

Thomas Wise
513 ½ N Columbus St
Alexandria, VA 22314
Oct 17, 2020

Board of Architectural Review
c/o: Lia Niebauer
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Email: Lia.Niebauer@alexandriava.gov

RE: BAR Application 2020-00475

Dear Board of Architectural Review:

As the property owner immediately adjacent to the area of the proposed changes, I am the most affected property owner, other than the applicant.

I am very supportive of the proposed changes, with the exception of one small, yet critical detail that unnecessarily adversely affects the privacy of both back yards at the 515 and 513 ½ properties.

The proposed 41 SF extension of the first floor porch to provide a walkway to the back yard (shown most readily on diagrams 2.1A and 3.1A of the BAR application) is proposed to be elevated 1 ft 9 inches above grade. As this is immediately adjacent to the privacy fence separating the 515 and 513 ½ back yards, elevating the porch extension/walkway negates the function of the privacy fence. The fence is limited in height, by zoning, to 6 ft above grade, and will be just 4 ft 3 inches high above the floor of the elevated porch extension/walkway. This places the top of the privacy fence roughly at chest height to persons on the walkway, making them plainly visible from the back yard of 513 ½ and providing them with an elevated vantage point to survey the entire back yard of 513 ½.

Because there is no benefit to be gained by elevating the porch extension/ walkway, and significant downside in that it defeats the function of the privacy fence between the back yards, I suggest that the porch extension/walkway be built at grade in order to retain the functionality of the privacy fence and retain the existing privacy between the two back yards. There is no added cost, nor any downside to this proposed change, and it is indeed in the best interest of both the 515 and 513 ½ properties and the City of Alexandria.

Thank-you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Thomas Wise