

Docket Item # 14  
BAR CASE # 2006-0281

BAR Meeting  
December 20, 2006

**ISSUE:** After-the-fact approval of demolition

**APPLICANT:** Boyd Walker

**LOCATION:** 200 Commerce Street

**ZONE:** CL/Commercial

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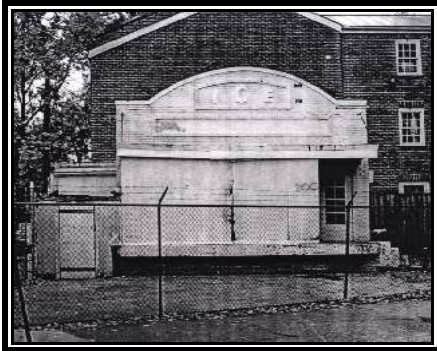
**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the after-the-fact Permit to Demolish with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant replace the demolished canopy to match the original canopy in respect to size and proportions, structure, and materials,
2. That any remaining features such as the support chains and rings/bolts be retained, and
3. That the applicant must obtain a building permit from Code Enforcement.

(Insert sketch here)

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote

**I. ISSUE:**



**Figure 1 - Before demolition**



**Figure 2 – After Demolition**

The applicant is requesting after-the-fact approval of a Permit to Demolish portions of the Ice House building at 200 Commerce Street. Prior to making application, the applicant removed a framed enclosure on the front loading dock of the Ice House and removed the projecting canopy over the front loading dock.

The Ice House building is an excellent representative of a small scale industrial building from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century.

The applicant did not contact BAR Staff or Code Enforcement regarding the decision to remove the enclosure on the front loading dock and the canopy. Therefore, staff was unable to make any professional determination of the historic integrity of these features of the building.

Staff became aware of the unapproved demolition on November 8, 2006 and Code issued a stop work order on November 9, 2006. Since that time, Staff has been working with the applicant to determine how to proceed with the case and to obtain the necessary materials to return to the Board. The unapproved demolition constitutes a class one violation of section 10-203(B) of the zoning ordinance which carries a civil penalty of \$1,500 (section 11-6 (C)1)). Each day that the violation exists may constitute a separate individual offense (section 11-207 (C)6). Staff is recommending applying a penalty in the amount of \$1,500, to be used exclusively for the purpose of promoting historic preservation within the city, and to require that the character-defining canopy be replaced in-kind.

**II. HISTORY:**

The one story brick building at 200 Commerce Street was constructed as a retail ice station for the Mutual Ice Company around 1931. According to the City Real Estate Records, the building was originally 344 square feet, on a 1377 square feet lot.

Staff could not locate any record of prior BAR reviews for this property.

**III. ANALYSIS:**

In considering a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, Sec. 10-205(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 and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the city?
- (5) 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?
- (6) Would retention of the building or structure help maintain the scale and character of the neighborhood

Staff believes that the Ice House itself meets criteria #'s 4 and 6. As stated previously, the Ice House is representative of a small scale industrial building from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century. In the opinion of staff, the canopy was an original character-defining feature of the building and its loss has diminished the integrity of the building. It is unclear from available records when the front loading dock was partially enclosed with the framed enclosure.

Staff is left with no option but to recommend approval of the after-the-fact demolition. Staff does believe the demolition can be somewhat mitigated by the proposed conditions for the Permit to Demolish and Certificate of Appropriateness which should ensure that the front facade is carefully restored to its original appearance. Staff has shared with the applicant drawings of the Ice House from 1931 that show the original gutter and canopy design. Also, as stated under Issue, staff is recommending a penalty in the amount of \$1,500, to be used exclusively for the purpose of promoting historic preservation within the city.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the after-the-fact Permit to Demolish with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant replace the demolished canopy to match the original canopy in respect to size and proportions, structure, and materials,
2. That any remaining features such as the support chains and rings/bolts be retained, and
3. That the applicant must obtain a building permit from Code Enforcement.

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.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.