

Gloria Sitton

From: website <webmaster@alexandriava.gov>
Sent: Friday, November 17, 2017 11:30 AM
To: Jackie Henderson; Gloria Sitton
Subject: City Council speaker's form submission received

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Meeting Date: 11/18/2017
Docket Item# 7

Speaker's Name: Duncan Blair
Phone #: 703-778-1444
Email: dblair@landcarroll.com
Address: 524 King Street

Representing self? No
If representing other: Paul & Amy Reed

Position on the item: For

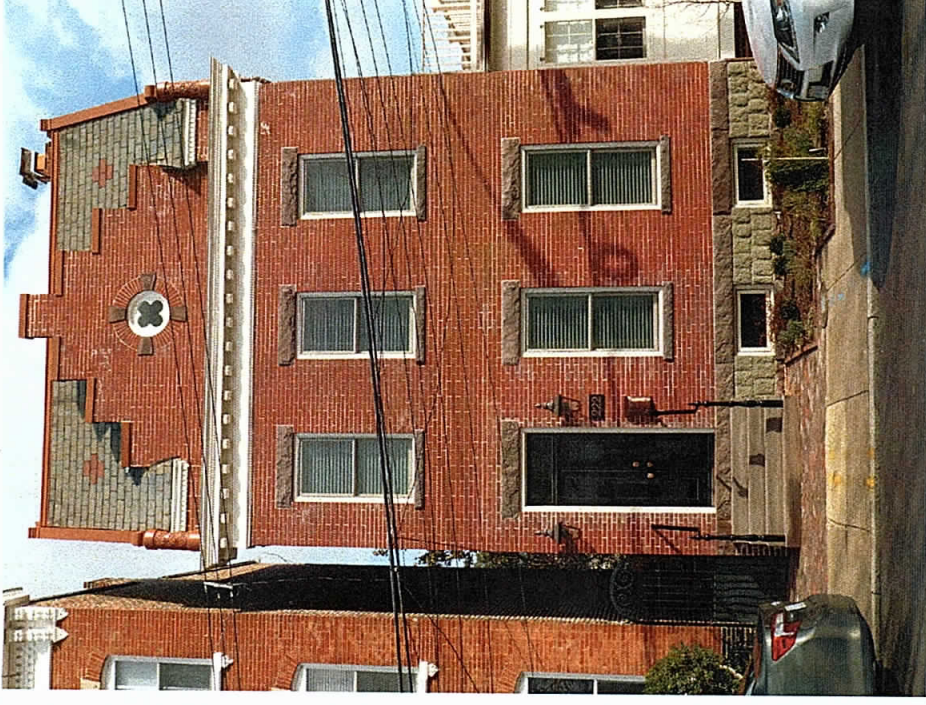
Nature of interest: Attorney

Are you being compensated? Yes

7
11-18-17



222 S Fairfax, Before



222 S Fairfax, After

A Sample of Recent Paint Removal Projects



305 Cameron



400 Prince



105/107 King, Fish Market



403 Prince, in progress



117 N Fairfax



7
11-18-17

November 15, 2001

TO: The Honorable Mayor and Members of Council

RE: Case BAR 2017-00287



Madam Mayor and Members of Council-

We are writing to support the appeal to Council of the Board of Architectural Review's disapproval of façade painting at 402 South Pitt Street, Alexandria. As neighbors directly across the street from this property, we believe the aesthetics of the property and the neighborhood of contiguous properties have been significantly improved by the owners. Pursuing the remediation directed by the BAR- removal of the paint- will only degrade the property beyond the condition that BAR is trying to preserve.

Unlike adjoining brick properties, this home was previously unpainted, resulting in a façade of brownish yellow brick that looked entirely incongruous with the rest of the block. In its former condition, the house looked more appropriate to a commercial district than to residential use. Removing the paint, as BAR has directed, will reverse these aesthetic improvements, return architectural discord to the block, and further degrade the structure the BAR's actions are designed to protect.

As residents of the historic district, we recognize the value of historic preservation and review. In this instance we believe the property improvements made by our neighbors are consistent with those values and appropriate to the location and period of adjoining properties. We would regret a decision by the Mayor and Council to uphold the BAR's denial of a certificate of appropriateness and it's proposed remediation, returning the building to a less attractive exterior, and potentially harming the property's brick and metal porch roof in the process.

Thank you for being open to these comments and concerns as you consider the merits of the case.

Sincerely,


Collin and K.C. Moller

405 South Pitt Street, Alexandria, Va. 22314



Page 10 of 10

U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General

Washington, D.C. 20535

Enclosure

The following information was obtained from the records of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General, regarding the investigation of the [redacted] case. The investigation was conducted by the [redacted] and the results are as follows:

The investigation revealed that the [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted] and the [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted]. The [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted] and the [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted].

The [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted] and the [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted]. The [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted] and the [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted]. The [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted] and the [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted].

