

Docket Item #13  
BAR CASE# 2004-0232

BAR Meeting  
November 3, 2004

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish

**APPLICANT:** Richard Clausen

**LOCATION:** 6 Potomac Court

**ZONE:** RM/Residential

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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/Capsulate for the construction of a screened porch at the first floor level of the house at the rear. The three story brick townhouse has a raised basement with a sunroom addition at the rear of the basement level. The new screened porch is to be located on top of the sunroom addition where there is currently a deck. The project will entail demolition of the existing deck surface and railing. In addition, it will entail capsulation of the existing flat roof of the sunroom addition, capsulation of the rear wall of the house at the first floor level and capsulation of a small portion of the wall of the neighbor to the west, at 5 Potomac Court.



**Figure 1 - Rear**

The area to be demolished/capsulated is visible from Windmill Hill Park and Union Street.

**II. HISTORY:**

6 Potomac Court is a three story brick interior unit townhouse dating from 1967. The Board approved the development of six attached and semi-attached townhouses on Potomac Court on June 8, 1966. This property is one of several facing on Potomac Court whose rear yards are elevated and overlook Union Street at the eastern end of the Wilkes Street Railroad Tunnel.

In 1979, the Board approved the rear sunroom addition (9/5/1979). In 1985, the Board approved the dormer addition on the third story (BAR Case #85-188, 10/2/1985). More recently, in 2002, the Board approved replacing the wood fence at the rear of the property with an iron fence (BAR Case #2002-171, 7/17/02). The Board has approved demolition and alterations at other houses

on Potomac Court including: demolition, alterations and the addition of a three story bay at 8 Potomac Court (BAR Case #99-0216 & 0217, 12/5/1999); demolition and the addition of a rear dormer at 9 Potomac Court ((BAR Case #2002-222 & 223, 9/4/2002); and, demolition and the addition of a front dormer at 8 Potomac Court (BAR Case #2004-0011 & 0012, 2/18/2004).

### **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/capsulation does not meet any of the above criteria. The proposed demolition and capsulation will occur at the rear of the house. The house was constructed in 1967 and the sunroom addition is even more recent, having been constructed in 1979. The Board has approved demolition and capsulation for a number of other projects in this development over the years.

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

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:

- F-1 The existing window in the party wall of #5 Potomac Court creates a fire separation issue for the proposed project. The applicant shall schedule a meeting with Code Enforcement in order to resolve fire separation issues created by this pre-existing condition prior to moving ahead with this project.
  
- 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.
  
- C-2 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
  
- C-3 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
  
- C-4 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
  
- C-5 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.

### Office of Historic Alexandria:

“No comment”