

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

Board of Architectural Review
Old & Historic Alexandria District
Wednesday, July 22, 2015
7:30pm, City Council Chambers, City Hall
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: Theresa del Ninno, Vice Chair
Purvi Irwin
Bill Conkey
Matthew Slowick
Philip Moffat

Members Absent: Robert Duffy, Chair
Brendan Owens

Staff Present: Planning & Zoning
Stephanie Sample, Historic Preservation Planner
Michele Oaks, Historic Preservation Planner

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Theresa del Ninno, Vice Chair.

I. MINUTES

Consideration of the minutes from the June 24, 2015 meeting.

BOARD ACTION: Approved as submitted, 5-0.

On a motion by Mr. Conkey, seconded by Mr. Slowick, the Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review, approved the minutes of June 24, 2015, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5 to 0.

II. NEW BUSINESS

1. CASE BAR2015-0166

Request for an accessory structure at **518-520 N Alfred St.**
Applicant: Stephen Baer

BOARD ACTION: Approved, as amended, 4-1.

On a motion by Mr. Slowick, seconded by Mr. Conkey, the Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR Case #2015-0166, as amended. The motion carried on a vote of 4-1, with Mr. Moffat voting in opposition.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

1. That the applicant work with Staff on the details of the balcony facing the alley.
2. That the statements below be included on all construction documents that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheet piling and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
 - a. The applicant/developer shall 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.
 - b. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection or artifact collection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
3. The two existing lots must be legally consolidated with a single address prior to the release of a building permit for the proposed accessory building.

SPEAKERS

Jeff Stoiber, architect for the applicant, testified in favor of the project and noted support for the staff report.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Conkey commenced the Board discussion expressing concern with the size of the garage in relationship to the house and suggested that the size of the dormers made the garage look too large. He said that alleys are important within the district because it's where people often congregate, especially those with houses facing Patrick and Henry Streets. He said that he thought the garage would make the alley more attractive. He said the notched out balcony facing the alley had an awkward transition to the adjacent roof slope.

Mr. Stoiber said that they looked at a number of different options to reduce the mass, from lowering the roof to adding an exterior stair to the building, but those options made the overall footprint larger and therefore closer to the house. He said that people's perception from Alfred Street would be that the building is secondary to the main house and that most people wouldn't view the garage from the rear alley. He said that the balcony was intended to break down the scale of the garage on the alley. He said that he'd work with staff to make the balcony transition more successful.

Mr. Moffat said that he had concerns about the massing of the garage and the awkward balcony. He said that if the dormers were removed the garage would be more compatible.

Mr. Slowick said that he supported the project but asked about a letter to the Board in which a neighbor stated that the owner said that the loft would be rented out as an apartment.

Ms. Sample said that the zoning ordinance does not allow for an accessory apartment and that a kitchen would not be permitted in the space. Any violation of the zoning ordinance – such as the installation of a kitchen or the renting out of the space as an apartment - would be addressed by Planning & Zoning.

Ms. Irwin said that while the garage is larger than most in the alley, the perspectives demonstrate that it will fit in well in the alley. She said that the design of the garage compliments the main historic house.

Ms. del Ninno said that she thought the alley was eclectic and because of the particularly large building to the north, the garage wouldn't be out of place. She did suggest that the mass of the building is the maximum she could support. She asked if the architect had looked at different dormer forms.

Mr. Stobier said that they looked at a number of different roof forms but wanted to keep the ridge of the garage lower than the ridge on the main house. He said that gabled dormers would not provide enough interior headroom and that the shed style dormer gave both square footage and a lower profile.

Mr. Slowick supported the project and made a motion to approve the application, as amended, with an additional condition that the applicant will work with staff on the balcony details. It was seconded by Mr. Conkey.

The BAR voted to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness with the conditions noted above, 4-1, with Mr. Moffat voting against the motion.

REASON

The BAR supported the proposed new garage, finding it will be compatible with the historic district and main house, particularly due to its alley location.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

2. A work session to discuss the proposed fourth floor addition at **211 North West Street**.

SPEAKERS

Mr. Shriver, the owner of the building, introduced the proposal to construct a fourth floor addition. He commenced with documenting the building's history noting that it was constructed in the 1960s by his father. He also expressed his limitations for the proposed design. He stated that he would ask his design team to explore a deeper setback for the addition, however, felt that *reverse design* as proposed by staff was not feasible.

Gaver Nichols, architect, summarized the scope of the project and the building's existing

zoning limitations.

