

Docket Item #5
BAR CASE #2016-00269

BAR Meeting
September 7, 2016

ISSUE: Waiver of Rooftop HVAC Screening at the Lyles-Crouch School

APPLICANT: Alexandria City Public Schools

LOCATION: 530 South Saint Asaph Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the Waiver of Rooftop HVAC Screening as submitted.

GENERAL NOTES TO THE APPLICANT

1. **ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS AND PERMITS TO DEMOLISH:** Applicants must obtain a stamped copy of the Certificate of Appropriateness or Permit to Demolish PRIOR to applying for a building permit. Contact BAR Staff, Room 2100, City Hall, 703-746-3833, or preservation@alexandriava.gov for further information.
2. **APPEAL OF DECISION:** In accordance with the Zoning Ordinance, if the Board of Architectural Review denies or approves an application in whole or in part, the applicant or opponent may appeal the Board's decision to City Council on or before 14 days after the decision of the Board.
3. **COMPLIANCE WITH BAR POLICIES:** All materials must comply with the BAR's adopted policies unless otherwise specifically approved.
4. **BUILDING PERMITS:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Building and Fire Code Administration (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.
5. **EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.
6. **HISTORIC PROPERTY TAX CREDITS:** Applicants performing extensive, certified rehabilitations of historic properties may separately be eligible for state and/or federal tax credits. Consult with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) prior to initiating any work to determine whether the proposed project may qualify for such credits.



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I. ISSUE

The applicant is requesting approval to intensify the Waiver of Rooftop HVAC Screening which was originally issued to this property in January 2004 (BAR Case #2003-0312 & BAR Case #2003-0313). As part of a recent reroofing project, the school's existing 15 self-contained HVAC units, located on the roof of the 1957 portion of the building had to be elevated some eighteen to twenty-four inches (18"-24"). The units are grey in color and approximately five feet (5') high and six (6') or seven feet (7') on a side. The rooftop units (RTUs) are currently bordered along the top with unpainted wood boards and are highly visible from public right-of-ways.

Although the applicant did not request permission to install composite wall panels on a portion of the upper level exterior masonry walls and parapets, the submitted construction drawings for permitting suggest that such an alteration is proposed in conjunction with the reroofing project. These walls are visible from the public way and BAR staff has **not** approved any changes to the exterior wall. The applicant will need to submit another application for such an alteration as this case solely concerns the waiver of rooftop HVAC screening.

Due to the necessity of installing the units prior to the start of the school year, BAR staff approved the building permits conditioned upon approval of a new rooftop HVAC screening, or waiver of screening, based on the BAR's decision.

II. HISTORY

Approved by the BAR on July 11, 1956, Lyles-Crouch School was constructed in **1957** in a Modernist design vocabulary by local architect Joseph Saunders. From the late 1940s through the early 1980s, Joseph Saunders and Associates (later Saunders and Pearson) was a prolific and prestigious architectural firm in Alexandria; their work included motels, churches, office buildings, schools and residential structures.

On February 17, 1993, the BAR approved replacement windows at Lyles-Crouch School (BAR Case #93-22); but the largest change came in December 6, 2000 and January 3, 2001, when the Board approved the media center addition on the north side of the building. The addition was designed by BMK Architects and was completed in 2002.

On March 20, 1991, the BAR approved HVAC renovations involving the installation of several new rooftop units and one at-grade unit at Lyles-Crouch School (BAR Case #91-42). More than a decade later, the BAR issued a waiver for rooftop HVAC screening, as well as a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations (BAR Case #2003-0312 & BAR Case #2003-0313), which involved the installation of 15 new RTUs; these replaced the circa 1991 equipment consisting of six (6) HVAC units and ten (10) condenser units. At that time, several smaller fans and ventilators were removed. The RTUs, according to the applicant in 2003, were located as close to the centerline of the flat roof of the Mid-Century portion of the school as was possible, and were no closer to the parapet edge than the previous equipment.

III. ANALYSIS

The proposed HVAC alterations requested in 2003 met the zoning ordinance requirements due to the BAR's waiver of the screening. Section 6-403(B)(1) of the zoning ordinance requires all rooftop HVAC units to be screened with similar architectural materials or features of the same quality used on the exterior of the main building. However, section 6-403(B)(3) of the zoning ordinance permits BAR to waive or modify the screening requirement if the Board finds such potential screening to be architecturally inappropriate, that is, more objectionable than viewing the units themselves.

