

*******DRAFT MINUTES*******
Board of Architectural Review
Wednesday, January 22, 2020
7:00pm, Council Chambers, City Hall
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: Christine Roberts, Chair
James Spencer, Vice Chair
Lynn Neihardt
Bill Conkey

Members Absent: John Sprinkle
Purvi Irwin
Robert Adams

Staff Present: Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager
Susan Hellman, Historic Preservation Principal Planner

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Architectural Review hearing was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Sprinkle, Ms. Irwin & Mr. Adams were excused. All other members were present.

II. MINUTES

Consideration of the minutes from the **January 8, 2020** public hearing.

BOARD ACTION: Deferred

On a motion by Mr. Conkey and seconded by Ms. Neihardt, the Board of Architectural Review voted to defer approval of the minutes from the January 8, 2020 hearing until the absent BAR members could comment.

III. NEW BUSINESS

3. BAR #2019-00539 OHAD

Request for partial demolition at 809 South Lee Street

Applicants: Michael & Allyson Hazzard

The BAR combined discussion of this case with BAR2019-00538, below.

4. BAR #2019-00538 OHAD

Request for alterations at 809 South Lee Street

Applicants: Michael & Allyson Hazzard

BOARD ACTION: Approved, as Submitted, 4-0

On a motion by Ms. Neihardt and seconded by Mr. Spencer, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR #2019-00538 & BAR #2019-00539, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

None

REASON

The Board agreed with the analysis in the staff report.

SPEAKERS

Rebecca Bostick, the project architect, was available to answer any questions.

DISCUSSION

There was no discussion.

5. BAR #2019-00552 OHAD

Request for partial demolition at 802 South Lee Street

Applicant: Jason Dowling

The BAR combined discussion of this case with BAR2019-00551, below.

6. BAR #2019-00551 OHAD

Request for alterations at 802 South Lee Street

Applicant: Jason Dowling

BOARD ACTION: Approved, as Submitted, 4-0

On a motion by Mr. Spencer and seconded by Ms. Neihardt, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve BAR #2019-00551 & BAR #2019-00552, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. Prior to submitting for building permits, the applicant must submit window specifications to confirm compliance with the *Alexandria New and Replacement Window Performance Specifications in the Historic Districts*.

REASON

The Board agreed with the analysis in the staff report.

SPEAKERS

Rebecca Bostick, the project architect, was available to answer any questions.

DISCUSSION

There was no discussion.

IV. PREVIOUSLY DEFERRED BY THE BOARD

7. BAR #2019-00241 OHAD

Request for new construction at 2901 Potomac Avenue (2405, 2501, 3701 Potomac Avenue, 3251 Potomac Avenue [Parcel ID 016.04-01-01], 700 Carpenter Road, 1702 and 1880 Potomac Greens Drive)

Applicants: City of Alexandria and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

BOARD ACTION: Approved Portions, as Amended, Deferred Portions

On a motion by Mr. Conkey and seconded by Mr. Spencer, the Board of Architectural Review voted to approve portions of BAR #2019-00241, as amended, and deferred portions. The motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. Approval of the downspout details with the color of the downspouts to match the adjacent structural feature and final review of the cover plate details by staff; the Chocolate Brown Met color flat exoskeleton finish; and the guardrail and stone retaining wall, as submitted.
2. Deferral of the cast stone details and west elevation of the entrance pavilion on the west side of the tracks, the glass handrail/guardrail details in the station and exoskeleton connection details.
3. Set the cover plate at the base of the downspouts approximately 1" behind the face of the battered stone wall and provide a sloped cap extending from the top of the cover plate to the bottom of the stone coping.
4. Set the guardrail at the east curb of the access road on the east side of the station in sleeves.

REASON

The BAR agreed with the analysis in the staff report.

SPEAKERS

Daphne Kott, project engineer with DPI, introduced the case.

Stephen Lasser spoke on behalf of the applicant and responded to questions. There were no public speakers.