The [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted] and the [redacted] was found to be in violation of the [redacted].

U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General

Washington, D.C. 20535

7
11-18-17

Shannon and Eric Thor
412 S Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
217-390-1504
Shannon.thor@gmail.com
November 16, 2017

Mayor Allison Silberberg and Members of The City Council
Mayor's Office
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

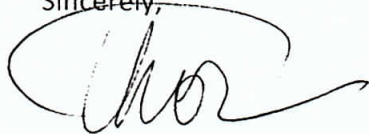
Dear Mayor Allison Silberberg and Members of The City Council:

We are writing in reference to BAR 2017-00287. We understand that Amy and Paul Reed of 402 South Pitt Street have requested a Certificate of Appropriateness to approve the painting of their previously unpainted brick. We live a few houses down on the same block of South Pitt, and we are writing in support of their request.

The overall resulting look of the painted brick facade is an enhancement to our neighborhood. The previous yellow-gold brick was inconsistent with the aesthetic of the adjacent painted brick houses built at the same time as the Reed house, and the previous yellow-gold brick color was inconsistent with historical red-brick Old Town Alexandria homes. Painting the brick at 402 South Pitt Street resulted in a marked improvement in the overall aesthetic of the block, while remaining true to the architectural character of the house and maintaining the consistency of Old Town Alexandria charm.

We encourage you to grant the Reed's request to approve the painting of the brick.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thor', with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Shannon and Eric Thor

7
11-18-17

To: Mayor Allison Silberberg and City Council
301 King St., Room 320
Alexandria, VA 22314

From: Paul and Amy Reed
402 S. Pitt St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

Date: November 14, 2017

Re: Appeal Staff Recommendation BAR Case #2017-00287

Dear Mayor Silberberg and City Council,

Please find enclosed a memorandum regarding our appeal requesting a reversal of the decision of the BAR (and the staff recommendation) denying our request for after-the-fact approval of the painting of the unpainted masonry on the façade of our home at 402 South Pitt St. Our hearing for appeal is scheduled for this upcoming Saturday November 18th at 9:30am.

Prior to the painting of the façade of our home it was a neighborhood anomaly and quite frankly an eye sore. My husband and I firmly believe that the painted façade has made it compatible and harmonious with the other homes in our neighborhood and that it is in the best interest of the City to approve the painting. For these reasons, we are not willing to remove the paint and we believe it is inappropriate and out-of-character with our neighborhood to even entertain the removal of the paint.

Needless to say this is matter that is very important to our family and prior to the hearing we are happy to answer any questions you may have regarding our case. We would also like to invite you to come view our home in person (located only a few blocks from City Hall) so that you have the opportunity to see the façade painting which was performed, familiarize yourself with our neighborhood, and to see the test sample removal of paint that was performed (on the lower back portion of the alley side porch column).

For your consideration we have also attached letters of support that we have received from our neighbors.

We look forward to presenting our appeal to you on Saturday November 18th.

Sincerely,


Amy and Paul Reed

Cc: Vice Mayor Justin Wilson
Councilman Willie F. Bailey Sr.
Councilman John T. Chapman
Councilman Timothy B. Lovain
Councilwoman Redela S. "Del" Pepper
Councilman Paul C. Smedberg

ISSUE: Appeal Staff Recommendation BAR Case #2017-00287

APPLICANTS & APPELLANTS: Amy and Paul Reed

LOCATION: 402 South Pitt Street

ZONE: RB/Residential

ISSUE

As the Applicants and Appellants, we are appealing to Alexandria City Council to reverse the decision of the BAR (and the staff recommendation) denying our request for after-the-fact approval of the painting of the unpainted masonry on the façade of our home at 402 South Pitt St.

As City Council is aware, neither the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia nor the ordinances of the City of Alexandria requires that historical preservation guidelines and restrictions to be disclosed to buyers upon the purchase of a home. Therefore, we were not aware that we were required to seek a Certificate of Appropriateness from the BAR prior to painting the unpainted masonry on the front façade of their home. In fact, we assumed the front façade could be painted because the entire exterior, except for the front façade, of the home was already painted. Additionally, our home is one of a row of three two story identical houses (although two have been colonize in the 1990's), and the other two are painted. Furthermore, the seven similar houses around the corner from our house on Wolfe Street all have been painted. The BAR staff has indicated there are no BAR records on how or when the paintings occurred.

We received a stop work order from the BAR and immediately requested a Certificate of Appropriateness for after the fact painting. It was at the BAR hearing on September 6, 2017 that we learned that the BAR has a de facto prohibition on the painting of any unpainted masonry in the Old Town Historic district.

