

Docket Item #11  
BAR CASE# 2004-0230

BAR Meeting  
November 3, 2004

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish  
**APPLICANT:** Robert Staples  
**LOCATION:** 225 North Fairfax Street  
**ZONE:** CD Commercial

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## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

Note: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

### **I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish portions of the building. On the west (Fairfax Street or front) elevation, the applicant proposes to remove the existing wood and glass entry in order to install a new entry system in the existing opening. The entry to be removed consists of a fully glazed door in the center flanked by two sidelights and surmounted by a three part transom. This entry appears to date to circa 1985, when the building was renovated for architectural offices for Hunter Miller, and to have replaced an earlier door and sidelight assembly installed in 1979. Secondly, the applicant proposes to remove the existing brick stoop on the east (rear) elevation in order to replace it with a new porch structure. The stoop appears to have been constructed circa 1965 as part of a renovation of the vacant building for use as a store (Building permit #21534, 2/11/1965). Thirdly, a small wood shed appended to the east elevation is to be removed. The structure appears to have been constructed circa 1989 for the purpose of containing/screening trash receptacles. Lastly, a section of the brick wall, approximately 30" by 30" on the east side is to be removed for the installation of a window.

### **II. HISTORY:**

225 North Fairfax Street is a two and half story masonry building with a large stepped parapet. The building was originally built as the Charles King & Son, Inc. garage in 1919 (Building Permit #418) and was designed by architect W. Leon Clark, a well known and prolific architect working in Alexandria in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the 1940s the building served as a warehouse for the Montgomery Ward department store in the 900 block of King Street (City Directories). Beginning in the 1970s the building has housed a number of retail and office tenants. A review of building permit and BAR records indicates that numerous changes have been made to the door and window openings over the years.

More recently, in 1999 the Board denied a request to replace a metal roof with asphalt shingles (BAR Case 99-0202, 11/17/99). The roof was subsequently replaced with copper. In 2003 the Board approved alterations to convert a raised overhead door on the Queen Street side of the building into an at-grade pedestrian entrance (BAR2003-0077, 5/7/2003).

### **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, the requested demolition does not meet any of the above criteria. The extent of demolition is relatively minor and is confined to elements that appear to have no historic or architectural significance. The front entrance, rear stoop and rear shed are all modern alterations. The area of the east side brick wall to be removed for a window is small in size and in a secondary elevation.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish as submitted.

## CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

### Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The proposed removal of the exterior side stair and enclose of the opening in a balcony may create a conflict with the approved means of egress within the structure. The applicant shall work with a licensed design profession to ensure that the egress requirements of the USBC are maintained.
  
- C-1 Structural calculations are required to verify the ability of the existing roof to support the additional weight of the HVAC unit.
  
- C-2 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
  
- C-3 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
  
- 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 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.

### Office of Historic Alexandria:

“No comment”