DISCUSSION

The BAR members agreed with the staff recommendations but added refinements to the downspout cover plate and recommended that the railing on top of the curb at the east side of the service road be installed in sleeves rather than bolted through the proposed plate into the curb, so that the bolts did not fracture the concrete.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

8. BAR #2019-00556 OHAD

Request for concept review at 912, 916 & 920 King Street

Applicant: Galena Capital Partners

SPEAKERS

Michael Winstanley, architect, presented the project and was available to answer questions.

Steve Milone, President of Old Town Civic Association and resident in 900 block Prince Street. Mr. Milone said that the civic association had not yet voted on the proposed project but that the members he spoke with agreed with the staff report. He raised some concerns about setbacks, the visibility of the west elevation and the need for additional setbacks. He suggested that the alley behind the project be replaced with cobblestones, as the east end of the alley is, when the project is completed.

Mike Gilbert, Firehouse Square owner, said that he generally supported development but that the height and mass relative to the Firehouse Square addition should be restudied so that it does not appear as tall as the historic structure. He referenced the setback from the 11980s addition on the east side of Firehouse Square. He said that he liked the architecture of the building and the blue brick but said that the building should be consistent with the Design Guidelines and the recommendation that new buildings should be background buildings that are compatible with nearby buildings of historic merit.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Spencer said that he supported the height of the project and the architectural character but said that the massing and scale needed to be restudied. He said that the wedding cake approach did not help to visually reduce the building mass and encouraged the architect to look at a vertical break and additional setbacks. He said those modifications would help to minimize the appearance of this building, which will be the largest on the block, and maintain the rhythm of the historic buildings on the King Street blockfaces.

Mr. Conkey said that he, too, had some concerns with the mass of the buildings. He said that the eight-inch setbacks were too subtle and suggested that the second and third floor be in the same plane, and questioned the need for setbacks on the south, alley façade, so that the upper floor on King Street could have a greater setback. He also said that he agreed that the building felt too horizontal and that a vertical break could help break up the long façade. Mr. Conkey said that he had no objection to the use of blue brick and encouraged the applicant to be playful with the design.

Ms. Neihardt said that she thought the building was too massive and that it should be broken down vertically. She said she understands the applicant's desire for a pedestrian alley on the east side but was not yet convinced that it will be welcoming and bright. She said that she did not like the multi-light Colonial style windows and suggested that these could be more contemporary. She recommended that the applicant work to make the building more interesting and less imposing.

Ms. Roberts said that she thought the building was too tall and reminded the Board of the potential precedent that this building could be setting. She said that the proposed density is appropriate near the Metro, but that she did not know if it was appropriate in the heart of the historic district. She said that the pedestrian alley on the east side felt too private and not inviting, in part because of the sign extending above the entrance and in part because of the width and length of the alley. She apologized to the applicant that three BAR members were absent at the hearing and encouraged them to reach out to those members individually before proceeding with design refinements. She said that she looked forward to seeing the project at another concept review.

9. BAR #2019-00557 OHAD

Request for concept review at 116 South Henry Street

Applicant: Galena Capital Partners

SPEAKERS

Michael Winstanley, architect, presented the project and was available to answer questions.

Steve Milone, President of Old Town Civic Association and resident in the 900 block of Prince Street, noted that in general the concept seemed good, but he had concerns as to the size of the proposed buildings in relation to those surrounding them, especially the parking structure. He also expressed concern with the large expanse of Dryvit on the proposed parking structure, wondering if the applicant could come up with a better-quality cladding. He endorsed staff comments regarding setbacks and projecting cornice lines.

