

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

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
Old & Historic Alexandria District

Wednesday, March 4, 2015
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
Christine Roberts

Members Absent: Wayne Neale

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Oscar Fitzgerald.

I. MINUTES

Consideration of the minutes from the February 18, 2015 public hearing.

BOARD ACTION: Approved as amended, 6-0.

On a motion by Mr. Carlin, seconded by Mr. von Senden, the OHAD Board of Architectural Review, approved the minutes of February 18, 2015, as amended by Ms. Finnigan. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 0.

II. NEW BUSINESS

1. CASE BAR2015-0026

Request for complete demolition and capsulation at **700-710 North Washington St.**
Applicant: Mahmood Investment Corp.

This case was combined with CASE BAR 2015-0027, below, for discussion purposes.

2. CASE BAR2015-0027

Request for new construction at **700-710 North Washington St.**
Applicant: Mahmood Investment Corp.

BOARD ACTION: Deferred for further study, 6-0.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Carlin, the OHAD Board of Architectural Review voted to defer BAR Case #2015-0026 and BAR Case #2015-0027 for additional study. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

SPEAKERS

Mike Ernst, project architect representing the applicant, stated that they were in agreement with the staff report recommendations and responded to questions throughout the Board's discussion.

John Rust, senior project architect representing the applicant, also responded to questions.

Elaine Johnston, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation, supported the staff recommendations but noted that too many conditions were proposed and therefore perhaps the project was not ready for final approval. While HAF agreed with staff on this particular structure, they were concerned that mid-century architecture on Washington Street deserved protection. She noted that staff said some buildings had merit and asked staff to define which buildings these were.

Stephen Milone, 907 Prince Street, had several comments. First, he requested that the existing historic stone curb now in the sidewalk be preserved in place (already part of previous BAR comment and a DSUP condition). Second, he commented that the proposed architectural CMU was not an appropriate high quality material. Third, he disfavored the addition of balconies. Fourth, he found the changes to the rear elevation to be a lesser quality than what was proposed and more similar to the new development in Potomac Yard than the GW Parkway.

Mr. Ernst responded that the proposed architectural CMU was not a split-faced concrete block but rather an oversized (12" x 24") chiseled cast stone and that it was of high quality. The addition of balconies and revision of the rear elevation were requests by the applicant.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Carlin had a question about the rear elevation colors and materials. He asked the applicant to walk through the proposed materials palette. Mr. Ernst used materials boards to explain which brick, mortar, color scheme, etc... was proposed for each "building." Mr. Carlin stated that he supported the proposed materials.

Ms. Finnigan stated that the existing motel was not past the point of restoration. She also requested that staff provide examples of what would be considered good roadside architecture on Washington Street. She inquired whether the National Park Service had submitted comments. Staff responded that they did not submit comments on this version of the application but that they previously had comments for the concept review in 2013 and that no comments in this application generally meant that they had no strong concerns. Ms. Finnigan expressed concern with the number of conditions. She also felt that some of the Washington Street Standards were not met and recommended that the south wall of 710 North Washington Street not be encapsulated since it and 712 were a freestanding, semidetached pair. She requested that there be a physical separation between the new construction

and 710. She also found that the proposed building's mass was not appropriate with respect to the adjacent buildings.

Chairman Fitzgerald noted that the mass and scale of this project had already been reviewed and supported by the BAR in 2013. City Council had approved the DSUP with this height, scale and mass, so it was too late to ask the applicant to reduce the size of the building. Concerns about demolition or proposed mass is the type of information that needs to be communicated during Concept Review.

Mr. Carlin inquired about the status of the survey of the district and noted that the survey results would allow us to better understand the district's 20th-century resources. He looked forward to staff presenting that information when the survey was complete. He commented on the proposed materials further, noting that the color choices for the brick, mortar and precast stone were all appropriate. He found the rear elevation changes to be acceptable.