In the opinion of Staff, the proposed HVAC alterations are acceptable. Currently, several pieces of existing rooftop equipment are visible in views from the north along South Saint Asaph, South Pitt, and Wilkes streets and from the school grounds. The view from the south is considerably more restricted. While raising the equipment another two feet (18"-24") will make the RTUs more visible, Staff has been assured by the applicant that the units are located as far from the roof edge as possible and notes that the units are visible only at a distance from the building.



Figure 1: Pictometry view of the roof looking south

In the opinion of Staff, rooftop screening of the equipment would not be beneficial in this case. The units are not grouped together but are scattered throughout the roof. Metal mechanical screen walls could be added around each of the visible units, but the screen walls would have to be set off from the equipment by approximately three feet (3') to allow access for maintenance.

Alternatively, the entire roof area could be screened at the perimeter by a metal false-mansard roof like those once used on strip shopping centers and recently removed from 1201 North Washington Street. In addition to being stylistically inappropriate on this Modernist style building, staff believes the bulky screens would only increase the appearance of mass on the flat rooftop and

serve to draw more attention to the intrusions. Finally, the color of the existing HVAC units is already a light gray and blends with the Virginia sky, rather than trying to make the units brick red and part of the architecture. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the request for Waiver of Rooftop HVAC Screening.

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

STAFF

Heather McMahon, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C- code requirement R- recommendation S- suggestion F- finding

Zoning Comments

C-1 Proposed roof top mechanical will comply with zoning if the waiver of screening is approved.

Code Administration

No comments received.

Transportation and Environmental Services

C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). (T&ES)

C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line. (T&ES)

R-1 The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition. (T&ES)

F-1 After review of the information provided, an amendment to the approved site plan DSP2000-00046 is not required at this time. Please note that if any changes are made to the plan it is suggested that T&ES be included in the review. (T&ES)

Alexandria Archaeology

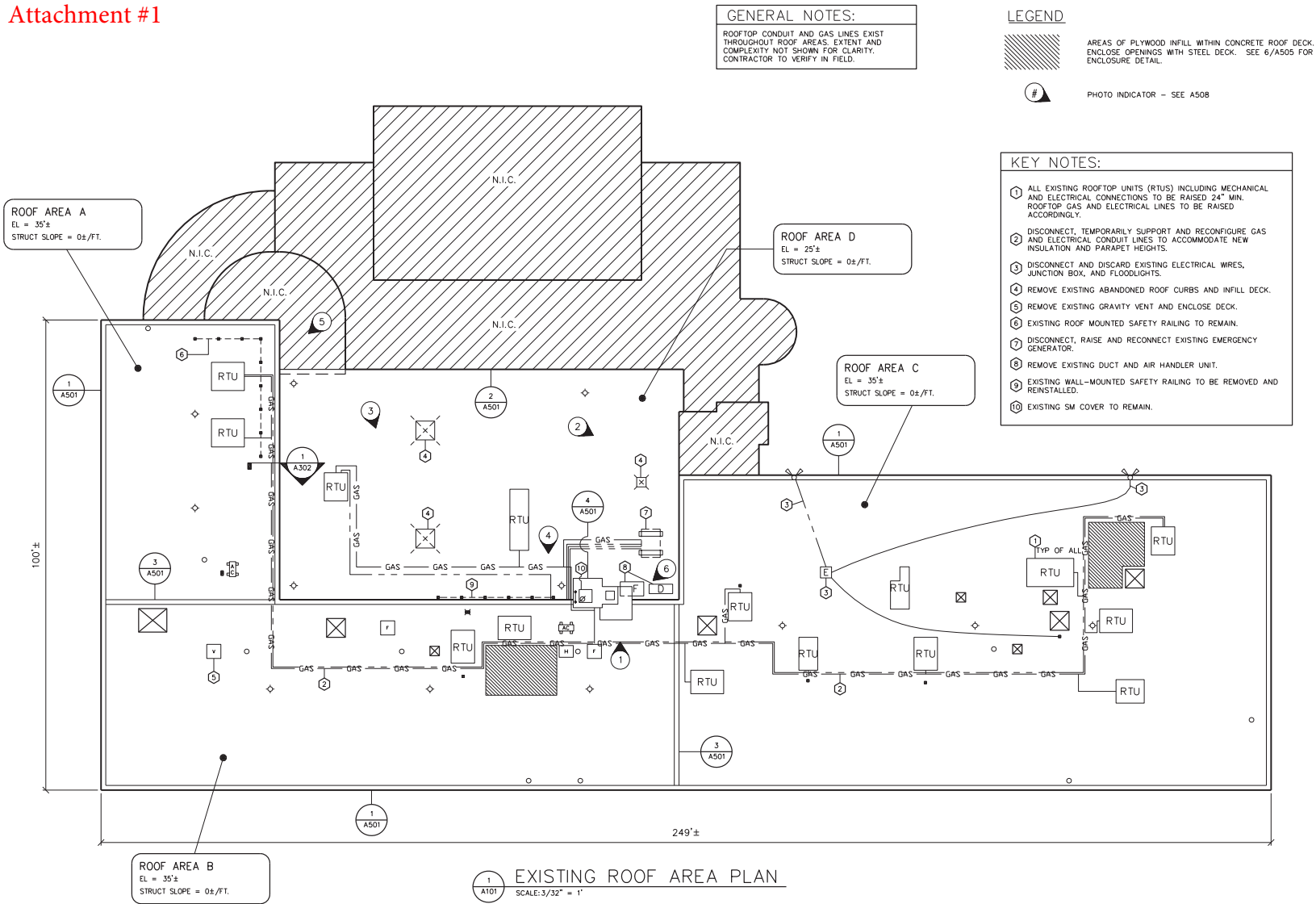
No comments received.

