

**ISSUE:** Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations

**APPLICANT:** City of Alexandria

**LOCATION:** Old and Historic Alexandria District  
105 North Union Street

**ZONE:** CD/Commercial Downtown Zone

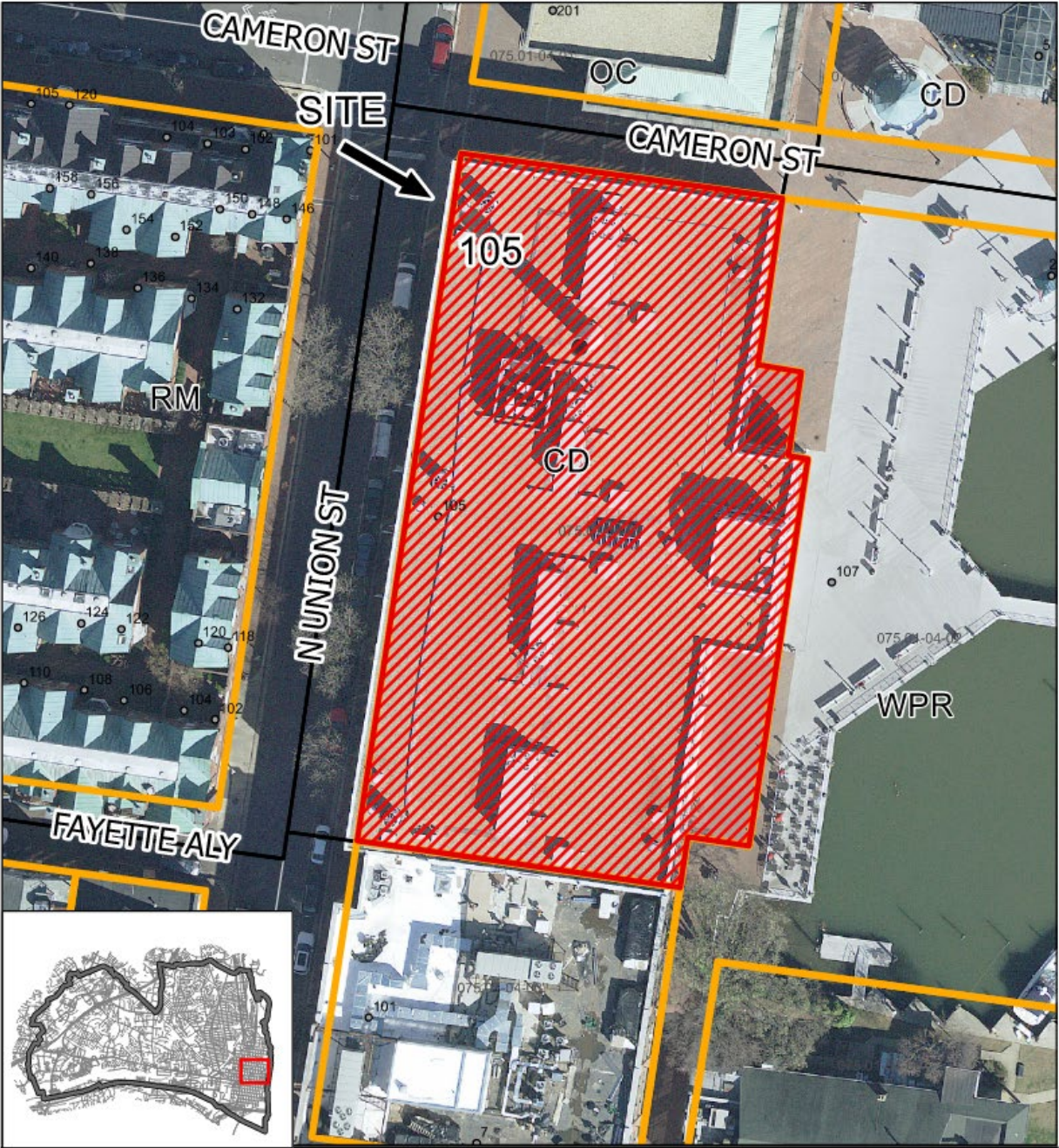
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations as submitted.

**GENERAL NOTES TO THE APPLICANT**

1. **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.
2. **COMPLIANCE WITH BAR POLICIES:** All materials must comply with the BAR's adopted policies unless otherwise specifically approved.
3. **BUILDING PERMITS:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Department of 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.
4. **ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS AND PERMITS TO DEMOLISH:** Applicants must obtain a 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](mailto:preservation@alexandriava.gov) for further information.
5. **EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B), 10-206(B) and 10-307 of the Zoning Ordinance, any 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.



**BAR #2021-00066**  
**105 North Union Street**



0 20 40 80 Feet



## I. APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The applicant requests a Certificate of Appropriateness to install three antenna/equipment screening structures on the property's rooftop, at 105 North Union Street.

### Certificate of Appropriateness

The project calls for the installation of three metal structures roughly 12' wide x 12' long x 9' high on the west side of the property's roof to screen new and existing AT&T antennas and equipment. The metal structures will be finished with ESSV fiberglass panels to be painted to match the building walls. The structures on the northwest and southwest corners of the building's roof will be visible from the right-of-way (Figures 1 and 2). The proposed structure on the middle, west side will not be visible from the right-of-way.