HISTORY OF OUR HOME

- A vernacular two-story brick rowhouse with a one-story front porch, likely constructed in the 1920s (actual date unknown). The only specific date given is that it was constructed by 1931 pursuant to Sanborn Fire Insurance maps from that year. This type of row house is found throughout the City. In the District of Columbia there are hundreds constructed during the same period by developer Harry Wardman. In the District the style of houses are affectionately known as "Wardman Houses". There is no evidence that Harry Wardman developed in the City of Alexandria.
- The façade is comprised of textured yellow golden brick, which had not been previously painted until July of 2017. Based on our research we believe that the brick used to construct the front façade of our home is likely a California style rug face brick which was a designer fad brick only under production and used for a short time starting around 1915 most likely to differentiate the fresh new modern houses from the older homes in the downtown area prior to the Old Town renaissance in the late 1960's and 1970's.

- The north side exterior of our home is composed of common brick and was previously painted (date unknown). The remaining exterior of our home is composed of hardi fiber cement plank siding which was previously painted the same color as the north side common brick.
- It should be noted that our home has undergone significant exterior renovations since its original construction. The most recent being in 2012 when a second story addition was constructed and the previously enclosed porch restored to the original open porch design. The character of our home is that of a two story brick row house of the era that it was built and was not made over to appear colonial in nature.

ADDITIONAL FACTS

- As indicated above, the majority of our home had already been painted, except for the front façade.
- The front brick facades of the two adjacent townhouses at 404 and 406 South Pitt St., which were part of the original three townhouse development, are both painted.
- The front brick facades of the other homes located around the corner from our home, between 428 and 414 Wolfe St., are painted.
- Prior to the BAR hearing on September 6, 2017, two of our neighbors wrote to the BAR in support of the painting of our front façade and we also provided the BAR a text from a third neighbor supporting the painting of our front façade. Additionally, one of neighbors appeared at the September 6, 2017 BAR hearing and made a statement in support of the painting of our home.
- No citizens appeared at the September 6, 2017 BAR hearing to object to our request for certificate of appropriateness and we are not aware of any complaints beyond the initial citizen complaint made to the BAR. Nor did the BAR staff disclose any additional complaints during the September 6, 2017 hearing.
- BAR has asserted that we willfully disregarded the Stop Work Order. This is simply not the case. We were informed by the BAR that the North side of the house could still be painted. As such we instructed the painter to proceed with painting the North side of the house but unfortunately the painter understood this to include the remaining small unpainted portion of façade as well. We believe this to be an honest mistake as there was only a very small amount of brick at the top of the façade that had not already been painted at the time the stop work order was received.
- Prior to receiving the Stop Work Order we were not aware of the zoning ordinance that requires approval from the BAR to paint previously unpainted brick. The BAR has asserted that we should have been aware of the zoning ordinance based on a flyer that is included in January tax assessments from the City of Alexandria. As the BAR is aware we were not owners of 402 South Pitt St at the time such flyer was mailed and as such would have never received such notice.
- In November 2012 a request for a certificate of appropriateness was made to the BAR to paint the unpainted brick façade of the house which the BAR denied. Such a previous denial by the BAR is also is not required to be made to be disclosed to buyers seeking to purchase a home in Virginia. Therefore, the Applicants were not made aware that such a request had been previously made and subsequently denied by the BAR.

RULES

- ***Design Guidelines for the Old and Historic Alexandria District and the Parker Gray District – Chapter 2 Building Alterations – Paint Colors:***
 - The color of a building is, perhaps, its most dominant characteristic. The color of a building can enhance or detract from its own architectural characteristics as well as neighboring structures.
 - The Boards strongly discourage the painting of a previously unpainted masonry surface
- ***Zoning Ordinance Section 10-109(B)(4) – Permitted maintenance of exterior architectural features:***

The painting of a masonry building which was unpainted prior to such painting shall be considered the removal of an exterior feature having historic and/or architectural significance requiring a certificate of appropriateness.
- ***Zoning Ordinance Section 10-105(A)(2) – Matters to be considered in approving certificates and permits – Standards:*** Subject to the provisions of section 10-105(A)(1), the Old and Historic Alexandria District board of architectural review or the city council on appeal shall consider the following features and factors in passing upon the appropriateness of the proposed construction, reconstruction, alteration or restoration of buildings or structures:
 - (a) Overall architectural design, form, style and structure, including, but not limited to, the height, mass and scale of buildings or structures;
 - (b) Architectural details including, but not limited to, original materials and methods of construction, the pattern, design and style of fenestration, ornamentation, lighting, signage and like decorative or functional fixtures of buildings or structures; the degree to which the distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site (including historic materials) are retained;
 - (c) Design and arrangement of buildings and structures on the site; and the impact upon the historic setting, streetscape or environs;
 - (d) Texture, material and color, and the extent to which any new architectural features are historically appropriate to the existing structure and adjacent existing structures;
 - (e) The relation of the features in sections 10-105(A)(2)(a) through (d) to similar features of the preexisting building or structure, if any, and to buildings and structures in the immediate surroundings;
 - (f) The extent to which the building or structure would be harmonious with or incongruous to the old and historic aspect of the George Washington Memorial Parkway;
 - (g) The extent to which the building or structure will preserve or protect historic places and areas of historic interest in the city;
 - (h) The extent to which the building or structure will preserve the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway;
 - (i) The extent to which the building or structure will promote the general welfare of the city and all citizens by the preservation and protection of historic interest in the city and the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway; and
 - (j) The extent to which such preservation and protection will promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions,

attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in American culture and heritage and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live.

