

Docket Item #19
BAR Case #2003-0250

BAR Meeting
November 5, 2003

ISSUE: Demolition/capsulation

APPLICANT: R. B. Adams

LOCATION: 820 Duke Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate as submitted.

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant s Description of the Undertaking:

Request approval for 2 story rear addition, partial demolition of existing rear to allow for addition, 2 AC condensers on roof without screening.

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate to remove the existing two story rearmost addition. This addition has a footprint of approximately 8.5' by 9.5' and is attached to an earlier rear ell. The proposed new addition will capsulate the rear wall of the remaining rear ell to the same extent that the addition to be removed now does. The proposed project also includes several minor alterations to existing openings which entail removing or infilling portions of exterior walls. These include extending an existing window opening on the rear (south) elevation of the main block on the first story to become a door opening, infilling the existing first story door and window openings on the east elevation of the rear ell and inserting a new window opening in the center of that same wall.

The rear of the house at 820 Duke Street is visible from the alley at the back of the property.

History and Analysis:

820 Duke Street is a two story two bay frame freestanding residential townhouse dating from ca. 1860 according to the historic district survey information. Historic map research indicates that by 1902 the house consisted of a two story main block with two story rear ell and a small one story addition beyond that. However, building permits suggest that the two story flounder form rear ell was reconstructed in 1939 as part of a larger renovation project (Permit #3000, 5/15/1939). The rearmost addition appears to date to 1957 (Permit #13766, 12/9/1957) and was approved by the Board.

The Board approved a number of minor alterations to the house at 820 Duke Street more recently. In 1998, the Board approved raising the roof of the main block in the rear and installing three windows to allow the attic story to be inhabited (BAR Case #98-0097, 7/15/1998). In 1999 the Board approved two new windows on the rear addition (BAR Case #99-0174, 10/6/1999). In 2000, the Board approved a skylight on the rear slope of the main block (BAR Case #2000-0108, 6/7/2000).

In considering a Permit to Demolish and/or Capsulate, 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, the proposed demolition of the rear addition and capsulation of the rear wall of the two story ell does not meet any of the above criteria. The rear addition appears to date to 1957 and has no particular architectural or historical significance. The two story rear ell appears to date to 1939 and will be capsulated only where it has already been capsulated. The project will not result in an increase in the extent of capsulation. The alterations to openings proposed for the rear (south) elevation of the main block and east elevation of the rear ell are minor in scope. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate as submitted.

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 be taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.

Alexandria Archeology:

F-1 This property is part of an early 19th -century Free Black neighborhood. Therefore it has the potential to yield archaeological resources which could provide insight into residential life in 19th -century Alexandria.

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 the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.