

Docket Item #15  
BAR CASE #2004-0221

BAR Meeting  
October 20, 2004

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish

**APPLICANT:** Brian Walsh

**LOCATION:** 601 South Washington Street

**ZONE:** CL/Commercial

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## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the demolition and capsulation as submitted.

Note: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

### **I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish for the demolition of and infill of portions of the brick wall of the building on the rear (west) and south sides for new door and window openings. In addition, a portion of the rear (west) wall will be capsulated by the addition of an open exterior stair. The demolition/capsulation is described in more detail below:

#### Rear elevation:

An open exterior stair leading to the second story will capsulate a portion of the rear elevation on the left side. A new door opening will be cut in the second story at the head of the new stairs. The leftmost door opening on the right side of the building on the first story will become a window. The area below the window will be infilled with brick.

#### South side elevation

Three new openings are proposed for the south elevation. A second door is proposed to the left of the existing door on that elevation. The new door opening would be similar in size to the existing. In addition, two new window openings are proposed directly above the two doors.

### **II. HISTORY:**

The building at 601 South Washington Street was originally two buildings, 601 and 603 South Washington Street. It is possible that the building at 601 South Washington existed in some form prior to 1877 as a building with a somewhat different footprint appears on the Hopkins map of 1877. Both buildings are clearly extant on the 1891 Sanborn map, which shows 601 S. Washington Street as a grocery with the existing footprint and 603 South Washington as a house with a narrower rear ell. The 1896 map shows the two buildings as internally connected. The 1902 map shows a porch at the rear of 601 South Washington. By 1907, the space created by the rear ell at 603 South Washington Street had been infilled and the current footprint had been attained. The two buildings were significantly altered in 1964, when the storefront windows were added and the buildings were combined into a single commercial building. This alteration was approved by the Board on November 13, 1963. Successive signs have been approved for various commercial uses over the years. Most recently, in 1996, the Board approved signs for Sumpter Priddy III (BAR Case #96-130, 6/19/1996).

### **III. ANALYSIS:**

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 none of the above criteria are met because the extent of demolition/capsulation is relatively small and the impacts are confined to secondary elevations. Moreover, the rear elevation has already been subject to a number of alterations over the years, including the addition and removal of the rear porch, infilling a rear ell and infilling openings.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the demolition and capsulation as submitted.

## CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

### Code Enforcement:

- C-1 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. (USBC 704.5)
- 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.
- C-4 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.

### Historic Alexandria:

No comment.