

Docket Item #9
BAR Case #2004-0011

BAR Meeting
February 18, 2004

ISSUE: Permit to Demolish/Capsulate

APPLICANT: Ann Louise Mapes

LOCATION: 8 Potomac Court

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:

“Add new dormer to front of existing gable roof & add new window on south elevation at attic.”

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish a section of the front slope of the gable roof, approximately 12' wide by 15' long for a dormer addition. In addition, the applicant proposes to remove a small circular window in the peak of the gable on the south side of the house at the attic or fourth story. A new larger window is proposed for the same general location. The new window opening will be approximately 3' wide by 4' long.

The front, where the dormer is proposed, is visible from Potomac Court. The south side of the house, where the new window is proposed, is visible from Windmill Hill Park and South Union Street.

History and Analysis:

8 Potomac Court is a three story brick end unit rowhouse dating from 1967. The Board approved the development of six attached and semi-attached townhouses on Potomac Court on June 8, 1966. In 1999, the Board approved demolition, alterations and the addition of a three story bay on south side of 8 Potomac Court (BAR Case #99-0216 & 0217, 12/5/1999). More recently, in 2001, the Board approved fences, a gate and pergola at 8 Potomac Court (BAR Case #2001-250, 11/7/2001). The Board also approved demolition and the addition of a rear dormer next door, at 9 Potomac Court (BAR Case #2002-222 & 223, 9/4/2002).

The proposed alterations and dormer comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

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 does not meet the above criteria and is acceptable. The house dates to the mid 20th century and the Board has previously approved similar demolition for the installation of dormers in other houses the same development as well as extensive demolition at 8 Potomac Court for the three story bay on the south side of the house.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Construction type for this property is 5B and is limited to 3 stories of habitable space. City records do not reflect an approved, habitable space in the attic which is located above the height threshold for occupied spaces within this construction type. The proposed project creates a habitable space above the 3 story limit which is not permitted under code. This proposal will require the applicant to install an automatic fire suppression system and other fire protection features. It is recommended that the applicant arrange a meeting with Code Enforcement to address construction and fire protection issues as soon as possible.

- F-2 The property owner shall obtain a design professional to conduct a building code analysis in order to submit a proposal of building modifications in order to obtain a change of construction type from 5B to 3B.

- C-1 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

- C-2 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

- C-3 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.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.