Jason Longfellow, owner of the gallery at 111 South Patrick Street, noted that the other buildings in that block of South Patrick Street are commercial and that he would prefer that the proposed buildings north of his gallery be commercial instead of residential. He praised the height of the proposed building on South Patrick, saying that it would attract the eye of people walking on King Street. He liked that this new building would minimize the jarring look of the building at 115 South Patrick. He pointed out that the proposed development will block the existing parking access for the rear of the three extant townhouses on the west side of South Patrick Street, and thanked Omar Abdul-Baki of Galena Capital for discussing the project with him. Overall, Mr. Longfellow supported the project.

Dino Drudi, President of West Old Town Citizens Association, found the blue brick intriguing, but felt that the design would be too modern and would not harmonize with other Old Town buildings. He said that the windows on each building should get smaller as they go higher, as they do on traditional buildings.

DISCUSSION

Ms. Neihardt liked that the South Patrick Street building was broken visually into three separate buildings and asked the architect to consider recessing the center portion. She liked the garage, its signage font, and its modern look. She did not feel that the height here would present as big an issue as the height on the King Street portion of the project. Ms. Neihardt supported the height, mass, scale, and architectural character of this project.

Mr. Conkey liked the overall project and its playfulness on a block in desperate need of something to tie it together. He felt that the height would be fine, but the top floor of the South Patrick building needed some work. He discussed the pros and cons of using Dryvit synthetic stucco for the garage and noted that he understood why the architect chose that material for this application. He supported the height, mass, and fun brick detailing.

Mr. Spencer liked the project and felt that the height, mass, and scale were all good. He agreed with Mr. Conkey as far as the cornice on the South Patrick building was concerned. The cornice on South Patrick felt heavy in comparison to the one on South Henry. He liked the simplicity of the garage but expressed concern about the use of Dryvit. He requested that its appearance and scale of the monolithic wall be broken up more, with vertical lines added.

Ms. Roberts said that she is not opposed to modern design and does not want a slavish interpretation of the past, as seen in Celebration, FL and Williamsburg, VA. She appreciated the fact that the applicant intends to take a service area, improve it, and make it a destination with parking. She expressed enthusiasm for this part of the project and would like to see the applicant improve the concept for King Street. The rest of the BAR agreed – they liked the South Henry Street project and felt it only needed minor tweaks. Ms. Roberts encouraged the architect to reach out to the three BAR members not present at the hearing to get their input. The BAR chose not to endorse the project at this time and requested another presentation in response to their comments and those of the absent members.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Architectural Review hearing was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

The following projects were administratively approved since the last BAR meeting:

BAR #2019-00511

Request for window replacement at 711 South Royal Street

Applicant: Carol James

BAR #2019-00527

Request for door replacement at 1001 Cameron Street

Applicant: Derek and/ or Erin Connor

BAR #2019-00537

Request for lamp replacement at 520 Prince Street

Applicant: Patrick & Geraldine O'Connell

BAR #2019-00542

Request for window replacement at 1001 Duke Street

Applicant: Pyush Kumar

BAR #2019-00543

Request for window replacement at 609 Princess Street

Applicant: Richard Bosland

BAR #2019-00546

Request for window and door replacements at 1250 South Washington Street #814

Applicant Glenda Parker

BAR #2019-00553

Request for signage at 606 King Street

Applicant: Hang Zheng

BAR #2019-00554

Request for window replacement at 829 South Lee Street
Applicant: Karlen Murray

BAR #2019-00555
Request for deck replacement at 715 Princess Street
Applicant: Staff Restaurants, LLC

BAR #2020-00002
Request for signage at 724 Jefferson Street
Applicant: KidCreate Studio

BAR #2020-00003
Request for signage at 810 King Street
Applicant: Sephora

BAR #2020-00009
Request for vent installment at 620 South Saint Asaph Street
Applicant: Michael Miller

BAR #2020-00010
Request for siding replacement at 108 North Patrick Street
Applicant: Patricia Harris

BAR #2020-00015
Request for roof replacement at 832 South Pitt Street
Applicant: John McPherson

BAR #2020-00020
Request for fence replacement at 718 Queen Street
Applicant: Mauk Griffin