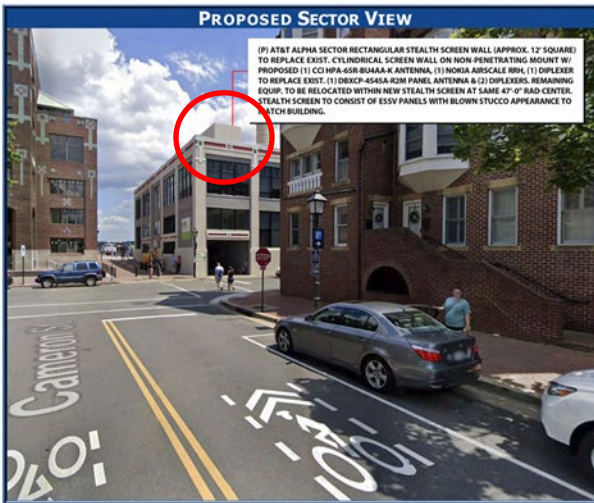


Figure 1 - Northwest corner view

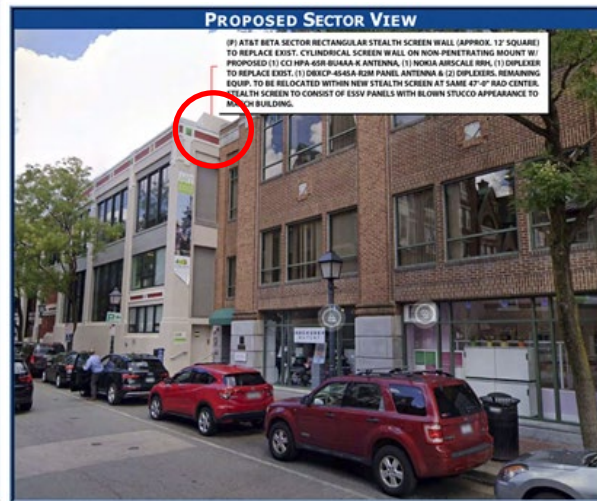


Figure 2 - Southwest corner view

### Site context

The subject property sits on the east side of the 100 block of North Union Street, between King and Cameron streets.

## II. HISTORY

Ground broke on the U.S. Naval Torpedo Station in **1918**, the day after Armistice Day ended WWI. The building opened in 1919 and the first Mark III torpedoes rolled off the assembly line in 1920. The plant was active for five years before becoming munitions storage. In WWII, it produced Mark XIV torpedoes. By the war's end, it converted to government storage for the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial Records, Smithsonian dinosaur bones, and other large objects and archives. The City of Alexandria acquired the complex in 1969, setting the stage for the Art Center that stands today.<sup>1</sup>

### Previous BAR Approvals

The Board has approved a number of projects at the Arts Center which include the following:

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.alexandriava.gov/TorpedoFactory> last accessed 3/9/21

BAR Case #1998-0011, 2/18/98 - Signage for North Elevation  
BAR Case #1995-0022, 3/1/95 - Rear Signage  
BAR Case #2002-0089, 5/15/02 – Signage  
BAR Case #2007-0280, 2/6/08 – Signage, Lighting and Awnings  
BAR Case #2010-0220, 9/1/10 – Installation of cellular antennas with canister covers, equipment cabinets and cabling.  
BAR Case #2015-00231, 8/3/15 - Signage  
BAR Case # 2018-00340, 9/5/18 – Chimney demolition  
More recently, BAR2011-00354, BAR2014-00408, and BAR2017-00256 removal and installation of antennas on the property’s rooftop

### **III. ANALYSIS**

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness**

The *Design Guidelines* state that “Respectful additions make use of the design vocabulary of the existing historic structure;” and “An addition to a historic building should be clearly distinguishable from the original structure;” and finally, “In general, the existing form of a historic building should be retained in the expression of the addition.”

Staff finds the proposed structures on the building’s rooftop compatible with the historic building in scale, mass, and materials. Staff has no objection to the proposed screening structures as they will be minimally visible from a public way and no historic fabric will be lost. In addition, the structures can be easily removed in the future if needed without damaging the historic building. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations as submitted.

#### **STAFF**

Marina Novaes, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning  
Tony LaColla, AICP, Land Use Services Division Chief, Planning & Zoning

### **IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

Legend: C- code requirement R- recommendation S- suggestion F- finding

#### **Zoning**

- F-1 Per section 6-403(B), the antennas may be erected as a part of the main building to their required height; however, per section 6-403(B)(1), they “shall be concealed by or constructed of exterior architectural materials or features of the same type of quality used on the exterior walls of the main building in question”.
  
- F-2 Per section 6-403(B)(2), “for buildings located within the Old and Historic Alexandria District... the board of architectural review may, after public hearing, waive or modify

the screening requirement of subsection (B)(1) of this section, if the board finds such requirement to be architecturally inappropriate.”

F-2 The proposed replacement antennas and screening comply with zoning.

### **Code Administration**

Code Administration has no comments

### **Transportation and Environmental Services**

R-1 The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition, if a separate demolition permit is required. (T&ES)

R-2 Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)

R-3 No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (T&ES)

F-1 Previously reviewed under BAR98-00011; BAR2002-00089; BAR2002-00176; BAR2007-00280; BAR2010-00220; BAR2011-00108; BAR2011-00354; BAR2014-00408; BAR2017-00256. (T&ES)

F-2 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)

F-3 Floodplain has no comments.

F-4 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)

C-1 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)

C-2 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)

C-3 Roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. Where storm sewer is not available applicant

must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation & Environmental Services. (Sec.5-6-224) (T&ES)

- C-4 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3) (T&ES)
- C-5 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-2) (T&ES)
- C-6 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)

**Alexandria Archaeology**

- F-1 Archaeological oversight will not be necessary for this undertaking.

**V. ATTACHMENTS**

- 1 – Application Materials*
- 2 – Supplemental Materials*