

Docket Item # 3
BAR CASE # 2017-00417

BAR Meeting
December 13, 2017

ISSUE: After-the-fact Certificate of Appropriateness to paint unpainted masonry

APPLICANT: Renee Delisle

LOCATION: 404 North Henry Street

ZONE: RB / Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **denial** of the application for after-the-fact painting of unpainted masonry. Staff recommends that the BAR require that the applicant remove the paint of the front and side elevations under staff's guidance within six months.

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, 703-746-4200 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.



I. ISSUE

The applicant is requesting an after-the-fact Certificate of Appropriateness to paint the exterior of a previously unpainted masonry rowhouse located at 404 North Henry Street.

II. HISTORY

The two-story cinder block, brick-clad rowhouse at 404 North Henry Street was constructed in **1938** as one half of a pair of rowhouses with a shared pediment that comprise the end units of a row of 12 two-story rowhouses (404 to 426 North Henry Street) (Permit #1696, 5/20/1938). The unit at 408 had been demolished, and for a period of time 404 and 406 North Henry were viewed as a semi-detached pair sharing a common pediment, but 408 is now being reconstructed and the original unity of this block face is being restored.

In 2011 a new shed and fence was built on the side yard south of the townhouse (BAR Case #2011-00318). In 2016 the applicant removed and replaced six windows in kind (BAR Case #2016-00399).

This dwelling is considered a “Later” building according to the Parker-Gray Residential Reference Guide.

III. ANALYSIS

The BARs in both historic districts have always been very concerned about the painting of previously unpainted masonry and the zoning ordinance specifically prohibits it without BAR approval. Section 10-209(B)(4) of the zoning ordinance states: “The painting of a masonry building which was unpainted prior to such painting shall be considered to be the removal of an exterior feature having historic and/or architectural significance requiring a certificate of appropriateness.” The *Design Guidelines* further state that “painting a previously unpainted masonry surface, no matter what color, requires review and approval of a certificate of appropriateness by the Boards. Additionally, the Boards strongly discourage the painting of a previously unpainted masonry surface.” However, each request is reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

While the Parker-Gray Residential Reference Guide (RRG) provides significant leniency with respect to the types of alterations that may be done on Later buildings or on side or rear elevations, it is explicit that the painting of unpainted masonry must be reviewed by the BAR at a public hearing for both Early and Later buildings and for all elevations. This is in part because painting unpainted masonry significantly alters the character and material of a building and a painted masonry building also results in an unnecessary ongoing maintenance issue. Additionally, while removing paint can be accomplished via chemical process, it requires great care and expense to successfully remove paint without damaging the masonry. Due to the abundance of previously painted masonry structures in Old Town, and the fact that most brick masonry buildings were not originally painted, the Boards do not normally support such requests. Historically, most property owners avoided painting brick because painting was expensive and the use of brick was a clear sign that the building was higher quality and more expensive material than frame construction with wood siding.

Staff cannot support the request in this particular case for many reasons.

First, the subject property is one of a pair that shares a common architectural element (the common triangular pediment at the parapet) and painting one side but not the other significantly diminishes the architectural integrity of both rowhouses. The Parker-Gray Historic District National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Nomination states that “[t]he houses in the 400 block of North Henry Street are the only ones in which the English garden apartment model was followed in the front yard landscaping, with a series of brick piers and fences defining a separate garden space in front of each unit.” This statement affirms that the development on the 400 block of North Henry Street is a cohesive plan and should be interpreted together. 404 North Henry Street “is half a pair of twins, constructed as one unified composition, the other half being 406 North Henry Street.” Second, this rowhouse is part of a larger composition of unpainted brick rowhouses in the Colonial Revival style, with each end framed by a pair of rowhouses with the common pediment. Third, these rowhouses are representative of the Colonial Revival rowhouses and garden apartments constructed in the 1930s and 1940s in this area. The character-defining elements of these buildings typically include Colonial Revival detailing and durable, lasting materials such as unpainted red brick and slate. While they are individual rowhouses, the uniformity of material and form contribute to the overall design intent.

Although the building is considered a Later building in the district, the NRHP nomination states that 404 North Henry is a contributing resource to the overall historic district. The BAR confirmed the importance of the compatibility of the overall composition of this row by requiring that the new house proposed at 408 North Henry (in the vacant lot where one unit burned) to be constructed in brick, though a contemporary architectural character was appropriate for subtle differentiation (BAR 2014-0020, 3/26/14; reapproved at BAR 2017-00106, 4/26/17). The Board noted that a character-defining feature of this row of buildings was the cohesive use of red brick.



Figure 1. Until the unapproved painting of 404 North Henry recently, the entire row of 1938 Colonial Revival rowhouses was unpainted masonry. The subject property at the south end of this row is identified with a red box. Photo taken before the 2017 painting of 404 North Henry.

Painting of one unit in a composition is not appropriate, as its impact is not only on the painted rowhouse itself but also the adjacent architectural twin and the overall composition of the row (Figure 2). 424 North Henry Street (BAR Case# 2017-00376) recently requested to paint the exterior of their house to the BAR on October 25, 2017. The request was denied by a vote of 6-0 with the BAR commenting on the overall composition of a row of unpainted units and the potential damage to the brick caused by painting.

Painting the red brick rowhouses was a topic of discussion at the Parker-Gray Design Guidelines Work Group in 2010 and the majority was in agreement that changes to windows, doors and fences

did not cause lasting harm to the character of the neighborhood but that painting a unit of a unified row of red brick homes effectively permanently changed the character of the entire block face and diminished the historic red brick character that Alexandria is known for.