Stephanie Andrews, owner of 209 North West Street, urged the Board not to support the application. She testified that the neighbors on the block experience noise issues from the apartment building and her concern is that constructing outdoor spaces will further impact peace and tranquility on the street. A picture taken on her mobile phone of the rear elevation of the building that was taken from her yard was shown to the Board.

Mr. Nichols responded to Mrs. Andrews's testimony by noting that the apartments are changing to condominium units after the renovation.

Karen Toth, owner of 215 North West Street, expressed concern with the size and mass of the project, specifically the height of the building, as a result of the new rooftop addition relative to her townhouse. She noted that if she was forced to choose, she would support the addition if it was located at the rear of the building. She also stated concerns with the new windows to be installed on the rear portion of the north elevation and the view into her rear yard.

Mr. Nichols responded to Ms. Toth's concerns by stating that they could look at alternatives to the windows on the north elevation, making them clearstory windows.

Leslie Vicale, tenant at 211 North West Street, stated concern about the project and the potential impact to her living situation if the owner plans to sell the apartments as condominiums.

Mr. Shriver, owner of the building, responded to Ms. Vicale, stating that this project was in the early stages of design and assured her that the tenants would receive sufficient notice when/if he chooses to convert the building to condominiums.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Mr. Moffat commenced the Board discussion by noting concern with the fourth story addition. He thought that it was a bit overpowering, and stated that he would be interested in a redesign which included moving the mass to the rear and altering the architectural style.

Mr. Conkey disagreed with Mr. Moffat regarding the architectural style of the building. He felt that there was no problem with the architectural style, noting that the Jefferson Houston School was a major influence. He also expressed that the immediate neighbors needed to be considered. He recommended that the fourth floor mass should be set back from the front building face, however noting that being midblock does provide more flexibility. He also supports the staff's recommended *reverse design*, yet noted that the addition did not necessarily need to be set back this much from the front building wall. He encouraged the applicant to submit drawings and models of the addition and architectural details as part of the Certificate of Appropriateness. He stressed to the architect that the modern architectural style that has been selected for this project relies

heavily on details. This includes details such as how the balconies attach to the building, and matching the brick, but also ensuring that the whole building is reading as the project, not just the front façade. He emphasized that he will be looking closely for all these features and elements with the Certificate of Appropriateness submission.

Mr. Slowick expressed that he felt that the fourth floor as it is currently designed overwhelms the existing building and was concerned about the impacts to the flanking neighbors.

Ms. Irwin supports the architectural style proposed, however, feels that the balconies as proposed are “goofy.” She concurred with Mr. Conkey’s recommendations and stressed the importance of 3D models and detailed drawings to be included with the Certificate of Appropriate submission. Regarding the neighbor’s concerns about the fenestration on the north elevation, she recommended that the architect consider using an opaque glass.

Ms. del Ninno noted support for a partial fourth floor if it was set back more than five feet. She supports staff’s *reverse plan* suggestion, as she feels this public space on the street frontage brings the activity back to the front – similar to a porch. She supports the recommended that the architect further develop the vertical articulation on the front façade.

After the Board’s discussion, the Vice-Chair requested a non-binding straw vote on the Concept Review application to provide the applicant with a clear direction for the project. The informal vote conveyed that the Board supports the fourth floor addition in concept; however, they rejected the Concept Review designs. The majority of the Board recommended that the architect recess the fourth floor from the front building wall significantly and study the north elevation’s fenestration to address the neighbors’ concerns. They also requested that the architect refine the features and details for all the building elevations to highlight the modern style.

3. Election of Board of Architectural Review – Parker-Gray District officers for Chairman and Vice Chairman

Mr. Conkey made a motion to elect Vice-Chair del Ninno as Chair of the Parker-Gray Board. Mr. Slowick seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Chairwoman del Ninno made a motion to elect Ms. Irwin as Vice-Chair. Mr. Conkey seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

4. Staff informed the Board of the upcoming Del Ray Historic Preservation Conference, to be held on September 19, 2015.

The Board of Architectural Review Parker Gray District meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Minutes submitted by,

Michele Oaks, Historic Preservation Planner
Board of Architectural Review

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS SINCE LAST MEETING

CASE BAR2015-0162

Request for siding repair at **523 N Patrick St.**

Applicant: Christine Brown

CASE BAR2015-0162

Request for rooftop HVAC at **418 N Henry St.**

Applicant: Richard Wang