

From: [Al Cox](#)
To: [Tal Day](#)
Cc: [Lia Niebauer](#); [Catherine Miliaras](#)
Subject: RE: BAR Docket No 2018-00486 - Dec. 5, 2018
Date: Wednesday, November 28, 2018 9:44:18 PM

Thank you, Tal. We will distribute to the BAR.

From: Tal Day <htfairfax@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 28, 2018 8:02 PM
To: Al Cox <Al.Cox@alexandriava.gov>
Cc: Barbara Day <bkfairfax@yahoo.com>; Jim Sanborn <kryptos@earthlink.net>; psolon006@gmail.com
Subject: BAR Docket No 2018-00486 - Dec. 5, 2018

Al -

I am writing specifically in support of the plan submitted by 219 Restaurant for shielding of the refuse bins at the rear of the Restaurant through construction of a sliding wooden fence. It is my understanding that comments timely directed to you will be circulated to members of the BAR in advance of the December 5, 2018, hearing.

The fence appears from the plan to emulate the style of wooden fencing in common use throughout the historic area in the mid-19th Century and probably earlier for utilitarian purposes. The fence design appears to be an appropriate height to shield the refuse bins while also enabling efficient periodic access to the bins for trash collection. When installed, the fencing at the rear of the 219 Restaurant will enhance the appeal of a historic alley that consistently attracts the attention of tourists and local photographers.

More generally, I hope that the BAR and City Planning Staff will give further thought to means to incentivize other businesses setting out trash along Ramsay Alley to shield their refuse bins as well. The design submitted should be considered as a starting point that might be adapted by other businesses setting out trash further down Ramsay Alley.

At a time when the City advertises its cobblestoned streets and alleys as tourist attractions, more can and should be done to enhance the visual appeal of the historic section of Ramsay Alley. Because of its location, Ramsay Alley is quite commonly the first of Alexandria's cobblestoned streets and alleys to come to tourists' attention.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on 219 Restaurant's submission to the BAR.

Sincerely,

TAL DAY

H. Talmage Day
htfairfax@yahoo.com



Historic Alexandria Foundation

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December 18, 2017

Board of Architectural Review, Old and Historic District
City of Alexandria

**Re: BAR Case Number 2018-00486 and 2018-00487
219 King Street**

Dear Chair Kelley and Members of the Board:

Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF) recommends that the proposal for an addition to the historic townhouse at 219 King Street that is operated as a restaurant and bar be disapproved or deferred for restudy. We concur with the staff report that the rehabilitation of the historic building that is planned as part of this project is welcome and necessary. We particularly support and endorse staff report condition #8 that the stone window sills and the cast iron stoop must be repaired and rehabilitated. Nevertheless, we find that the design of the addition does not meet the requirements for a Certificate of Appropriateness as it is not compatible with the historic building, nearby historic properties, or the surrounding streetscape.

We note that the Special Use Permit approved by the City Council in September 2018 allowing expansion of the 219 Restaurant is expressly "subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances". Accordingly, the BAR retains authority to exercise its powers and duties to apply the applicable standards and guidelines under Article X of the Zoning Ordinance to determine whether a Certificate of Appropriateness should be granted.

The proposed roof deck atop the addition is not appropriate in this location. The Design Guidelines note that the BAR has serious reservations regarding the appropriateness of roof decks on structures in the historic district and have found that roof decks may not be an aesthetic asset to a property. The Design Guidelines further state that decks should be minimally visible from a public way and roof decks should not detract from historic architecture or visually disrupt historic structures. In recent years the BAR has become more amenable to rooftop decks, but these have been mostly limited to residential properties and locations with a river view, where such uses are more traditional.

In this case, the proposed roof deck does not meet the standards set forth in the Design Guidelines. It is highly visible from a large area of King Street, including all four corners of King and Fairfax Streets – the epicenter of the tourist's introduction to Old Town. Moreover, the roof deck looms directly over the Ramsey House garden and will totally change the quality of the

viewshed of that property. The garden also is visible from the four street corners with the backdrop of the handsome dark brick wall of the west façade of 219 King. That view will be detrimentally altered, and the quality of the visitor's experience diminished by a roof deck, its tables and chairs, restaurant patrons standing next to the railing noisily drinking, smoking, etc. as the visitors sit in the garden waiting for the next tour.

We believe the current proposal should not be approved, because a rooftop deck is architecturally incompatible on the west side of the 219 building. The staff report alludes to the west side of 219 as being a secondary elevation. It is a secondary elevation of 219, but it is a primary elevation, and backdrop to the Visitor's Center and its garden.

While there are other existing roof decks nearby at the Daniel O'Connell's Restaurant on King Street and the Union Street Public House they are minimally visible from the street and should not be considered a precedent to support a roof deck in this location. The proposed rooftop deck at 6 Prince Street (Misha's coffee shop) that is currently before the BAR for approval also is designed to be less visible from the street and is in a more suitable location.

