

Docket Item #8  
BAR CASE #2006-00169

BAR Meeting  
September 20, 2006

**ISSUE:** Demolition/encapsulation

**APPLICANT:** Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church by Moore Architects

**LOCATION:** 614 South Washington Street

**ZONE:** CL/Commercial

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

(Insert sketch here)

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish for partial demolition/capsulation of the rear section of the existing former residential structure at 614 South Washington Street to permit the construction of a new addition. The section to be demolished is only partially visible down pedestrian alleys on either side of the structure.

**II. HISTORY:**

614 South Washington Street is a two story three bay wood frame vernacular Italianate style building and the original section fronting on South Washington Street was likely constructed prior to 1877, the first year that Alexandria buildings were mapped. The rear section is a somewhat later addition and likely dates from the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The building was acquired by the church for use as a manse in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



The original church building was constructed in 1832.

The Board approved in concept a similar rear addition to this building in 2003 (BAR Case #2003-0045, 3/19/03).

**III. ANALYSIS:**

The proposed addition and alterations comply with the zoning ordinances requirements.

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?

Staff believes none of the above criteria are applicable in this case. Those portions of the rear of the house that will be affected by the demolition and capsulation were constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century and as such are not central to the main historic block.

**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 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 be taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.

Historic Alexandria:

Proposed addition and alterations which focus on increasing space and ADA accessibility seem appropriate, with the exception of the demolition of the chimney. If this component of the original structure is not deteriorated, it would be preferable to retain it.

Alexandria Archaeology:

F-1 This property was part of an area known as The Bottoms, a free African American neighborhood in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Tax records from 1850 indicate the presence of seven free African American households on the street face. The lot therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities relating to free blacks living in Alexandria in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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 (703/838-4399) immediately if any buried historic structural remains (wall foundations, cisterns, wells, privies, 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 to record the finds.

R-3 The applicant must not allow metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

R-4 The requirements stated in C-1, C-2 and C-3 above, must be included in the General Notes of all site plans, as well as on all site plan sheets that include ground disturbing actions.