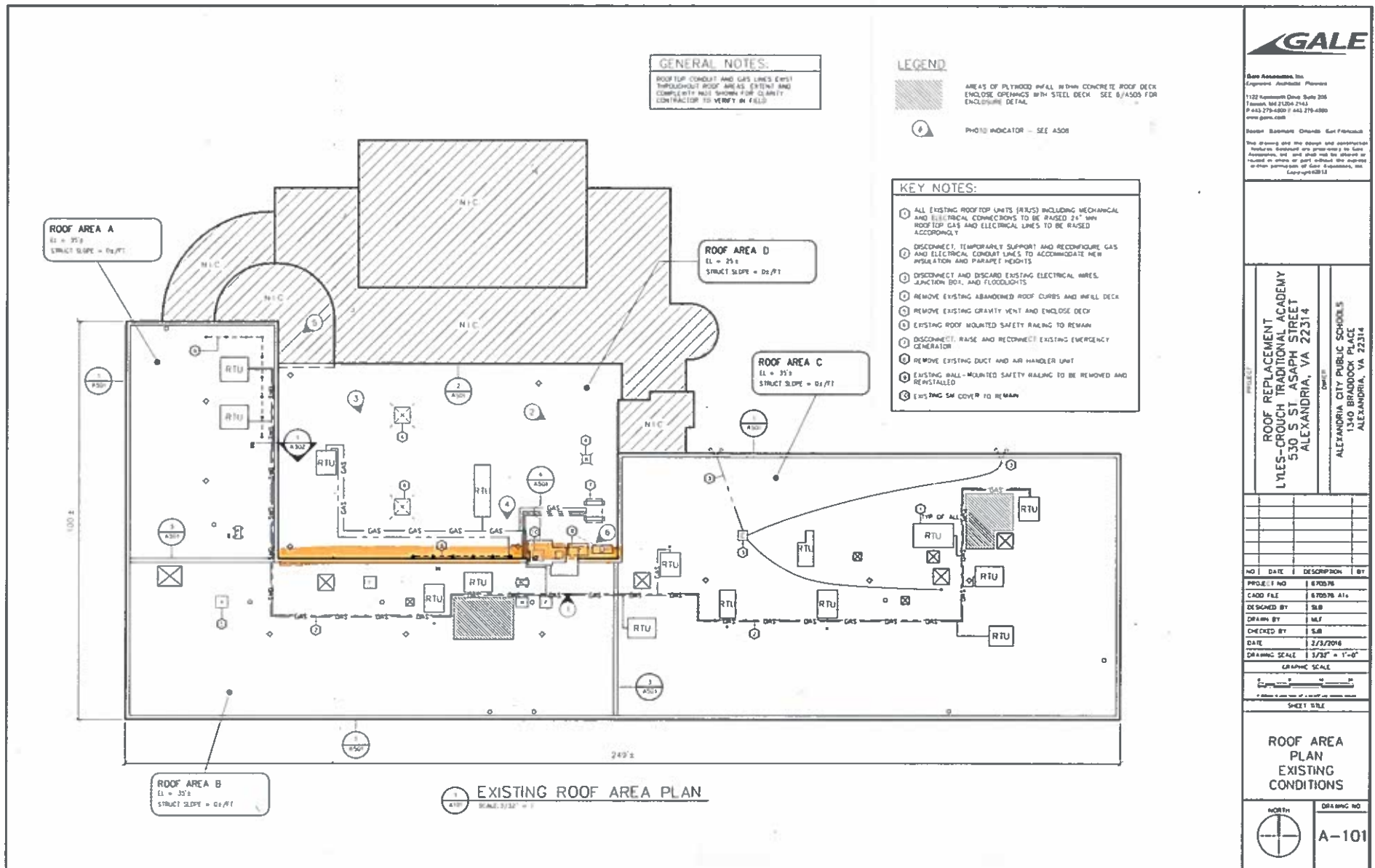
V. ATTACHMENTS

1 – Supplemental Materials

2 – Application for BAR2016-0269: 530 South Saint Asaph Street

Attachment #1





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530 S Saint Asaph Street
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ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 530 S. St. Asaph St.
 TAX MAP AND PARCEL: 080.02 Block 03 / 01 ZONING: _____

APPLICATION FOR: (Please check all that apply)

- ☐ CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
- ☐ PERMIT TO MOVE, REMOVE, ENCAPSULATE OR DEMOLISH
 (Required if more than 25 square feet of a structure is to be demolished/impacted)
- ☒ WAIVER OF VISION CLEARANCE REQUIREMENT and/or YARD REQUIREMENTS IN A VISION
 CLEARANCE AREA (Section 7-802, Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)
- ☒ WAIVER OF ROOFTOP HVAC SCREENING REQUIREMENT
 (Section 6-403(B)(3), Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)

Applicant: ☐ Property Owner ☒ Business (Please provide business name & contact person)Name: Alex ALEXANDERAddress: 340 BRADDOCK R. Suite 6City: ALEXANDRIA State: VA Zip: 22314Phone: 703-619-8300 E-mail: ALEX.ALEXANDER@jacks.k12.va.usAuthorized Agent (if applicable): ☐ Attorney ☐ Architect ☐ _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Legal Property Owner:

Name: ALEXANDRIA City Public SchoolsAddress: 340 BRADDOCK R.City: ALEXANDRIA State: VA Zip: 22314Phone: 703-619-8000 E-mail: _____

- ☐ Yes ☒ No Is there an historic preservation easement on this property?
- ☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, has the easement holder agreed to the proposed alterations?
- ☐ Yes ☒ No Is there a homeowner's association for this property?
- ☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, has the homeowner's association approved the proposed alterations?

If you answered yes to any of the above, please attach a copy of the letter approving the project.

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NATURE OF PROPOSED WORK: *Please check all that apply*

- ☐ NEW CONSTRUCTION
☒ EXTERIOR ALTERATION: *Please check all that apply.*
 ☐ awning ☐ fence, gate or garden wall ☒ HVAC equipment ☐ shutters
 ☐ doors ☐ windows ☐ siding ☐ shed
 ☐ lighting ☐ pergola/trellis ☐ painting unpainted masonry
 ☐ other _____
☐ ADDITION
☐ DEMOLITION/ENCAPSULATION
☐ SIGNAGE

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORK: *Please describe the proposed work in detail (Additional pages may be attached).*

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

Items listed below comprise the **minimum supporting materials** for BAR applications. Staff may request additional information during application review. Please refer to the relevant section of the *Design Guidelines* for further information on appropriate treatments.

Applicants must use the checklist below to ensure the application is complete. Include all information and material that are necessary to thoroughly describe the project. Incomplete applications will delay the docketing of the application for review. Pre-application meetings are required for all proposed additions. All applicants are encouraged to meet with staff prior to submission of a completed application.

Electronic copies of submission materials should be submitted whenever possible.

Demolition/Encapsulation : *All applicants requesting 25 square feet or more of demolition/encapsulation must complete this section. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.*

- ☐ N/A
☐ ☒ Survey plat showing the extent of the proposed demolition/encapsulation.
☐ ☒ Existing elevation drawings clearly showing all elements proposed for demolition/encapsulation.
☐ ☒ Clear and labeled photographs of all elevations of the building if the entire structure is proposed to be demolished.
☐ ☒ Description of the reason for demolition/encapsulation.
☐ ☒ Description of the alternatives to demolition/encapsulation and why such alternatives are not considered feasible.

Additions & New Construction: Drawings must be to scale and should not exceed 11" x 17" unless approved by staff. All plans must be folded and collated into 3 complete 8 1/2" x 11" sets. Additional copies may be requested by staff for large-scale development projects or projects fronting Washington Street. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- ☐ ☒ N/A Scaled survey plat showing dimensions of lot and location of existing building and other structures on the lot, location of proposed structure or addition, dimensions of existing structure(s), proposed addition or new construction, and all exterior, ground and roof mounted equipment.
- ☐ ☒ FAR & Open Space calculation form.
- ☐ ☒ Clear and labeled photographs of the site, surrounding properties and existing structures, if applicable.
- ☐ ☒ Existing elevations must be scaled and include dimensions.
- ☐ ☒ Proposed elevations must be scaled and include dimensions. Include the relationship to adjacent structures in plan and elevations.
- ☐ ☒ Materials and colors to be used must be specified and delineated on the drawings. Actual samples may be provided or required.
- ☐ ☒ Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- ☐ ☒ For development site plan projects, a model showing mass relationships to adjacent properties and structures.

Signs & Awnings: One sign per building under one square foot does not require BAR approval unless illuminated. All other signs including window signs require BAR approval. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- ☐ ☒ N/A Linear feet of building: Front: _____ Secondary front (if corner lot): _____.
- ☐ ☒ Square feet of existing signs to remain: _____.
- ☐ ☒ Photograph of building showing existing conditions.
- ☐ ☒ Dimensioned drawings of proposed sign identifying materials, color, lettering style and text.
- ☐ ☒ Location of sign (show exact location on building including the height above sidewalk).
- ☐ ☒ Means of attachment (drawing or manufacturer's cut sheet of bracket if applicable).
- ☐ ☒ Description of lighting (if applicable). Include manufacturer's cut sheet for any new lighting fixtures and information detailing how it will be attached to the building's facade.

Alterations: Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- ☒ ☐ N/A Clear and labeled photographs of the site, especially the area being impacted by the alterations, all sides of the building and any pertinent details.
- ☐ ☒ Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- ☒ ☐ Drawings accurately representing the changes to the proposed structure, including materials and overall dimensions. Drawings must be to scale.
- ☐ ☒ An official survey plat showing the proposed locations of HVAC units, fences, and sheds.
- ☒ ☐ Historic elevations or photographs should accompany any request to return a structure to an earlier appearance.

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ALL APPLICATIONS: *Please read and check that you have read and understand the following items:*

- ☒ I have submitted a filing fee with this application. (Checks should be made payable to the City of Alexandria. Please contact staff for assistance in determining the appropriate fee.)
- ☒ I understand the notice requirements and will return a copy of the three respective notice forms to BAR staff at least five days prior to the hearing. If I am unsure to whom I should send notice I will contact Planning and Zoning staff for assistance in identifying adjacent parcels.
- ☒ I, the applicant, or an authorized representative will be present at the public hearing.
- ☒ I understand that any revisions to this initial application submission (including applications deferred for restudy) must be accompanied by the BAR Supplemental form and 3 sets of revised materials.

The undersigned hereby attests that all of the information herein provided including the site plan, building elevations, prospective drawings of the project, and written descriptive information are true, correct and accurate. The undersigned further understands that, should such information be found incorrect, any action taken by the Board based on such information may be invalidated. The undersigned also hereby grants the City of Alexandria permission to post placard notice as required by Article XI, Division A, Section 11-301(B) of the 1992 Alexandria City Zoning Ordinance, on the property which is the subject of this application. The undersigned also hereby authorizes the City staff and members of the BAR to inspect this site as necessary in the course of research and evaluating the application. The applicant, if other than the property owner, also attests that he/she has obtained permission from the property owner to make this application.

APPLICANT OR AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Signature: 

Printed Name: A. ALEXANDER

Date: 07.25.2016

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