Mr. Ernst noted that the applicant had met with St. Joseph's Church to show the revisions to the revised rear elevation and that no objections were raised.

Mr. von Senden noted that every building is historic to its own time but that doesn't necessarily make it worthy of preservation. He also encouraged the preservation of 20th-century architecture before it was all gone but agreed with staff that this motel was not the best example of that era. He liked the large size of the proposed architectural CMU. He recommended deleting the balconies, particularly for Buildings 1 and 3. He recommended pursuing an encroachment for the bow window. He observed that the east elevation of the "center building" was not as formal as what was presented in the concept but was softer now. He also said that he had not seen spandrel glass used successfully to look like clear glass and recommended reworking the scheme so no spandrel glass will be necessary.

Ms. Miller had a question about the proposed roof material. (Metal shingles in a diamond pattern with a durable, Kynar finish). Ms. Miller did not like the balconies on Buildings 1 and 3 but thought they would be acceptable on #2. She also favored the projecting bow window element on Wythe Street, preferring the 36 inch projection which required an encroachment.

Ms. Roberts stated that eight open design conditions was too many and she was not comfortable approving the project at this time. She did not think that the revisions to the rear were an improvement, particularly if it was so different from what City Council had seen. She wanted to see more details.

Chairman Fitzgerald stated that it was worthwhile to look at the many issues raised. He noted that the rear had been revised to create balconies and recommended restudying the rear to make it more similar to what they had previously seen. He disliked the Juliet balconies. He agreed that there were too many unresolved issues.

On a motion by Ms. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Carlin, the OHAD Board voted to defer the applications for further study. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

REASON

The Board continued its overall support of the project but thought that there remained too many unresolved issues at this time. The Board deferred the project for further study of the rear elevation, Juliet balconies and other comments.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

An informational presentation on the Potomac Yard Metrorail Project by the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

Lee Farmer, Potomac Yard Metrorail Project Manager, and Jeff Farner, Deputy Director, Planning & Zoning, gave a presentation and responded to questions.

The BAR questioned how they would be involved in the review and design process. They inquired as to how the Washington Street Standards might apply to the new Metro station.

A follow-up presentation for the BAR was tentatively scheduled for April 15, 2015, after the Draft EIS is released.

Ad Hoc Group on Signage

Mr. Cox noted that the City Manager was creating a work group to study signs—specifically A-frame and digital signs—and asked that the BAR appoint a member to serve on the work group.

Based on his interest and extensive experience over the years on signage, the Board recommend that former BAR member Peter Smeallie be appointed. On a motion by Mr. von Senden, seconded by Mr. Carlin, former BAR member Peter Smeallie was appointed to serve on this work group, 6-0.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The hearing was adjourned at 9:20pm.

V. DEFERRED PRIOR TO HEARING

CASE BAR2015-0023

Request to partially demolish and capsulate at **611 S Fairfax St.**
Applicant: Jonas Neihardt & Lynn Vendinello

The Board noted the deferment of case BAR2015-0023.

CASE BAR2015-0024

Request for an addition and alterations at **611 S Fairfax St.**
Applicant: Jonas Neihardt & Lynn Vendinello

The Board noted the deferment of case BAR2015-0024.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

CASE BAR2015-0030

Request for brick wall construction at **734 S Royal St.**
Applicant: T.D Fraley

CASE BAR2015-0031

Request for window replacement at **1250 S Washington St. #419**
Applicant: Susan Linden

CASE BAR2015-0034

Request for window replacement at **217 King St.**
Applicant: Gerrie Winslow, LLC.

CASE BAR2015-0035

Request for window replacement at **207 S Fayette St.**
Applicant: Steve Morris

CASE BAR2015-0038

Request for roof replacement at **207 S Fayette St.**
Applicant: Steve Morris

Minutes submitted by,

Catherine K. Miliaras, Historic Preservation Planner
Board of Architectural Review