

Docket Item #5  
BAR CASE # 2007-0047

BAR Meeting  
April 4, 2007

**ISSUE:** Demolition of office building

**APPLICANT:** City of Alexandria

**LOCATION:** 714 Church Street

**ZONE:** CL/Commercial

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

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(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 the existing two story freestanding office building at 714 Church Street. The building is being demolished in preparation for the construction of a memorial park at this site. The park plans will be reviewed by the Board at a later date.

**II. HISTORY:**

714 Church Street is a two story brick office building originally constructed by Charles Guber in 1959. An addition was added in 1962. Both the original building and the addition were approved by the Board.

**III. ANALYSIS:**

In considering a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate, 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, because this is a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century office building none of the criteria for demolition are met in this instance. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

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

Historic Alexandria:

Proposal is appropriate in preparation for the development of this significant memorial park. Alexandria Archaeology should be consulted on all phases of this project.

Alexandria Archaeology:

F-1 This property is the site of Alexandria Freedmen's Cemetery, the burial place for up to 1800 African Americans who fled to Alexandria to escape from slavery during the Civil War. Archaeological investigations conducted in 2004 have indicated that burials remain intact on the lot.

R-1 Alexandria Archaeology must monitor all ground-disturbing activities associated with the demolition to insure that no burials are disturbed. After demolition, Alexandria Archaeology will conduct additional investigations to locate graves and prepare guidelines to insure that all burials are protected during park development.

R-2 Demolition guidelines, drawings and specifications should indicate that Alexandria Archaeology must be on-site to monitor all ground disturbance.