ANALYSIS

Design Guidelines

- The *Design Guidelines* indicate the Boards strongly discourage the painting of a previously unpainted masonry surface. However, it is a general rule and although strongly discouraged it is not a strict prohibition against the painting of any unpainted brick or masonry. The provision merely requires that the owner must request and receive a Certificate of Appropriateness rather than treating it as general maintenance such as repainting a non-masonry building.
- The BAR has noted in several cases requesting a certificate of appropriateness to paint unpainted brick that the underlying this *Design Guidelines* principle is the belief that red brick buildings are one of the chief distinguishing characteristics of the historic district (See BAR CASE#2005-00130). The brick on the front of our home was not the iconic red brick used in older historic houses. In fact the color and texture of the brick used on the front of our home is incongruous to the iconic red brick of old town. No one would suggest that Gadbsy Tavern be painted.
- In addition, the *Design Guidelines* indicate the color of a building is, perhaps, its most dominant visual characteristic and as such can enhance or detract from its own architectural characteristics as well as neighboring structures.
- In the instant case, the façade of our home is not constructed of the red brick that the underlying principle of the *Design Guidelines* is based on. We contend that the gold colored brick used on the front façade of our home is not only unattractive but is actually out of place in the historic district, detracts from the overall architectural structure of our home and our neighborhood. As indicated above the California style gold rug face brick appears to have been a short lived fad which is not a good part of Alexandria's history. Therefore, granting an after the fact certificate of appropriateness to paint the façade of our home would not be an alteration to one of the chief distinguishing characteristics of the historic district of Alexandria, but rather would enhance the architectural style of our home and make it more compatible and consistent with the homes in our neighborhood.
- *See attached pictures below of before and after painted facade*

Zoning Ordinance Section 10-105(A)(2) - Standards

In denying our request for a certificate of appropriateness the BAR made its determination based on the following standards set forth in Zoning Ordinance Section 10-105(A)(2).

- (a) Overall architectural design, form, style and structure, including, but not limited to, the height, mass and scale of buildings or structures
 - The BAR considered the painting of the original gold rug face brick to be a significant alteration to the original design intent.
 - We contend that what makes our home unique is not the color of the brick but the two story masonry front porch style of the house and the gold brick actually was a distraction and detracted from the overall architectural style. It should be noted that

the texture of the brick can still be seen even when painted, so the original texture characteristic of the brick is still retained.

- **(b) Architectural details including, but not limited to, original materials and methods of construction, the pattern, design and style of fenestration, ornamentation, lighting, signage and like decorative or functional fixtures of buildings or structures; the degree to which the distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site (including historic materials) are retained**
 - The BAR considered the use of a specific and unusual brick contributed to the rowhouse's architectural and historic integrity.
 - We contend that the color of the brick used actually detracts from the architectural and historic integrity of our home. In addition, having our home be the only unpainted rowhouse in the original development has resulted in visually distinctive different buildings, a condition that was clearly not intended by the designer. In addition, the BAR has overlooked that the painted brick unifies and makes our home more compatible with the painted front brick facades of the two adjacent townhouses at 404 and 406 South Pitt St., which were part of the original three townhouse development. In addition, it also more compatible with the other two-story brick rowhouses between 428 and 414 Wolfe St Wolfe St. in our neighborhood.
- **(c) Design and arrangement of buildings and structures on the site; and the impact upon the historic setting, streetscape or environs**
 - The BAR indicated that inappropriate alterations have a negative impact on the subject property but also the adjacent area and the overall historic district.
 - This appears to be merely a declaration by the BAR with no underlying support as they offered no specific examples or details of how the painting of the façade actually has a negative impact.
 - We contend that the painting of our home enhances its architectural style and is more compatible with the homes in our neighborhood. In addition, it does not negatively impact the unique red brick of the historic district as the original brick is gold and not red.
- **(d) Texture, material and color, and the extent to which any new architectural features are historically appropriate to the existing structure and adjacent existing structures**
 - The BAR indicated that the uncommon yellow brick and rough texture is a signature element of our rowhouse and since it is one of very few that is not painted and raises its significance.
 - We once again contend that the BAR has overlooked that the painted brick unifies and makes our home more compatible with the painted front brick facades of the two adjacent townhouses at 404 and 406 South Pitt St., which were part of the original three townhouse development. In addition, it also more compatible with the other Wardman styles homes on between 428 and 414 Wolfe St Wolfe St. in our neighborhood that are painted. Finally, the texture of the brick can still be seen even when painted, so the

original texture characteristic of the brick is still retained and only the color is altered. For all of these reasons, the painting of the brick façade is historically appropriate.

