

Docket Item #8
BAR CASE #2004-0254

BAR Meeting
December 1, 2004

ISSUE: After-the-fact permit to demolish

APPLICANT: Stephen and Eileen Quatannens

LOCATION: 217 South Alfred Street

ZONE: CL/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is seeking after-the-fact approval of a Permit to Demolish for the single story frame addition on the south side of the two story, brick veneer house at 217 South Alfred Street. A new two story rear addition and a second story addition to the now demolished side addition were approved by the Board on November 19, 2003. Instead of adding to the top of the side addition as had been approved, it was demolished. As explained by the applicant in the materials accompanying the application, the side addition was so insubstantial and the previously approved demolition so extensive that it already was in essence “de facto demolition.” Once demolition got underway, it seems futile to retain what little was left. The framing that is currently visible on the south side of the house is all new construction.

The single story side addition was set back from the front of the house by approximately 17' and measured 5' wide by 12' long. The front (east) wall held a multi-light door, flanked by a multi-light window. The rear wall was similarly arranged. The flat roofed addition was attached to the neighboring building at 219 South Alfred Street on the south side and, according to the applicant did not have a south wall of its own.



Figure 1- Side addition visible beyond gate at arrow

II. HISTORY:

217 South Alfred Street is a two story, three bay frame residence built prior to 1877. According to the building permit record, it was extensively renovated in 1936 (Permit #1960, 9/28/1936). The permit and accompanying plans call for the demolition and reconstruction of the one story kitchen wing at the rear of the house and for the application of brick veneer on the front, south side and rear sides. A subsequent permit from 1948 also calls for the application of brick siding to the frame dwelling at 217 South Alfred Street (Permit #8056, 2/2/1948). This request was approved by the Board of Architectural Review on 2/19/1948. The existing one story frame

section on the south side appears to be the outgrowth of a “concrete porch” shown in the 1936. The 1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows a one story frame addition in this same location. Thus, the present appearance and form of the building seems to date to the period circa 1936 - 1948.

On October 4, 2000, the Board approved the demolition of a mid-20th century frame garage at the rear of 217 South Alfred Street (BAR Case #2000-210). On November 11, 2001, the Board approved plans for demolition/capsulation and a new two story rear addition (BAR Case #s 2001-163 & 164). That addition was not built. On November 19, 2003, the Board again approved plans for demolition/capsulation and a new two story rear addition (BAR Case #s 2003-261 & 262).

III. ANALYSIS:

In considering a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, Sec. 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?

Staff does not believe the above criteria are met. The addition that was demolished appears to have been constructed between 1936 and 1941. The mid-20th structure was insubstantial in size and construction and had no particular architectural or historical significance.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- 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 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. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.