

Docket Item #8
BAR CASE #2006-0035

BAR Meeting
March 1, 2006

ISSUE: Demolition and capsulation

APPLICANT: Nigel and Lori Morris by Robert Bentley Adams

LOCATION: 311 Cameron Street

ZONE: CD/Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the “Fleishman’s Hotel” stone step be preserved and retained on site.

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish and Capsulate portion of the commercial building 311 Cameron Street. Those portions to be demolished and capsulated include: the bulkhead, vertical paneling and chimney flue at the east side of the main historic block inside the driveway created by the two story addition on the east side; two areas approximately 3' x 7' each on the rear (north) slope of the gable roof to create two new dormers; and the concrete and block steps at the front entrance on the west side of the building.

II. HISTORY:

311 Cameron Street is a three bay, three story brick building dating from the early 19th century. According to Ethelyn Cox’s *Historic Alexandria Street By Street*, the building at 311 Cameron Street was advertised for sale in 1817 by the owner/builder William Dunlap.

The Board approved signs for a previous retail tenant in 2002 (BAR Case #2002-0231, 9/18/02).

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 shrine?
- (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 proposal to demolish portions of the rear (north) slope of the gable roof meet criteria #'s 1, 3, and 6. However, this section of the roof is only minimally visible between houses from North Fairfax Street. Thus, the overall public perception of the building will not change. Because of this Staff is not opposed to the demolition of portions of the rear slope of the roof and recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish.

The demolition of the bulkhead, wood paneling and chimney flue are interior to the building and are, therefore, not subject to review by the Board.

In addition, while Staff does not object to the demolition and removal of the front entry steps because they are concrete, Staff believes that the stone step with the incised lettering “Fleishman’s Hotel” should be preserved. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of this portion of the demolition with the condition that the “Fleishman’s Hotel” stone step be preserved and retained on site.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the condition that the “Fleishman’s Hotel” stone step be preserved and retained on site.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- 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 of the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance. Openings in exterior walls between 3 and 5 feet shall not exceed 25% of the area of the entire wall surface (This shall include bay windows). Openings shall not be permitted in exterior walls within 3 feet of an interior lot line.
- C-2 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.
- 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.
- C-6 Permission from adjacent property owners is required if access to the adjacent properties is required to complete the proposed construction. Otherwise, a plan shall be submitted to demonstrate the construction techniques utilized to keep construction solely on the referenced property.

Historic Alexandria:

Noted in Alexandria Street by Street as advertised for sale in 1817 by owner-builder William Dunlap. Proposed alterations seem appropriate.