

Docket Item #9
BAR CASE #2003-0048

BAR Meeting
November 5, 2003

ISSUE: Permit to Demolish/Capsulate

APPLICANT: Warren L. Almquist

LOCATION: 1401 Duke Street

ZONE: CD/Commercial

BOARD ACTION, OCTOBER 15, 2003: On a motion by Dr. Fitzgerald, seconded by Mr. Smeallie the Board deferred the application for restudy. The vote on the motion was 6-0.

REASON: The Board agreed with the Staff analysis that there were alternative locations within the building for the location of an accessibility entrance. Additionally, the Board believed that a shelter in place option should be explored for emergency situations.

SPEAKERS: Warren Almquist, project architect, spoke in support
Herbert Spears, Chair, Building Committee, spoke in support

BOARD ACTION, SEPTEMBER 3, 2003: On a motion by Dr. Fitzgerald, seconded by Ms. Neihardt the Board deferred the application for restudy. The vote on the motion was 5-0.

REASON: The Board believed that the east elevation of the church building had never been altered and was an intact section of the building dating from 1891. The Board believed that there were alternative locations to achieve accessibility to the basement level of the church without penetrating the east elevation of the building. The Board said that an alternative solution for accessibility was needed.

SPEAKER: Warren Almquist, project architect, spoke in support

BOARD ACTION, JUNE 18, 2003: The Board combined discussion of docket item # s 6 & 7. On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Dr. Fitzgerald the Board:

1. Approved the demolition along the north and west sides of the building;
2. Approved the alterations to the north and to the west sides of the building;
3. Deferred for restudy the proposed demolition and changes to the east facade;
4. Deferred for restudy appropriate new pedestrian access doors and that they be wood;
5. Staff to approve appropriate columns for the building which reflect the Gothic Revival style of the building;

6. Contact Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks prior to any ground disturbing activity (such as coring, grading, filling, vegetation removal, undergrounding utilities, pile driving, landscaping and other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of The Zoning Ordinance) on this property. City archaeologists will provide on-site inspections to record significant finds;
7. 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; and,
8. The above statements in R-1 and R-2 must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.

The roll call vote on the motion was 4-0.

REASON: The Board agreed with Staff that the design of the new doors was inappropriate and should reflect the Gothic Revival style of the building. In addition, the Board believed that the columns supporting the portico should also reflect the architectural style of the building. Finally, the Board believed that the conversion of a window to a door on the east side of the building was inappropriate because this was an otherwise pristine elevation without any other changes. Mr. Almquist explained that the door was for egress from the basement, but that it was not required by the building code, but was rather desirable from the perspective of the use of the room by the church.

SPEAKER: Warren Almquist, project architect, spoke in support

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends denial of the application.

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

Update:

The applicant has made no changes to the proposed design and is requesting permission to demolish a window opening and associated surround for the installation of a new doorway on the east elevation (South West Street side) of the church. At the public hearing, of June 18, 2003, the Board approved the demolition proposal on the north side of the building facing the parking lot.

DISCUSSION:

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish and Capsulate portion of the Shiloh Baptist Church at 1401 Duke Street. The portions to be capsulated and demolished are described in the applicant's request.

History and Analysis:

1401 Duke Street is the Shiloh Baptist Church. It is two and a half story brick Gothic Revival style building constructed in 1891 by William Vincent, an Alexandria builder, according to Penny Morrill in *Who Built Alexandria?* (pp.36-37).

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, Criteria # s 1, 3, 5 & 6 are met in this case. The east side of the church has not been altered since the building was constructed, thus presenting an intact historic

elevation. Staff also notes the concerns of the Board regarding the demolition of this area of the building that were expressed when this application was last heard by the Board on October 15, 2003. Staff, therefore, recommends denial of the proposal to demolish a portion of the east elevation. At that public hearing, the Board noted several other areas of the church that could provide an area for an accessible entrance without altering the east elevation of the building.

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.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.