

Docket Item #25
BAR CASE #2004-0051

BAR Meeting
April 7, 2004

ISSUE: Demolition/capsulation
APPLICANT: Stephen & Jasmine Milone
LOCATION: 907 Prince Street
ZONE: CL/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

NOTE: This item requires a roll call vote.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant's Description of the Undertaking:

“Demolish rear two-story frame addition, constructed in phases from approximately 1910-1920. Of poor initial quality is seriously deteriorated due to rot and termite damage. Reconstructed two-story frame addition of same envelope- no change in FAR.”

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish and Capsulate to remove the existing two story frame addition at the rear of the three and two story brick house in order to construct a new two story frame addition on the same footprint. The addition to be removed is 17.3' wide, 7.5' deep and approximately 22' high. It has a flat roof and is clad in vinyl siding. It has what appear to be modern replacement windows and no architectural detailing. The 17.3' wide by 22' high area at the rear brick wall of the house which is to be capsulated by the new addition is the same as that currently capsulated. There will some demolition of the rear brick wall to facilitate the interior plan, but as this wall is already capsulated, this demolition is outside the purview of the Board.

The rear of the house at 907 Prince Street is visible from the public alley at the rear and from the Prince Street along the west side of the property.

History and Analysis:

The house at 907 Prince Street was constructed between 1896 and 1902. The 1902 Sanborn map shows the three story brick house with its long two story brick ell and a two story frame addition of approximately the same size as the current addition at the rear. According to the applicant, the house has been used as an office and a multi-family dwelling. Over the years a number of alterations have been made to the interior. However, with the exception of the rear frame addition, the exterior retains a high level of integrity. The front facade of the late Victorian period rowhouse exhibits Romanesque Revival influence in its use of arched opening and Roman brick. The rear addition retains nothing of the character of turn-of-the-19th century frame construction. It is clad in vinyl siding and has modern windows. Staff was unable to locate any prior record of BAR review for this property.

In considering a Permit to Demolish, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, §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 shrine?
- (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?

Staff believes none of the above criteria are met. The two story addition which is to be demolished may date to the early years of the 20th century, but it has been significantly altered over time and has no particular architectural significance. According to the applicant, the addition is in poor condition. The rear wall of the two story brick ell which will be capsulated has long been capsulated by the current two story frame addition. 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 Archaeology:

F-1 Tax records from the early 19th century indicate the presence of free African American households on this street face (1 in 1810; 10—including the residence of Benjamin Cryer, a signer of the 1831 petition of loyalty—in 1830, and 5 in 1850), but the exact addresses are unknown. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into African American life in the early 1800s.

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 (in R-1) must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.