

Docket Item #6
BAR CASE #2005-0255

BAR Meeting
April 5, 2006

ISSUE: Permit to Demolish and Capsulate

APPLICANT: Lee Carosi

LOCATION: 519 South Lee Street

ZONE: RM Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the permit to demolish.

Note: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

BOARD ACTION, FEBRUARY 1, 2006: The Board combined the discussion of docket item #'s 4 & 5. On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Ms. Neihardt, the Board deferred the application for restudy. The motion passed on a vote of 4-3 (Dr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Wheeler and Ms. Quill were opposed).

REASON: The Board continued to express its concerned about the proposed scale and mass of the new addition and its impact on the historic property. The Board encouraged the applicant to listen to the Board's concerns and the concerns voiced by the public.

SPEAKERS: Brendan Dunn, property owner, spoke in support
Dale Overmeyer, project architect, spoke in support.
Tim Elliott, representing Old Town Civic Association, spoke in opposition
Lawrence O'Connor, representing Historic Alexandria Foundation, spoke in opposition
Fred Parsons, 521 South Lee Street, spoke in opposition
Tara Carter, 207 Wilkes Street, spoke in support
John Groupe, 424 South Lee Street, spoke in support
Jon Wilbor, 310 South Lee Street, spoke in opposition
Twig Murray, 513 South Lee Street, spoke in opposition

BOARD ACTION, JANUARY 18, 2005: The Board combined the discussion of docket item #'s 3 & 4. On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Ms. Neihardt, the Board deferred the application for restudy. The motion passed on a vote of 4-3.

REASON: The Board was concerned about the proposed scale and mass of the new addition and its impact on the historic property. The Board encouraged the applicant to listen to the Board's concerns and the concerns voiced by the public.

SPEAKER: Dale Overmeyer, project architect, spoke in support.
Brendan Dunn, property owner, spoke in support.
Lee Carosi Dunn, property owner, spoke in support.
Harry Mahon, 513 S. Lee Street, spoke in opposition.
Lawrence O'Connor, representing Historic Alexandria Foundation, spoke in opposition.
Michael Hobbs, representing Old Town Civic Association, spoke in opposition.
Tom Brosnan, 509 S. Lee Street, spoke in support.
Stuart Dunn, 418 S. Lee Street, spoke in opposition.
Frederick Parsons, 521 S. Lee Street, spoke in opposition.

BOARD ACTION, NOVEMBER 16, 2005: The Board combined the discussion of docket item #'s 9 & 10. On a motion by Mr. Keleher, seconded by Mr. Smeallie, the Board deferred the application for restudy. The motion passed on a vote of 6-0.

REASON: The Board was concerned about the proposed scale and mass of the new addition and its impact on the historic property.

SPEAKER: Dale Overmeyer, project architect, spoke in support.
Brendan Dunn, property owner, spoke in support.
Harry Mahon, 513 S. Lee Street, spoke in opposition.
Lawrence O'Connor, representing Historic Alexandria Foundation, spoke in opposition.

(Insert sketch here)

Update: There have been no significant changes in the extent of the demolition/capsulation application and Staff here repeats the Staff reports from November 16, 2005, January 18, 2006, and February 1, 2006.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish and Capsulate portions of the rear elevation of the two-story frame building located at 519 South Lee Street in order to construct a two-story rear addition and add an additional story to the existing side brick porch. The existing bay window on the first floor and the two, six-over-six windows on the second floor of the rear (west) elevation will be removed. Several side windows at the second level, off the rear will also be removed. The new addition will capsulate the almost full width of the rear at the first and second stories, an area of approximately 480 square feet.

The rear of the house is partially visible from Gibbon Street.



Figure 1: Existing front view



Figure 2: Existing rear view

II. HISTORY:

According to Ethelyn Cox's *Historic Alexandria, Street by Street, A Survey of Existing Early Buildings*, the two-story frame house was constructed before 1803 by Alexander Veitch (p.93). In 1942, J.D. Mathew, owner and architect, applied for a building permit to renovate the frame house and add a brick chimney, porch, and kitchen addition. The permit and accompanying plans suggest that the windows and window trim were replaced at that time (Building Permit #4636, 7/8/1942).

The Sanborn maps show a one-story rear addition on the 1921 map; however, the 1941 map shows the addition as two-stories.

The current owner came before the BAR in September 24, 2004, and received approval to replace windows on the front and side elevations with true divided light wood windows (BAR Case #2004-131).

III. ANALYSIS:

In considering a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, §10-105(B):

- (1) Is the building or structure of such architectural or historical interest that its moving, removing, capsulating or razing would be to the detriment of the public interest?
- (2) Is the building or structure of such interest that it could be made into a historic house?
- (3) Is the building or structure of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty?
- (4) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway?
- (5) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the city?
- (6) Would retention of the building or structure promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in American culture and heritage, and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live?

In Staff's opinion, none of the above criteria are met. The demolition/capsulation will occur on the rear facade of this early 19th-century semi-detached house. However, the Board has approved similar demolitions and capsulations at the rear of turn-of-the century structures to allow for additions. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the permit to demolish.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Enforcement that will outline the steps that will taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-2 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-3 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-4 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully detail the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-7 Permission from adjacent property owners is required if access to the adjacent properties is required to complete the proposed construction. Otherwise, a plan shall be submitted to demonstrate the construction techniques utilized to keep construction solely on the referenced property.
- C-8 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.
- C-9 All exterior walls within 5 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides of the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance. Openings in exterior walls between 3 and 5 feet shall not exceed 25% of the area of the entire wall surface (This shall include bay windows). Openings shall not be permitted in exterior walls within 3 feet of an interior lot line.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

Area and volume have been reduced to meet the concerns of the Board but the placement of the dormer windows in the new proposal is awkward.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 According to Ethelyn Cox's *Historic Alexandria, Street by Street, A Survey of Existing Early Buildings*, the house on this lot was probably constructed by Alexander Veitch prior to his selling it to George Noble Lyles in 1803. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into residential life in Alexandria during the early nineteenth century.
- R-1 Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
- R-2 The above statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including sheeting and shoring and grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.