- (e) The relation of the features in sections 10-105(A)(2)(a) through (d) to similar features of the preexisting building or structure, if any, and to buildings and structures in the immediate surroundings
 - The BAR indicated that this rowhouse was only a few that was not painted in the middle of the 20th century and has acquired significance in its own right as 90 year old building representing the evolution of Alexandria over time.
 - We find this assertion by the BAR regarding the historical significance of our home quite curious because as noted above, in its 90 year history, the exterior of our home has been significantly altered. We once again contend that what makes our home unique is the architectural style of the home (which was restored with its open one story porch a few years ago) and not the color of the brick. In fact, the short lived fad of the original gold brick has not made our home more significant but has but actually made it not compatible with the neighborhood and the overall historic district.
- (f) The extent to which the building or structure would be harmonious with or incongruous to the old and historic aspect of the George Washington Memorial Parkway
 - Not Applicable
- (g) The extent to which the building or structure will preserve or protect historic places and areas of historic interest in the city
 - The BAR indicates that although the overall townhouse form will continue to exist as a painted building it will not accurately or appropriately tell its history.
 - As indicated above, only a small portion of our home, the façade was not previously painted, so the large majority of our home is actually a painted building. We also again find the assertion by the BAR that painting the façade will not accurately tell its history considering the extensive exterior alterations that have been made to our home over its 90 year history. We once again contend that what makes our home unique and tells its history is the Wardman architectural style of the home. Therefore, the painting of the façade does not detract from its history or that of the historic district.
- (h) The extent to which the building or structure will preserve the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway
 - Not applicable
- (i) The extent to which the building or structure will promote the general welfare of the city and all citizens by the preservation and protection of historic interest in the city and the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway
 - The BAR contends that allowing inappropriate alterations done without BAR approval to remain does a disservice to the general welfare of the city and threatens to erode tourist interest and property values in Alexandria's signature neighborhood. The BAR also insinuates that we ignored the rules.

- We did not willfully and intentionally disregard the rules. As indicated above, since the Commonwealth of Virginia does not require historical preservation guidelines and restrictions to be disclosed to buyers upon the purchase of we were not aware that we were required to seek a Certificate of Appropriateness from the BAR prior to painting the unpainted masonry on the front façade of their home. In fact, we innocently assumed the front façade could be painted because the entire exterior, except for the front façade, of the home was already painted.
- The BAR has recommended that we remove the paint from the façade even though in a previous request for a certificate of appropriateness to the BAR indicated that they consider paint not to be a reversible treatment (See BAR discussion in BAR CASE#20016-0325). The BAR has also indicated in its appeal memorandum that the removal could be done “easily”.
- *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* does not recommend applying paint to historically unpainted masonry. However, it also does not recommend removing paint from historically painted masonry. It also does not recommend using methods of removing paint that are destructive to the masonry, such as, application of caustic solutions or high pressure water blasting. In addition, it does not even recommend cleaning with chemical products that will damage masonry or applying high pressure water cleaning that will damage historic masonry and the mortar joints.
- The BAR assumption that the paint can be removed easily is simply not based on facts and is rather an assertion made by the BAR in an email response. Nowhere in the quote that Vaughn Masonry provided to the BAR does it indicate the removal process would be easy. Vaughn Masonry only indicated that it was “feasible” that the paint could be removed but made no guarantee to be able to restore the brick 100% nor did it address potential damages that could result.
- Based on the sample paint removal that we had commissioned on our home, it is our understanding that although removal of the paint on the façade of our home is feasible there is actually no guarantee that the removal process will result in the restoration of the façade brick to its original condition. In fact, in order to remove the paint it will require several applications of highly toxic chemicals and the use of high pressure waterblasting. The removal process will in the best case scenario result in at least minor damage to the original brick and mortar, even with extensive encapsulation will damage the open first story porch and its original metal roof, existing vegetation and also cause damage to our neighbor’s home. Therefore, removing the paint on the façade should not be required.
- *See attached picture below of sample façade paint removal*

- (j) The extent to which such preservation and protection will promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in American culture and heritage and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live.
 - The BAR indicates that although our home itself may not attract visitors it contributes to the overall character of the historic district.
 - For all of the reasons previously stated we contend that the painting of the façade of our home enhances the Wardman architectural style of our home, makes it more compatible with the historic district and actually increases the real estate value.

CONCLUSION

For all of the reasons set forth above we respectfully request that the Alexandria City Council reverse the decision of the BAR (and the staff recommendation) denying our request for after-the-fact approval of the painting of the unpainted masonry on the façade of our home at 402 South Pitt St.

