

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: AUGUST 31, 2020

TO: GLORIA SITTON, CITY CLERK
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK AND CLERK OF COUNCIL

THRU: KARL W. MORITZ, DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

FROM: MS. CHRISTINE ROBERTS, CHAIR
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW (BAR)

SUBJECT: FY 2020 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL
REVIEW (BAR)

I am pleased to present this Annual Report for the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) for Fiscal Year 2020, extending from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020, as required by City Code Section 2-4-7(i)(1). The attached record of membership and attendance shows that all members attended more than 75% of the meetings, or had an excused absence in advance, as required.

BAR Membership and Attendance

There were changes in the membership of the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) for FY 2020. William Conkey resigned from the BAR effective February 20, 2020 to take on employment with the City of Alexandria. Mr. Conkey served on the Parker-Gray District Board of Architectural Review (PG BAR) from March 2008 through June 2018, and then on the newly consolidated Board of Architectural Review (BAR) from March 2019 until his resignation. He attended his last BAR Public Hearing on February 19, 2020 as a Board Member. Following Mr. Conkey's resignation, on March 10, 2020, the City Council appointed Christine Sennott as the Parker-Gray District representative to the Board of Architectural Review. Ms. Sennott took the Oath of Office on March 16, 2020 and attended her first BAR Public Hearing on March 18, 2020. On June 10, 2020, City Council reappointed both Lynn Neihardt and Robert Adams for another one-year term. Currently, there is no vacancy on the BAR.

At its February 19, 2020 BAR Public Hearing, Chair Roberts appointed John Sprinkle to replace Bill Conkey on the Design Guidelines Committee and Al Cox as an Ex Officio member of the committee.

BAR held twenty public hearings in FY 2020. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic emergency, the last four (April 22, May 6, June 3, and June 17, 2020) of the twenty public hearings were held electronically with BAR board members and staff participating from remote locations through Zoom Webinar. The virtual public hearings were held pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3708.2(A)(3), the Continuity of Government ordinance adopted by the City Council on June 20, 2020 or Sections 4-0.00(g) in HB29 and HB30 to undertake essential business. The meetings were accessed by the public through Zoom, broadcasted live feed on AlexTV (Comcast Channel 70), and streamed on the City’s website. Public comments were received at the meetings. The video and audio recordings were made available one day after each meeting. The April 1 and May 20, 2020 hearings were canceled due to Covid-19.

The membership and attendance report for the Board of Architecture Review (BAR) is included in Attachment 1.

Regulatory Activities

FY 2020 - Approvals		FY 2019 - Approvals	
BAR (Consolidated Board)	131	OHAD BAR	142
<i>OHAD</i>	<i>110</i>	PG BAR	12
<i>Parker-Gray</i>	<i>20</i>	BAR (Consolidated Board)	50
<i>100-Year-Old Building</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>OHAD</i>	<i>45</i>
		<i>Parker-Gray</i>	<i>5</i>
		100-Year-Old Building	0
Administrative	328	Administrative	368
<i>OHAD</i>	<i>284</i>	<i>OHAD</i>	<i>323</i>
<i>Parker-Gray</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>Parker-Gray</i>	<i>45</i>
Total Cases	459	Total Cases	572

FY 2019 provided for comparison

In 2019, City Council voted to dissolve the Old and Historic Alexandria District Board of Architectural Review (OHAD BAR) and Parker-Gray District Board of Architectural Review (PG BAR) and appointed a new consolidated Board of Architectural Review (BAR) to serve both districts. From 2019 to 2020, the number of OHAD cases and the number of Parker-Gray cases remains comparable from year to year. The number of OHAD approvals went down from 187 to 110, a 41% decrease, while the number of Parker-Gray approvals went up from 17 to 20, which is an 18% increase. Cumulatively, BAR approvals went down from 204 to 131, a 36% decrease. Administrative approvals went down from 368 to 328, an 11% decrease. The bulk of that decrease was from OHAD (Administrative) which went down by 39 while Parker-Gray (Administrative) only went down by one. The total overall approvals went down from 572 to 459, a 20% decrease. The overall decrease can be attributed to Covid-19. Consequently, April 1 and May 20, 2020 hearings were canceled due to Covid-19.

Examples of public hearing cases are highlighted below:

(1) Examples of Concept Reviews:

On June 3, 2020, The BAR unanimously endorsed a new construction project at 912 – 920 King Street, BAR #2019-00556, and a related project at 116 South Henry Street, BAR #2019-00557. Both projects will be constructed on previously City-owned surplus parking lots. The building proposed on King Street will have four stories with retail and live/work on the ground floor and residential units on the floors above. The South Henry Street project will consist of a mixed-use development with three townhouse style condominiums, a four-story mixed-use building with residential and commercial uses, and a six-story automated parking structure. The Board endorsed the height, scale, mass, and architectural character of each project.

(2) Examples of Certificates of Appropriateness/Permits to Demolish:

A sample of the projects approved by the BAR in FY 2020 includes new construction of the Potomac Yard Metro station (BAR #2019-00241); the restoration, innovative flood mitigation, and adaptive re-use of the warehouse at 10 Duke Street (BAR #2019-00216 and BAR #2019-00217); Robinson Landing blanket approval for awnings (BAR #2019-00385); the construction of two semi-detached townhomes at 601& 603 North Alfred Street (BAR #2019-00422 and BAR #2019-00423); the construction of a new dwelling at 1417 Princess Street (BAR #2019-00528); the conversion of the upper floors of 128 North Pitt Street to residential with a new roof deck (BAR #2020-00006 and BAR #2020-00007); the addition of a new roof deck and updated entrances at the Atrium at 277 South Washington Street (BAR #2020-00148 and BAR #2020-00139); the residential conversion of the office buildings at 625 & 635 Slaters Lane (BAR #2020-00194 and BAR #2020-00195). Additionally, Certificates of Occupancy for the new development at 211/225 Strand (BAR #2019-0376) received final approval in April, 2020.

