

Docket Item #5
BAR CASE #2004-0268

BAR Meeting
January 19, 2005

ISSUE: Demolition and capsulation

APPLICANT: Robert B. Adams

LOCATION: 200 Duke Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

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 and Capsulate portions of the residence at 200 Duke Street. The proposed demolition and capsulation include:

- Main block - rear (south), first floor
Removal of an area approximately 3' in width by 6' in height to allow construction of a new window.
- Rear addition - first floor, south side
Removal of a section approximately 3' wide by 7' in height to allow construction of a new pair of French doors.
- Porch - south side, first floor
Capsulation of an area on the first floor on the rear (south) wall of the porch approximately 5'3" square.

II. HISTORY:

200 Duke Street is a two story freestanding wood frame house dating from ca. 1787 constructed for Leven Powell according to Ethelyn Cox in Alexandria Street by Street (p.20). Cox points out that Powell together with George Johnston, Jr. “drafted the Resolves adopted by the freeholders of Loudoun County in 1774. Powell served with the Virginia forces during the revolution, as major and lieutenant colonel; as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates in 1779, 1787-1788; and of the United States House of Representatives 1799-1801.”

In the 20th century the house was the home of Thomas Hulfish, Jr. and his wife, Marianne. Thomas Hulfish, Jr. was a City Council member and the sponsor of the legislation that first created the Old and Historic Alexandria District in 1946. His wife, Marianne (Polly) was the leading historic preservationist in the City in the 1960s and early 1970s. See: Peter H. Smith, “The Work of Marianne (Polly) Hulfish in the Old and Historic Alexandria District,” The Alexandria Chronicle, v.VII, no.1, Spring 1998, pp. 1-6.

The rear section to which a new porch is to be attached dates from the mid-19th century. The rearmost section was constructed in 1964 according to Code Enforcement Bureau building permits.

The Board originally approved the demolition of these sections of the house in 2000 to permit the construction of a porch addition and other alterations, but these changes were never built (BAR Case #2000-0051, 4/5/00).

The basic form of the historic main block of the house is little changed in exterior form from the late 18th century.

III. ANALYSIS:

In considering a Permit to Demolish and or 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?

The area to be demolished is extremely small. The capsulation of a small portion of the first floor of the porch is easily reversible. The changes to the rearmost section alter a 1964 addition to the building.

In the opinion of Staff, none of the criteria are met and the Permit to Demolish and/or Capsulate should be granted.

V. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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:

- 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.

Historic Alexandria:

This is an important, significant building. I have some concern about the “glazed” porch here, does not seem appropriate.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 According to *Historic Alexandria, Virginia, Street by Street, A Survey of Existing Early Buildings* by Ethelyn Cox, the house on this property probably dates to 1787, when Leven Powell purchased the quarter block at the southwest corner of Fairfax and Lee Streets from James Mercer. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities in 18th- and 19th-century Alexandria.
- R-1 Contact Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks prior to any ground disturbing activity (such as coring, grading, filling, vegetation removal, undergrounding utilities, pile driving, landscaping and other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of The Zoning Ordinance) on this property. City archaeologists will provide on-site inspections to record significant finds.
- R-2 Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
- R-3 The applicant should not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
- R-4 The above statements must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements.