

Docket Item #12  
BAR CASE #2004-0217

BAR Meeting  
October 20, 2004

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish

**APPLICANT:** Adams Architects

**LOCATION:** 212 Wolfe Street

**ZONE:** RM/Residential

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### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish with the following conditions:

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; and,
2. The above statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

Note: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

### **I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish the roof and second floor addition of the flounder type addition at the south end of the house as well as a portion of the rear wall of this section that currently encompasses a window and a door. No demolition is proposed to the front of the house.

### **II. HISTORY:**

The two story, three bay semi-detached, brick house at 212 Wolfe Street was built between 1845 and 1851 according to Ethelyn Cox in *Alexandria Street by Street* (p.196). It has had a number of additions. The area proposed to demolished is a section of the rearmost addition. This addition constructed in a flounder type style likely dates from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century based upon Staff inspection. This one story addition appears on the 1902 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the first year the company mapped this blockface. The second floor addition section over the one story flounder section certainly post dates the original one story section and likely dates from the mid-20th century.

### **III. ANALYSIS:**

The demolition of portions of the rearmost addition are not visible from the public right-of-way.

In considering a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate, 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 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 #6 is conceivably met in this case. However, given the fact that the entire area to be demolished as well as the proposed new addition are not visible from the public right-of-way, Staff has no objection to the Permit to Demolish and Staff believes the Permit to Demolish should be approved.

Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archaeology and has included them as a contion.

#### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish with the following conditions:

- 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; and,
2. The above statement must appear in the General Notes of all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

## CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

### Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The attached application only covers demolition. No plans were submitted which address the proposed addition to the property. The below comments address only demolition concerns. Construction concerns and requirements will be addressed upon submission of plans which detail the scope of construction.
- 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.
- C-2 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC). The site shall be maintained secured against unauthorized entry and precautions shall be taken to prevent water and other weather elements from entering the dwelling. This condition shall also apply to the areas exposed to the adjacent property as part of the removal of building component systems.
- C-3 All exterior walls within 5 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides, with no openings permitted within the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided.
- C-4 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-5 Permission from adjacent property owners is required if access to the adjacent properties is required to complete the proposed construction. Otherwise, a plan shall be submitted to demonstrate the construction techniques utilized to keep construction solely on the referenced property.
- R-1 Removal of the existing structure may create an unsatisfactory exposure condition for the wall of the building located on the adjacent interior lot line. It is recommended that the owner of that property be informed.

### Historic Alexandria:

Is there any dated material regarding the flounder style addition to the 1850s structure. Before going further with demolition I would prefer to at least know FAR and open space for future addition.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 According to Ethelyn Cox's *Historic Alexandria, Virginia, Street By Street, A Survey of Existing Early Buildings*, the house on this lot was constructed between 1845 and 1851, and was renovated after a fire in 1871. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities in 19<sup>th</sup>-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 all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.