

Docket Item #15  
BAR CASE #2004-0234

BAR Meeting  
November 3, 2004

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish  
**APPLICANT:** Stephanie Dimond  
**LOCATION:** 555 South Washington Street  
**ZONE:** CL/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 commercial building at 555 South Washington Street. The portion to be demolished is the roof and one story rear addition at the southwest end of the building.

### **II. HISTORY:**

555 South Washington Street is generally known as the Old Club and for many years was a tea room. It has been vacant since the 1980s. The proposed demolition for a new addition is to allow the entire building to be converted to residential condominiums. The nucleus of the building, that is the two first rooms on both the first and second levels at the front, dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. According to Ethelyn Cox in *Alexandria Street by Street*, tradition holds that this section was an 18<sup>th</sup> century tavern, Broomlawn, that was moved to this site in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (p. 186). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century there have been a number of alterations and additions to the building which have substantially changed the exterior appearance of the building. The rear addition, which is the subject of this application, is cinderblock faced with brick and was constructed between 1921 and 1941 according to information on the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps. The porch facing Washington Street on the south side of the building was enclosed in 1969 (Building Permit #26203, 4/14/69). The rearmost addition is a walk-in cooler and was constructed in 1975 (Building Permit #9579, 10/1/75). In 1987 the Board approved a number of alterations to this building when it was going to be converted into a restaurant for Clyde's Restaurant Group (BAR Case #87-26, 4/1/87). However, that proposal was not implemented and the alterations were not undertaken.

### **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?

It is the opinion of Staff that none of the criteria are met and that the Permit to Demolish should be approved. The area to be demolished dates from the mid-20th century and the architecture can be easily reproduced.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Thus, Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

## **CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

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

Code Enforcement:

Historic Alexandria: