

Docket Item# 5
BAR CASE# 2004-0248

BAR Meeting
June 15, 2005

ISSUE: Permit to Demolish and Capsulate

APPLICANT: Samuel Shanklin

LOCATION: 620 South Washington 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 requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish an existing concrete block shed located behind the main building as well as two rear additions; one a one story addition at the east end of the building and a two story section immediately to the west. The demolition will allow construction of a new two story addition.

II. HISTORY:

The two-story, two bay frame structure at 620 South Washington Street likely dates from the early part of the 20th century. The additions are later and likely were constructed in the 1930s.



III. ANALYSIS:

In considering a Permit to Demolish, 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 above Criteria 4, 5 & 6 above are met. This is a largely intact early 20th century vernacular dwelling fronting directly onto the Parkway.. The proposed demolition/capsulation includes the entire rear wall of the historic main block. The *Design Guidelines* state that “the Boards prefer that the amount of demolition be limited to that necessary to accommodate access to the addition rather than wholesale demolition and replacement of the rear facade” (Demolition of Existing Structures -Page 1).

On the other hand, the Guidelines state that “the Boards are also sympathetic to the needs of building owners to make contemporary [21st] century use of a property” (Demolition of Existing Structures - Page 1). Given the constraints of this particular very small house on a small lot, it is difficult to see how additional functional space can be achieved without demolishing and/or encapsulating a significant portion of the rear of the house. Staff notes that the Board has struggled with a number of similar cases in recent years involving additions to small early and mid-19th century house in rows and has ultimately recommended approval of the demolition and caspulation: 508 North Columbus Street (BAR Case#s 2005-0002 & 0003, 3/16/2005); 510 North Columbus Street (BAR Case #s 2004-0067 & 0068, 7/21/2004 & 8/18/2004); 128 North Payne Street (BAR Case #s 2004-0094 & 0095, 7/21/2004 & 8/18/2004); and, 132 North Payne Street (BAR Case #s 20003-0119 & 0120, 10/15/2003) and most recently two weeks ago at 605 South St. Asaph Street (BAR Case #2005-0088, 6/1/05).

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, 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 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.

Historic Alexandria:

No comment.