The BAR must consider the following Standards found in Sec. 10-205(A)(2)(b) of the Zoning Ordinance for approving a Certificate of Appropriateness for modifications to existing buildings in Parker-Gray:

- (1) The degree to which the distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site including historic materials are retained;*

The exterior paint changes the historic materials and characteristics of the building and block face.

- (2) The historic appropriateness of any new features;*

As stated previously, the exterior paint is not historically appropriate. These Colonial Revival rowhouses constructed in the English garden model were constructed in the 1930s and 1940s in this area. The character-defining elements of these buildings typically include red unpainted brick.

- (3) The compatibility of proposed alterations with other buildings on the block face or block face across the street, giving consideration to the building size, shape, roofline, color, materials, texture, nature of openings, and architectural details.*

The paint at 404 North Henry disrupts the uniform rhythm and relationship of the block. This section of the 400 block of North Henry Street is a cohesive composition and should be interpreted together, all of which are unpainted masonry except 404 North Henry. 404 North Henry is one of a pair that shares a common architectural element (the common pediment) with 406 North Henry and painting one side but not the other significantly diminishes the architectural integrity of both rowhouses. Therefore, the compatibility concern is twofold in this instance: compatibility with the subject property's twin that shares a common pediment and compatibility with the overall row.

- (4) Architectural classification based on age of building or structure; and*

404 North Henry is a Colonial Revival rowhouse constructed in the English garden apartment model constructed in 1938. This block, along with other garden apartment complexes found in Alexandria and collections of rowhouses, would not have been painted at the time of construction.

- (5) Hierarchy of building elevation based on the location of the alteration on the front (street facing), side (non-street facing) or rear elevation.*

404 North Henry's complete exterior was painted. The Board may find it appropriate to only require the removal of paint on the street-facing front elevation, the front and side elevations or all three elevations (front, side, and rear). 404 North Henry is at the end of the block, and the side is plainly visible from the public right-of-way.



Figure 2. 404 and 406 North Henry change in character and composition when one half of a pair is painted.

Staff finds that changing the color and permanently altering the brick material by painting brick is incompatible and has an adverse effect on the distinguishing original quality of this uniformly red brick blockface. The painting is not historically appropriate and, as explained in the discussion related to the Standards above, staff cannot recommend the after-the-fact painting of unpainted masonry in this location for a number of reasons. However, staff finds that it is less important to remove the paint from the rear elevation which is only visible from an alley. Therefore, staff recommends paint removal from the front and side elevations of 404 North Henry.

STAFF

Jennifer L. Rowan, 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

No comment.

Code Administration

No comment.

Transportation & Environmental Services

- F1. After review of the information provided, an approved grading plan 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)
- F2. If the alley located at the rear of the parcel is to be used at any point of the construction process the following will be required:
For a Public Alley - The applicant shall contact T&ES, Construction Permitting & Inspections at (703) 746-4035 to discuss any permits and accommodation requirements that will be required.
For a Private Alley - The applicant must provide proof, in the form of an affidavit at a minimum, from owner of the alley granting permission of use. (T&ES)
- C1. 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)
- C2. 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)
- C3. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (Sec. 5-2-1) (T&ES)

V. ATTACHMENTS

- 1 – Application for BAR2017-00380 & BAR2017-00417: 404 North Henry Street
2 – Supplemental Materials

BAR Case # _____

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 404 N. Henry Rd. Alexandria VA. 22314
 TAX MAP AND PARCEL: _____ ZONING: _____

APPLICATION FOR: (Please check all that apply)

Application Materials

BAR2017-00417

404 N Henry

Date Routed: 11/2/2017

☒ 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: Renee S. DelisleAddress: 404 N. Henry RdCity: Alexandria State: Va Zip: 22314

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Authorized Agent (if applicable): ☐ Attorney ☐ Architect ☐ _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Legal Property Owner:

Name: Renee S. DelisleAddress: 404 N. Henry Rd.City: Alexandria State: Va Zip: 22314

Phone: _____ 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.

BAR (

Application Materials

BAR2017-00417

404 N Henry

Date Routed: 11/2/2017

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).*

After the fact painting & unpainted masonry

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 be approved by staff. All plans must be folded and collated into 3 complete 8 1/2" x 11" 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.

OWNERSHIP AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Use additional sheets if necessary

Application Materials

BAR2017-00417

404 N Henry

Date Routed: 11/2/2017

1. Applicant. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1. Renee S. Delisle	404 NORTH HENRY St. Alexandria VA. 22314	100%
2.		
3.		

2. Property. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the property located at _____ (address), unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1. Renee S. Delisle	404 N. Henry St. Alexandria - Va 22314	100%
2.		
3.		

3. Business or Financial Relationships. Each person or entity listed above (1 and 2), with an ownership interest in the applicant or in the subject property is required to disclose any business or financial relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance, existing at the time of this application or within the 12-month period prior to the submission of this application with any member of the Alexandria City Council, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals or either Boards of Architectural Review.

Name of person or entity	Relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance	Member of the Approving Body (i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, etc.)
NI		
1. Renee S. Delisle	NA	No
2.		
3.		

NOTE: Business or financial relationships of the type described in Sec. 11-350 that arise after the filing of this application and before each public hearing must be disclosed prior to the public hearings.

As the applicant or the applicant's authorized agent I hereby attest to the best of my ability that the information provided above is true and correct.

10-13-17 Renee S. Delisle Renee S. Delisle
 Date Printed Name Signature

BAR Case

Application Materials

BAR2017-00417

404 N Henry

Date Routed: 11/2/2017

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

- ☒ 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: Renee S. DelislePrinted Name: Renee S. DelisleDate: 10-13-17



Attachment 2