PICTURES

Original Unpainted Facade



PICTURES

Painted Façade Brick



PICTURES

Sample Paint Removal



Dorothy Robert Farley

400 South Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
dorothyfarley@comcast.net

November 14, 2017

Mayor Allison Silberberg
Members of City Council Of Alexandria, Va
Mayor's Office
301 King Street, Room 2300
Alexandria, VA. 22314

CASE. BAR. 2017-00287

Dear Mayor Silberberg, and Members of City Council,

I have been notified that the owners of 402 South Pitt Street, my next door neighbors Amy & Paul Reed, seek a Certificate of Appropriateness for the BAR to approve the house painting of their previously unpainted brick.

Please grant their appeal. The previously unpainted brick was simply not as attractive as their current treatment. The aesthetics of their current treatment render the house far more appealing both in terms of taste, house to house compatibility, and boosts the charm and elegance of our neighborhood.

As to considerations of Historic Preservation, the bones and structure of that house are sustained. Judging "the look" out of context of our neighborhood feels arbitrary and unnecessarily rigid. Many of the homes on our block are painted. Why should the Reed's be constrained from bringing improvements? I have witnessed their careful considerations and care, investing their developments with good workmanship and great taste.

I say the house is an excellent representation of the distinctive "look and feel" of Old Town. Please grant their appeal.

Warmest Regards,



Dorothy Robert Farley

409 S. Pitt St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
13 November 2017

Mayor Allison Silberberg and Members of City Council
Mayor's Office
301 King Street, Room 2300
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: Case BAR 2017-00287

Dear Mayor Silberberg and Members of City Council:

I write in support of the appeal by Amy and Paul Reed for a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior painting at 402 S. Pitt Street following the Board of Architectural Review's denial.

I live directly across the street and am very happy with the changed exterior at 402 S. Pitt. The paint is a vast improvement from the original yellow brick on the front of the house, which was an eyesore. The Reeds picked a neutral color that is both attractive and consistent with other houses on Pitt and Wolfe.

A Certificate of Appropriateness is certainly warranted. In its new incarnation, 402 improves the look of the 400 block of South Pitt. If the Reeds are forced to try to remove the paint, I hate to think what 402 might look like and how the façade might affect property values.

Even in Old Town, new sometimes is better than old. Please grant the appeal.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Marsha D. Mercer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Marsha D. Mercer

November 11, 2017

Re: BAR Case 2017-00287

Dear Mayor Silverberg and Members of City Council,

We're writing in support of maintaining the paint on the facade of 402 South Pitt Street. My wife and I live at 416 Wolfe Street - the back of our house is located at the end of the alley that runs by the entire length 402 South Pitt Street, so we see the house almost every day when we exit the alley to go running or biking or simply take out the trash. We support maintaining the paint on the facade of 402 South Pitt Street for four reasons:

- 1. The house looks much better now than it did with the unpainted brick. The entire neighborhood agrees that the paint applied to the house has improved its appearance.**
- 2. Every other house of this style has been painted, so it seems unreasonable to prohibit painting on this one. The house at 402 South Pitt Street was built at the same time and is the same style as nine other nearby townhouses - eight on Wolfe Street and two next door on South Pitt Street. Every other house in this style has been painted and painting 402 South Pitt Street increases the compatibility of this house with its neighboring houses.**
- 3. Removal of the paint would result in unacceptable environmental hazards. The house at 402 South Pitt Street is close to our house and the others on the alley that runs parallel to Wolfe Street, as well as houses on Pitt Street. Because the house at 402 South Pitt Street has a front porch and multiple surfaces, we believe that it would be difficult to encapsulate a workspace sufficiently to prevent exposure of removed paint particles if this remedy was sought. As a result, we're concerned that paint removal will result in exposure to unacceptable levels of particulates and, depending on the removal method, aerosolized chemicals, presenting a health risk to nearby residents.**
- 4. Removal of the paint would result not in the restoration of the original unpainted brick appearance but instead damaged brick surfaces. The surface of the bricks on the facades of the 10 houses on Wolfe and Pitt Streets are striated / grooved, and physical removal of the paint from these bricks will necessarily result in damaging the bricks' surface.**

We appreciate the City's consideration of our views on the paint at 402 and hope that the paint is left in place.

Sincerely,

**Kevin & Lisa Connell
416 Wolfe Street**

November 15, 2001

TO: The Honorable Mayor and Members of Council

RE: Case BAR 2017-00287

Madam Mayor and Members of Council-


We are writing to support the appeal to Council of the Board of Architectural Review's disapproval of façade painting at 402 South Pitt Street, Alexandria. As neighbors directly across the street from this property, we believe the aesthetics of the property and the neighborhood of contiguous properties have been significantly improved by the owners. Pursuing the remediation directed by the BAR- removal of the paint- will only degrade the property beyond the condition that BAR is trying to preserve.

Unlike adjoining brick properties, this home was previously unpainted, resulting in a façade of brownish yellow brick that looked entirely incongruous with the rest of the block. In its former condition, the house looked more appropriate to a commercial district than to residential use. Removing the paint, as BAR has directed, will reverse these aesthetic improvements, return architectural discord to the block, and further degrade the structure the BAR's actions are designed to protect.

