

Docket Item #14
BAR CASE #2006-193

BAR Meeting
September 20, 2006

ISSUE: Demolish portions of rear elevation

APPLICANT: Roland Frye & Susan Pettey by Robert Bentley Adams

LOCATION: 220 North Royal Street

ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. To insure that information about the City's past is not lost as a result of this development project and to allow for inspection to look for evidence of human remains, the applicant must call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that an inspection schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged;
2. Call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) immediately if any bones, 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 inspect and record the finds; and,
3. The above statements in R-1 and R-2 must appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including landscaping, sheeting and shoring, and grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

(Insert sketch here)

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate portions of the rear elevation of the residential rowhouse at 220 North Royal Street. The demolition proposed is in conjunction with a new rear addition.

II. HISTORY:

220 North Royal Street is a three story, three bay brick Greek Revival style rowhouse dating from ca. 1854 that was built by Joseph McLean according to Ethelyn Cox in *Alexandria Street by Street* (p. 151).

The two story rear section and frame porch that is proposed to be demolished and capsulated is a later addition dating from the late 19th century.

Staff did not locate any records of previous B.A.R. applications with respect to this property.

The rear of the property is not visible from the public right-of-way and, therefore, the design of the new addition is not before the Board.

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 none of the criteria are met because the section of the property to be demolished and capsulated dates from the late 19th century. Therefore, Staff recommends

approval of the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate.

Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archaeology and has included them as a condition.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

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3. The above statements in R-1 and R-2 must appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including landscaping, sheeting and shoring, and grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

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 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-4 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-5 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-7 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-8 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.
- C-9 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Historic Alexandria:

Request seems appropriate.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 Tax records indicate that some structures were already present on this street face by 1810. In 1830 and 1850, there were free African American households on the block, but the exact addresses are unknown. The 1830 tax record also shows that the residence and shop of Thomas Towers were present on the street face, but nature of the shop and exact address are not known. It was reported in a 1904 article in the *Alexandria Gazette* that there may have been an old burial ground on the west side of Royal Street in this area; an interview with an elderly citizen in the town at that time recollected that the earlier structures in the area had been torn down and that many skeletons were found during construction of new houses in the 1840s. The current house on this lot was built around 1854 by Joseph McLean, according to Ethelyn Cox's *Historic Alexandria, Virginia, Street by Street, A Survey of Existing Early Buildings*. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into life in 19th-century Alexandria, perhaps related to free African Americans during the early part of the century. If burials are present, they could yield information about early burial practices, and analysis of the human remains could add to knowledge on the early populations in Alexandria.
- F-2 It should be noted that State law prohibits disturbance to human remains and specifies procedures for their removal and reburial. These will need to be followed in the event that human remains are discovered.
- R-1 To insure that information about the City's past is not lost as a result of this development project and to allow for inspection to look for evidence of human remains, the applicant must call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that an inspection schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
- R-2 Call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) immediately if any bones, 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 inspect and record the finds.
- R-3 The above statements in R-1 and R-2 must appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including landscaping, sheeting and shoring, and grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.