Alternative design solutions that minimize the openness and visibility of the 219 deck while preserving the prominence of the historic structure could be considered, such as stepping back the area of the rooftop used for restaurant service so that it does not directly overlook the garden and street or considering a parapet to enclose the deck. In any event, the glass panel railing is not compatible with the historic architecture and should be replaced with an alternative such as an appropriate metal railing. The restaurant should also be required to follow the standards for quality of furniture set forth in the King Street Outdoor Dining Guidelines.

Regarding the enclosure of the ground floor of the addition, we believe that the very wide entry space being enclosed by a wall of modern glass doors should be restudied. This design feature is not compatible with the adjoining historic structure and detracts from the historic character of this important and harmonious streetscape. We suggest that a solution similar to the new doors at 200 King Street (Comfort One shoe store) be considered.

We agree with the staff that the existing awning over the entrance door should be replaced but disagree that the minimalist glass canopies are appropriate. We recommend that a more historically compatible awning consistent with the Design Guidelines be required.

Finally, with regard to the windows on the west wall of the addition we concur with the statement from the Garden Club of Alexandria that a solid brick wall facing the Ramsay House garden is the preferred solution to the proposed windows that are not allowed per the building code.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

/s/

Elaine Johnston

Co-Chair, Advocacy Committee

December 13, 2018

Dear Members of the Board:

The Garden Club of Alexandria is actively involved in the long awaited renovation of the Ramsay House Visitors Center Garden. This public/private partnership has been a collaborative undertaking between The Garden Club of Alexandria and the city's Department of Parks and Recreation. For the last several years, we have worked toward the mutual goal of renovating the Ramsay House garden to welcome the thousands of visitors and residents who visit each year. With an enormous amount of planning and fundraising, we are now in the installation stage, with completion expected in Spring 2019.

The proposed expansion of 219 King Street offers several areas of concern:

The scope of the construction required to build the significantly taller wall, is likely to damage the newly planted garden during the construction process. If damage occurs, it would be important that the owners of 219 King Street enter into an agreement to reimburse The Garden Club of Alexandria for any in-kind replacement or repairs caused by the construction. It is also important to realize that the damage and resulting plant failure may not be immediately apparent. All repair work to be performed by the Garden Club's city approved providers, under contract to the Garden Club of Alexandria.

The proposed construction poses significant drainage and water run-off issues that will impact the garden. How will the run-off from the upper level awning be managed? Again, water issues and resulting damage may not be immediately apparent.

The addition of the upper level restaurant space will change the level of sunlight in the garden. The design of the garden was based on the existing conditions. Of particular concern, a large, established tree will likely be damaged by the construction and the change in daylight. Not only will the change in sunlight affect the plants, it will impact the ambiance of the garden for visitors.

The proposed, ground level windows will require cleaning and maintenance. They do not appear to meet City of Alexandria code requirements. The alternative of a solid brick wall might be the better option.

Finally, there is the issue of noise and light pollution. It was our understanding that the Visit Alexandria team envisioned the garden as a possible venue for Alexandria events. The change in use of the neighboring property will, no doubt, impact this. Is there a lighting plan to be submitted for BAR approval?

On behalf of the club members, we want to express our hope that any expansion and construction to the 219 King Street space, be thoughtful and measured to ensure the

Ramsay House Garden project succeeds in its goal of providing an inviting entry to our city for visitors and a place of respite for our residents.

Respectfully,

Virginia Rocen
Betsy Huffman
Vici Bogueess
Margaret Gardner
Ramsay House Garden Committee,
The Garden Club of Alexandria

From: [Sally Hatch](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Subject: BAR MEETING 12/19/18 219 King Street #2018-00486/00487
Date: Wednesday, December 19, 2018 9:58:01 AM

Dear BAR Members,

I was one of several people who owned 219 King St. and turned it from a residence into its first life as a restaurant in the 1970's. I continue to own 119 King Street and 214 King Street. David Rosenthal was the architect of the addition and changes to 219 King in 1978 and Bateman Construction did the work. Just so the current owners know, we discovered a stream that flowed from the high point of the property under where we ended up building the glass entryway which we used as the primary entrance to the building. That stream caused several months of construction delay.

My concerns with the new plans for the building are:

Why the outside of the building has not been well maintained for a long time.
What problems the evacuation for the new addition may cause to the Ramsey House garden.

The heavy black awning over the outside dining area (does make bad weather dining possible), but is so gloomy that it discourages people from what could be a very pleasant space, if the awning were eliminated and the garden were opened to the air with several potted plants and tables with umbrellas. As it is it also inhibits visual access to the grand entrance.

The venting of their cigar-bar does not add to that access, and that may be the main reason for the new plans with a special vent for the cigars on the roof.

The other problem with the proposed new 2nd floor outdoor dining is that it will overlook the small outdoor park of the Ramsey House, thereby limiting the the quietness and privacy of that small special public space.

The extensive and quite expensive plans do make full use of the property boundaries, but have drawbacks to the Ramsey House and it seems that for a restaurant that is seldom full, much less money could be better spent on the missing upkeep of the existing building and making the open area a very sought after outdoor dining space. But then again, the cigar bar and jazz seem to be the primary focus.

Sincerely,
Sally Hatch

Owner: 119 King Street and 214 King Street