As residents of the historic district, we recognize the value of historic preservation and review. In this instance we believe the property improvements made by our neighbors are consistent with those values and appropriate to the location and period of adjoining properties. We would regret a decision by the Mayor and Council to uphold the BAR's denial of a certificate of appropriateness and its proposed remediation, returning the building to a less attractive exterior, and potentially harming the property's brick and metal porch roof in the process.

Thank you for being open to these comments and concerns as you consider the merits of the case.

Sincerely,



Collin and K.C. Moller

405 South Pitt Street, Alexandria, Va. 22314

Marin T. Walsh & Melanie K. Wieland
424 Wolfe Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Board of Architectural Review (BAR)
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

September 5, 2017

Dear BAR Members:

We share an alley/driveway with Amy and Paul Reed who recently purchased the house at 402 South Pitt Street. We are delighted that they painted the ugly-looking brick on the front and side of their home. In fact, the color of the original brick was an eye sore, causing the house to stand out as a sore thumb in our Old Town neighborhood, filled with a panoply of bright, colorful painted exteriors.

They selected an excellent color (Adaptive Shade) by Sherman Williams. Their contractor did a first class painting job, which further enriched the house and our Old Town neighborhood. It's now a joy looking out our back windows to see such a colorful and classy looking brick facade.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our opinion and experience. We have lived at 424 Wolfe Street for 23 years. (since 1994). During most of this time, 402 South Pitt Street was a rental property. If truth be told, it was rundown; a disaster inside and outside. Amy and Paul are the second owners. Sharing the alley with them is a gift. They are very good neighbors.

Please feel free to contact us at 703-684-0237, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Martin T. Walsh



Melanie K. Wieland

Jeanmarie M. Tulipane
426 Wolfe Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
202-256-2852

September 4, 2017

Mr. & Mrs. Reed
402 South Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

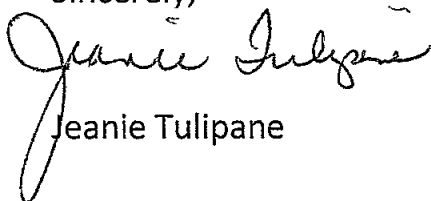
Welcome to the neighbor!

I applaud all of the improvements you have made to 402 S. Pitt Street but I understand that the BAR has concerns regarding the paint on the front exterior of your home. It is my understanding that they do not encourage painting brick that has not been previously painted.

To be honest, when the house was remodeled several years ago, I was disappointed that the contactors did not paint the front brick to match the side of brick facing my home. The front brick was a very unattractive yellow/beige color that was unlike most of our homes in this area. In addition, it was visibly jarring to have the front brick unpainted from the rest of the house.

I appreciate all that the BAR does to protect this wonderful city and I'm hoping that they will allow you to keep the color on the front of your home.

Sincerely,



Jeanie Tulipane

Cc:
Board of Architectural Review
Department of Planning and Zoning
301 King Street, Room 2100
Alexandria, VA 22314

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

703-746-3846 (direct)

From: Marsha Mercer [mailto:marsha.mercer@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, August 31, 2017 2:02 PM

To: Melissa Dunn <Melissa.Dunn@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: amymsuboyd@gmail.com

Subject: BAR Case 2017-00287 -- 402 S. Pitt St.

Hi Melissa Dunn,

I'm writing in support of the application by Amy and Paul Reed for a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior painting at 402 S. Pitt St. I live right across the street at 409 S. Pitt.

Sixteen years ago when I moved in, the house at 402 was nowhere nearly as attractive as it is now. A large tree obscured almost the entire front of the house. I was sad when it was cut down because it had hidden an old enclosure on the front porch that lacked appeal. The enclosure, fortunately, was taken off when the house was remodeled a few years ago.

The original yellow brick in front wasn't as attractive as the new neutral paint, which fits in very well with the next two painted brick houses.

I hope the board agrees that the Reeds' request for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 402 S. Pitt is well justified.

Thank you,

Marsha Mercer

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Marsha Mercer

Marsha Mercer Media, LLC

703-684-1724 or 202-834-1261

www.marshamercer.com

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Marsha Mercer

Marsha Mercer Media, LLC

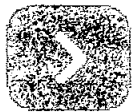
703-684-1724 or 202-834-1261

www.marshamercer.com

iMessage
Sunday 5:18 PM

Brian Klotz & David Terry
here. We own 412 Wolfe
(house under renovation).
We love the color of your
house and painting was a
good idea. Good luck on
Wednesday w your hearing.