(3) Appeals to City Council:

In FY 2020 there were no appeals to City Council.

Work Sessions/Training

Staff provided an informational update on the OHAD Architectural Survey & Sidewalk Material Survey as well as an informational update on the status of the Parker-Gray Design Guidelines update at the July 24, 2019 hearing.

On February 5, 2020, staff reviewed the districts' window policies with the Board, and suggested potential future updates.

On March 18, 2020, the BAR received information regarding the Electronic Participation Policy for BAR Hearings and discussed the Small Cell Policy.

Based on the discussion of the Small Cell Policy at the March 18, 2020 hearing, the Board amended the Policy at the April 22, 2020 hearing.

Outreach

Due to restrictions on public gatherings relating to the coronavirus pandemic, the City of Alexandria cancelled the planned Preservation Month public events, including a conference relating to the Ramsey Homes. The Board therefore did not have the opportunity to engage in public outreach in FY2020.

Review of National Register Nominations and Section 106 Reviews

BAR staff submitted a National Register Nomination for the George Washington Middle School. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources will vote on the application in September of 2020.

Staff is working to update the Town of Potomac Historic District National Register listing, considering an expanded period of significance and determining the contributing/non-contributing status of every building in the historic district.

BAR staff has performed 23 Section 106 reviews in FY 2020, primarily for cell antennas but also for the Washington-Bostetter Courthouse at 200 South Washington Street, the Waypoint at Fairlington development at 3846 King Street, and the Aspire development at 1112 First Street.

Goals for the Coming Year

In the coming year, BAR will continue to focus on reviewing and approving updated design guidelines, consistent with recently updated policies. The pandemic stalled this FY 2020 goal.

Staff has secured a Certified Local Government grant from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to host a National Alliance of Preservation Commission (NAPC) Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program (CAMP). This Board-focused one-day intensive training will take place at The Lyceum in May of 2021.

Due to the pandemic, Phase III of the OHAD digital survey has been delayed. The survey will resume as soon as possible. In a related project, Information Technology Services staff has loaded the alley survey into the City's GIS system, but is waiting for the alley working group to make final edits before making the map available to the public.

Milestone

On February 19, 2020, the Board issued a Statement of Recognition of William "Al" Cox, who retired from his position of Historic Preservation Manager after 29 number of years working for the City of Alexandria. The proclamation praised Mr. Cox for his exceptional service to the City and his indelible role in making Alexandria a great place to live, work, learn, play, and shop for all Alexandrians and our visitors.

ATTACHMENT 1

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
MEETING ATTENDANCE REPORT**

JULY 1, 2019 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2020

COMMISSION: Board of Architectural Review (BAR)

CHAIRPERSON: Christine Roberts

Board Member	2019												2020													
	July		Aug	Sept		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		June				
	10	24		4	18	2	16	6	20	4	18	8	22	5	19	4	18	1	22	6	20	3	17			
Christine Roberts (Chair)	X	X	Recessed	X	X	E	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	E	X	X	E	Canceled	X	X	Canceled	X	X			
James Spencer (Vice Chair)	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	E	X	X		E	X		X	X	X	X	X
Robert Adams	X	X		X	X	E	X	X	X	E	X	X	E	X	X	X	E		E	X		U	X	X	X	X
Purvi Irwin	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	E	X	X	X	E	X	E	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Lynn Neihardt	X	X		X	E	X	X	X	X	E	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	E		X	X	X	X	X
William Conkey	X	X		X	E	X	X	X	X	X	E	X	X	X	X	X	n/a		n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Christine Sennott	n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
John Sprinkle	X	E		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	E	E	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X

INDICATE: X - FOR PRESENT E - FOR EXCUSED U – FOR UNEXCUSED

Notes:

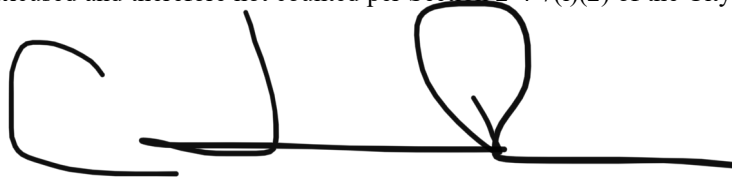
1. The BAR was in recess during August.
2. April 1 and May 20, 2020 hearings were canceled due to Covid-19.
3. April 22, May 6, June 3, and June 17, 2020 hearings were Virtual Hearings.
4. William Conkey resigned from the BAR effective February 20, 2020.
5. On March 10, 2020, City Council appointed Christine Sennott as the Parker-Gray District representative to the Board of Architectural Review. Ms. Sennott took the Oath of Office on March 16, 2020.

LIST OF THOSE WHO DID NOT ATTEND 75% OF MEETINGS:

N/A**

** All absences were excused and therefore not counted per Section 2-4-7(i)(2) of the City of Alexandria’s Charter and Code.

APPROVED:



Christine Roberts, Chair