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation, expressed concerns regarding the overall size and location of the annex. She believed that the proposed industrial style of the annex did not relate to the adjacent historic factory building. She also stated a strong preference for retaining the shutters on the original factory building to enhance its later, Colonial Revival residential character.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Carlin noted that this proposal had similar characteristics to the recent project at the old Alexandria Health Department site. He thought that the annex was pushed back far enough to successfully maintain the visibility of the historic building on Washington Street. He also explained that the annex would screen the existing unsightly surface parking lot. He preferred Option 1 with the staff recommendation to include the tripartite window configuration on the rear elevation (Option 3 became the composite of 1 and 2).

Mr. von Senden stated that although he normally liked shutters to remain, he thought it was acceptable for them to be removed on the historic building. He preferred Option 3 which combined the east elevation windows of Option 2 with the monitor form of Option 1. He thought the annex was appropriately subservient to the historic building and liked the stone plinth form.

Mr. Neale complimented the architect on the precedent images and also believed the stone plinth was successful. He commented that the double soldier course was not the best way to cap the plinth and suggested that the applicant consider a cast-stone course or contrasting brick color there. He liked both versions of the treatment of the east end. Overall, he preferred Option 1. He also stated that this project was an example of how the BAR concept review process could be successful.

Ms. Miller asked if Option 3 were a new option. Mr. Lenk responded that it was the hybrid option taking the monitor form of Option 1 and incorporating the east elevation tripartite windows on the lower three floors, as recommended by staff. Ms. Miller then noted that she thought the project was going in the right direction and was thoughtful and thorough. She preferred Option 1.

Ms. Roberts said she preferred Option 2, particularly the west elevation (Washington Street). She did not see much of a difference on the north elevations between Options 1 and 2. She also requested that the applicant consider creating a physical model.

Chairman Fitzgerald preferred Option 3 which combined the monitor of Option 1 with the east elevation tripartite windows of Option 2, as recommended by staff. He, also, reiterated that this project exemplified how the BAR concept review process resulted in improved designs.

When asked by Mr. Neale, Mr. Lenk responded that the applicant preferred Option 1.

Mr. Carlin made a motion that the BAR endorse Option 3 (the staff recommendation composite with the monitor from Option 1 and the east elevation tripartite windows from Option 2). The motion was seconded by Mr. von Senden. On a vote of 5-1, the BAR endorsed the height, scale, mass and general architectural character shown in Option 3 for the proposed annex addition. Ms. Roberts voted in opposition, as she preferred Option 2 for the west elevation and Ms. Finnigan had recused herself from the discussion.

9. CASE BAR2014-00119

A work session to discuss the proposed development project at **500 and 501 N Union St.**
Applicant: Alexandria North Terminal, LLC by Ken Wire

SPEAKERS

Ken Wire, land use attorney with McGuire Woods LLP, introduced himself and Mike Hickok, with Hickok Cole Architects. Mr. Hickok then presented the Board with updated drawings and a new proposal for the pavilion. The updated drawings were only refinements of what was shown in the BAR application and the only significant design change made was the revised pavilion design. The architect also provided a sample of the proposed slate and brick for the buildings.

Mr. Hickok clarified that the north wall will serve as public art and includes metal and slate to unify the design of the building with the landscape and history plan, which are not yet completed. He also further clarified that the space between this wall and the glass building above was intentional to provide light and ventilation to the truck entrance, as well as to differentiate the two uses.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Van Van Fleet, President of the Old Town Civic Association, said that the proposed building reminded him of Urban Renewal. He believed that the mass and scale of the

building at 500 N Union was much too large and he cited the development guideline #7 in the Waterfront Plan that “encourage(s) modern design inspired by historic precedent (such as 18th century Alexandria warehouse architecture)”. He reminded the Board that this building violated the street grid, lacked connectivity to this historic district and was completely different than what was represented in the waterfront model. Regarding the proposal at 501 N Union St., he said that the amount of glass on the building made it look like a building in Miami Beach and gave the wrong impression of Alexandria to potential visitors and tourists.

Bert Ely, co-chair of Friends of the Alexandria Waterfront, expressed frustration that the public was seeing very different drawings at the hearing than what was published online last week. (The Chair explained that the building design has not changed from the application. These additional drawings were simply provided to show additional views for clarity.) He opposed the mass, scale, parking and the modern pavilion design and encouraged the Board to speak more broadly of the project, since their role is purely advisory. He felt the proposed buildings clashed with the historic district and that the Board should judge the proposal against the waterfront model.

Ted Pulliam, a member of but not necessarily representing the Alexandria Archaeological Commission, felt that use of the rough slate wall material was good because slate was used historically in Alexandria and that there could even be more of it on the buildings. He was supportive of the north wall being used for public art to interpret history. He found the latest version of the pavilion, as shown at the hearing, to be very interesting but took issue with the flat roof on the main building as flat roofs are atypical of historic Alexandria. He said that he looks forward to seeing the revised historic interpretation plan in the future.

Elaine Johnston, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF) said that while HAF finds the current submission of the east building much improved due to the addition of masonry piers and a coherent window pattern, overall they did not agree with staff’s recommendation for several reasons. She also agreed with Bert Ely that it is difficult for the public to comment on revised drawings without ample preparation.

Ms. Johnston stated that HAF found the west elevation of the east building to be a “block long hulk” that is a “psychic and visual” barrier to the waterfront. HAF felt it is unclear where the public access is located and suggested there be visual openings between N Union Street and the river. Furthermore, she expressed concern that the transition of glass and masonry is too abrupt, the glass expanse too large, that the simplicity of the glass wall design will be negatively affected by interior drapes, and that UV spectrum glass should be considered to reduce bird deaths. Lastly, she suggested that green roofs be included on the building. The applicant clarified that all roofs will be green roofs.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Ms. Finnigan found improvement in the current submission and stated that the applicant has proceeded in the right direction. She asked the applicant to clarify the material palette and color selection.

The applicant explained that they had presented two options of paired red and grey brick colors, with the primary difference being that one was more textured than the other. They also said that they wanted color direction from the Board as opposed to a color selection.

Ms. Finnigan said that her initial preference was for the more textured brick. She told the applicant that they have begun to gain her support of the west elevation on the east building and with the proposed variation in the penthouse setback. She found the north and east elevations to be the weakest point of the application. Regarding the pavilion, she was almost “wowed” by the new proposal shown on sheet A4 at the hearing because it was sculptural. She said that she could support Mr. Pulliam’s suggestion of a sculptural wall and roof for the main building, as well. She found this version of the east building to be a “vast improvement and moving in the right direction.”

Mr. Carlin thanked the applicant for responding to the Board’s requests, as the Board is works very hard to represent the public’s interest. He found the west wall of the west building to be an improvement and likes the building angle in plan and the garden spaces that this produces. He thought the architectural character and masonry wall appearance of the east building was a “phenomenal breakthrough.” He liked that the east and west buildings were tied together by several design cues and the load bearing masonry expression of the buildings. He preferred the new pavilion design because it tied into the environment and nature on the site and believed that the wave form and animated character appropriately reflected the Potomac River. He expressed preference for the more textured brick and warm tones as opposed to cool. He found both gray brick samples to be too monochromatic and asked the applicant to consider a gray brick with a wider range.

Mr. von Senden argued that low, sloped roofs are ubiquitous in Old Town due to the large number of Italianate Victorian buildings and found the proposed roofs appropriate. He expressed great enthusiasm for the proposed green roofs and found great improvement in the pergola style cornice “eyebrows,” but felt they still needed further development. He said he hoped the applicant would play up the visual effect of a cantilevered glass wing on the north end and visually minimize the support columns as much as possible. He liked the box bay windows and the rhythm that created on the street but asked the applicant to define the window lintels more to imply structural support. Regarding the materials, he found either color palette to be suitable, but preferred a more textured brick given the large scale of the buildings and preferred a pink tone over green. His preferred pavilion design was the Option 10 shown at the hearing, with option 6 being a distant 2nd.

