

Docket Item # 13
BAR CASE # 2007-0005

BAR Meeting
February 7, 2007

ISSUE: Demolition
APPLICANT: Ayne Furman & Arthur Miller by BMK, PC
LOCATION: 517 ½ S. Royal Street
ZONE: RM/residential

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

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

Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, 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 and records the finds.

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

(Insert sketch here)

Note: This docket item must be approved by roll call vote.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a permit to demolish for the proposed demolition of the existing brick wall with wood gate that extends across the 9.9' wide south side yard at the front of the property even with the face of the house. The existing wall appears to be approximately 4' to 5' tall. The gate is centered within the wall. According to the applicant's architect, the existing wall has structural problems and must be taken down.

The gate and wall are readily visible from Royal Street.

II. HISTORY:

517 ½ South Royal Street is a three story brick veneer rowhouse and is one of a group of ten rowhouses constructed on the site of the old Alexandria Iron Works in 1964. The brick wall and gate may be part of the original construction, but Staff has been unable to definitively confirm this.

On August 18, 2004, the Board approved a permit to demolish and certificate of appropriateness for a new one story addition and dormer window at the rear of this property (BAR Case #s 2004-0117 & 0118). This work was completed in 2006.

III. ANALYSIS:

In considering a Permit to Demolish or 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 it's 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?
- (6) In the instance of a building or structure owned by the city or the redevelopment and housing authority, such building or structure having been acquired pursuant to a duly approved urban renewal (redevelopment) plan, would retention of the building or

structure promote the general welfare in view of the needs of the city for an urban renewal (redevelopment) project?

Staff does not believe any of the above criteria are met by the proposed demolition of the wall and gate at the front of 517 ½ South Royal Street. This feature is approximately 40 years old at the oldest and may possibly be more recent. It is not unusual in design, material or construction method. Staff has no objection to its removal. However, as the wall is toothed into the brickwork at the front of the house, care should be taken in its removal not to damage the façade of the house and to match the façade brick and mortar if any repair work is required.

Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archaeology and recommends that they be included as a condition of the approval.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

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

Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, 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 and records the finds.

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

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-2 Additions and alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit (USBC 108.1). Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application (USBC 109.1).

Historic Alexandria:

No comments were received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 Tax records indicate that a free African American household was present on this street face in 1810, but the exact address is not known. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities of Alexandria's free black population in the early nineteenth century.
- R-1 Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, 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 and records the finds.
- R-2 The applicant must not allow metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
- R-3 The above statements in R-2 and R-3 must appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including sheeting and shoring and grading) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.