

Docket Item #6  
BAR Case #2003-0143

BAR Meeting  
September 17, 2003

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish and Capsulate

**APPLICANT:** Saskia Van Groningen

**LOCATION:** 417 Queen Street

**ZONE:** RM/Residential

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**BOARD ACTION, JULY 16, 2003:** The Board combined the discussion of docket item # s 18 & 19. On a motion by Mr Wheeler, seconded by Ms. Quill the Board deferred the application for restudy. The vote on the motion was 5-0.

**REASON:** The Board believed that the dormers were out of scale and that they should be no more than 75% - 80% of the size depicted in the drawing and that the dormers should not be covered in asphalt shingles, but rather should be the same material as the roof itself.

**SPEAKERS:** Saskia Van Groningen, project architect, spoke in support  
Philip Madison, neighbor, spoke in opposition

There have been no changes to the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate since the public hearing of July 16, 2003 and Staff here repeats that Staff report.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant s Description of the Undertaking:

Install two dormers on the rear of the property.

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate for the demolition of the two sections (each approximately 12' long by 4' wide) of the rear slope of the gable roof on the two story frame house at 417 Queen Street for the installation of dormers.

The rear of the house is visible from the public alley behind the property.

History and Analysis:

The main block of the two-story, frame house at 417 Queen Street was constructed prior to 1877 and probably in the 1860s or 1870s. A one-story ell was added between 1877 and 1885. A second-story bathroom was added atop the ell in 1937. 417 Queen Street is the middle of three similar townhouses (415-419 Queen Street) which were constructed as a unit with a common attic. On January 6, 1999, the Board approved a rear addition and alterations for the house at 417 Queen Street (BAR Case #s 98-0177 & 0178). The addition has not been constructed.

In considering a Permit to Demolish, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, Sec. 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 the opinion of Staff, none of the conditions are met. The capsulation will be confined to the rear slope of the roof of the house. More extensive demolition/capsulation, including demolition for rear dormers, was previously approved for 417 Queen Street by the Board in 1999 (BAR Case #98-0177, 1/6/1999). Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the permit as submitted.

## CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

### Code Enforcement:

- C-1 All exterior walls within 3 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides, with no openings permitted within the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. Skylights are not permitted within 4 feet of the property line.
- C-2 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 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.

### Office of Historic Alexandria:

No comment