Monday 2:18 PM



Q W E R T Y U I O P

A S D F G H J K L

7
11-18-17

Melanie K. Wieland and Martin T. Walsh

424 Wolfe Street, ALEXANDRIA, Virginia 22314

November 15, 2016

The Honorable Allison Silberberg, Mayor of Alexandria
And Members of the Alexandria City Council
301 King Street, Room 2300
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re Case: BAR 2017 00287

Dear Mayor Silberberg and Members of the City Council:

We own and reside at 424 Wolfe Street, our home since we married in 1996. Before that Marty lived in the Rosemount area of Alexandria starting in 1978. Between us, we've remodeled six homes here and in historic Falls Church. As such, we appreciate Alexandria's concern to protect the historical significance of buildings, not just compliance with building codes.

Nonetheless, in the case of BAR 2017-00287, we strongly support Mr. and Mrs. Paul Reed's appeal to the City Council to overturn the Board of Architectural Review's (BAR) decision regarding painting the front of their home at 402 South Pitt Street. We believe it should be overturned to achieve a fair, equitable and common-sense outcome that also supports our neighborhood's aesthetic and protects residents' health. Below are our reasons for supporting their appeal.

1. As Mr. and Mrs. Reed have well established, they were unaware that they needed to have BAR approval before painting the front of the house. We were equally shocked to learn that, as were seven other neighbors with whom we discussed the matter. That's because all the other homes built in the 1920's that are exactly like the Reeds home, ours included, have been painted in the front to achieve a unified, attractive look. Most, multiple times. We believe it is arbitrary and very unfair to hold the Reeds to a different standard in 2017.
2. Requiring the Reed family to remove the paint would be extremely expensive. It would require using potent, volatile chemicals that pose a risk to them and their neighbors, including the children and pets. The chemicals may also not be entirely successful, since the brick was not a smooth surface after 90 years of weathering and acid rain, and would likely destroy the brick further as well as the mortar. The public health hazards concern us a great deal since we live next door, directly across the ally. We are vulnerable because we are both extremely sensitive to chemicals that others sometimes don't notice, including a wide range of chemical cleaners. For Melanie, they trigger swollen lymph glands, sore throat and asthma reactions; for Mart, sinus congestion and pounding headaches. Moreover, there is the potential of ground and water contamination.
3. While the City has much history that should be respected, the City must take a balanced and fair approach that also considers today's environmental concerns and aesthetics. The Reed's home and others like it weren't built as upscale or unique homes. Constructed between 1924-28, they were entry-level, affordable homes marketed to blue collar and service workers and skilled craftsmen employed by the many small and mid-size manufacturers then located in the City. These small, 2-bedroom homes had front and back porches and were built with inexpensive materials.

4. **The off-yellow/tan brick in question was used only in the front.** To cut costs, the builder used cheaper, rough bricks less uniform in size and shape in a mish-mash of colors—grays to reds—in no particular pattern. Back porches were sided with sparse sheathing, tar paper and asphalt shingles. Yellow-tan brick perhaps appealed as fresh or modern in the 1920's; it fell increasingly out-of favor after WWII. Given that plus different colored and textured brick on the sides, homeowners painted the front, sides and back of their homes the same color to achieve a unified, more attractive and updated look. They also often redid back porches. Many first added aluminum siding, approved by the city; later many replaced them entirely with 2- or 3-story additions, to add bedrooms and living space. This usually required getting rid of the front porch to comply with the City's open-space policy, but it was a worthwhile trade-off to have 3-4 bedrooms instead of two.
5. We think the main reason the front of 402 S. Pitt St. was unpainted for so long is because it was a rental property whose owners felt they needed to be frugal. It was rented from at least 1992 until *Restored Properties, Inc.* bought it in 2012. (Online records stop at 1992.) We had occasional, cordial contact with the older couple renting it during that period. The first was in-person, when Melanie ran to help an elderly woman she assumed was a new renter who was struggling to carry yard debris and trash. She introduced herself as the owner along with her husband. The upshot was that she asked for our number, and later called after snowstorms to check if a contractor had shoveled the roof. In those calls, the owner fretted that the roof was weak and might cave in; she also volunteered that they couldn't afford to do more than basic maintenance because of their living and medical expenses. We had no reason to question, disbelieve or judge their choices.
6. Improving and painting the 1924-28 era homes has increased their property value, as have other changes to adapt them to modern needs. The city has benefitted with increased tax revenue to support services and infrastructure. The combined effect has been to make Alexandria a more attractive place to live and visit.

In sum, we and our neighbors applaud Mr. and Mrs. Reed's tasteful paint selection and the aesthetic improvement it brought to the neighborhood to give their home a more unified and attractive exterior. We also support them because we believe their natural instinct to have done so is no different than was any other homeowner's decision to paint their 1920's home. Forcing the removal of the paint may satisfy a narrow, academic interest of a scholar who doesn't live there. But that should not take precedence over fairness for a home that is one of many like it already long-since changed to meet the needs of today's working families.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of Mr. and Mrs. Reed's appeal.

Sincerely,



Melanie K. Wieland



Martin T. Walsh