Ms. Roberts expressed comfort with the current design of the west building and liked the additional wall articulation. On the east building, she liked the use of slate and said that she would like to see more of it. She found the rhythm of the east building coherent and appreciated the relationship between the east and west buildings. She was concerned about the way the glass and brick walls came together and asked for a more clear joint line there. She agreed with all of the comments already made by the Board members,

except that she did not find the present east elevation needed to be changed and thought it should be kept simple to offset the pavilion. Regarding the pavilion, she preferred Option 8, but stated that she may grow to appreciate the revised pavilion Option 10 with additional study.

Ms. Miller stated that the applicant was headed in a good design direction and that she leaned towards a textured brick with color variety on the west building. She preferred the color tone of the smooth gray brick, but would like it to be more textured. She thought the east elevation of the east building should continue to be a calm backdrop to the pavilion. She preferred pavilion Option 8 because it looked like a single, unified building design where the elevation drawing of Option 10 looked like three separate buildings.

Mr. Carlin suggested that the brick texture between the two buildings need not match. He would prefer that the east building become a background to the pavilion. He preferred Option 8 due to the movement within it and although he liked the sail concept of the new proposal, he found three pieces visually distracting. He asked what the height difference would be on both options. The applicant responded it would be between 4-5 feet.

Mr. Neale found that the pavilion design was beginning to succeed, particularly Option 8. He suggested the applicant heighten the peaks of the sail forms, perhaps using them as a screen for rooftop mechanical equipment in order to exceed the basic height limit. He felt the pavilion stood by itself and should be treated differently than the rest of the buildings. He also asked that a historic reference be introduced to the design. He said that the penthouse floor was too continuous and would like to see a sight line from the sidewalk because the design would be most successful if you don't see anything that bands the building all together, such as a continuous roofline. Regarding the color selection, he said it should be harmonious but as board a palette as possible to avoid the monolithic look, particularly on the east building. He found the proposed brick sample to be too hard-edged and contemporary. Lastly, he stated for the record that he would prefer to see a design for the west building that fills out the street grid and is two stories shorter.

Chairman Fitzgerald said that he was very pleased with the direction of the design and found the bay windows to be a beautiful reflection of the oriels within the historic district. He preferred a reddish brick for both buildings and thought the grey looked too much like concrete. He thanked the applicant for delivering on the Board's request to design something special for the pavilion. He found the revised pavilion design Option 10 "stunning" and expressed preference for it.

OTHER ITEMS

- 10.** Chairman Fitzgerald asked that the Board members provide him feedback on a draft response to a letter from a citizen. Following a brief discussion, the Board decided not to respond, noting that this had never been done before and that replying to individual's letters would be a bad precedent.

11. Chairman Fitzgerald called the question on a vote to endorse the local designation of Alexandria Union Station located at 110 Callahan Drive and the Charles Goodman House at 510 Quaker Lane as 100 Year Old Buildings. Mr. von Senden made a motion to endorse such a recommendation. Mr. Carlin seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 7-0.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:10 PM by Chairman Fitzgerald.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

The following items are shown for information only. Based on the Board's adopted policies, these have been approved by Staff since the previous Board meeting.

CASE BAR2014-0409
Request for railings at 704 Avon Place
Applicant: Penelope Roberts

CASE BAR2014-0420
Request for window and door replacement at 114 Commerce
Applicant: Greg and Cathy Christ

CASE BAR2014-0422
Request for stucco replacement at 211 Franklin St.
Applicant: Joe Lang

CASE BAR2014-0430
Request for window replacement at 1223 Portner Rd.
Applicant: Christopher Goode

Minutes submitted by,

Mary Catherine Collins, Historic Preservation Planner
Board of Architectural Review