

Docket Item #7
BAR Case #2003-0270

BAR Meeting
December 17, 2003

ISSUE: Demolition and capsulation of portions of existing building

APPLICANT: Mr. and Mrs. Brian Smith

LOCATION: 305 Charles Alexander Court

ZONE: R-12 Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of a Permit to Demolish and Capsulate.

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant s Description of the Undertaking:

Construct brick addition, extending 8'-1" from the front (East) wall of existing kitchen wing. Brick coursing, paint, details to match existing. New windows will be true divided light with sill to match existing. Roofing is to be Buckingham slate, to match existing.

Issue:

The applicant is requesting re-approval of a Permit to Demolish the front wall of an existing one story wing in order to expand the kitchen. The addition will also encapsulate the side wall of an adjacent frame section.

History and Analysis:

305 Charles Alexander Court is an individually designated 100-year old building that was formerly located at 2404 Russell Road. The address was changed when a new subdivision was constructed on the grounds of property, once known as Mt. Ida. The imposing brick residence at 305 Charles Alexander Court was purportedly built circa 1803 and is said to have been the ancestral home of the Charles Alexander and John J. Lloyd families - both prominently associated with the history of Alexandria in the 19th century. (North Ridge Lore, p. 21) The original Federal period house underwent a series of renovations and additions in the 20th century, resulting in its present eclectic Colonial Revival style appearance. Several years ago, Staff had an opportunity to investigate the house and found little evidence of the original structure.

In 2002, the Board approved an addition (BAR Case #2002-0087/88, 6/5/02) The Permit to Demolish and the Certificate of Appropriateness expired because construction has not commenced within the 12 month period. Therefore, the applicant is seeking re-approval of the proposed addition

In 1999, the Board approved repairs and alterations to the front porch and steps (BAR Case #99-0061, 5/19/99). Prior to that, on February 15, 1995, the Board approved partial demolition and capsulation of a rear addition for the installation of French doors (BAR Case #95-26, 2/15/95).

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 criteria for demolition are met in this case and the Permit to Demolish and Capsulate should be issued. The existing one story kitchen wing is believed to be a 20th century addition and is of no particular architectural or historic significance. While the addition will be visible from the public right-of-way, it will not be particularly noticeable on the already busy facade and will not detract from the visual character of the original house.

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.
- C-2 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-3 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 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-6 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.

Alexandria Archeology:

- F-1 This early nineteenth-century residence is historically significant to the North Ridge community and Alexandria. The lot therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources which could provide insight into nineteenth-century domestic life.
- R-1 Contact Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks prior to any ground disturbing activity (such as coring, vegetation removal, trenching for utilities or other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of the Zoning Ordinance) on this property. City archaeologists will provide on-site inspections to record any finds.
- R-2 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-3 Both of the above statements (R-1 and R-2) must appear in the General Notes of all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.