

Docket Item # 9
BAR CASE # 2007-0072

BAR Meeting
August 1, 2007

ISSUE: Demolition/encapsulation
APPLICANT: Larry Hirsch by Stephen Kulinski
LOCATION: 502 Duke Street
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, AUGUST 1, 2007: Staff recommends:

1. Approval of the demolition of the rear porch/deck and alterations of the window on the south and east elevations; and,
2. Denial of the demolition and capsulation of the rear (south) wall of the historic main block and the east wall of the flounder on the first level.

BOARD ACTION, JUNE 20, 2007: On a motion by Mr. Smeallie, seconded by Ms. Neihardt, the Board deferred the application for restudy. The vote on the motion was 5-0.

REASON: The Board agreed with the staff recommendation for denial of the demolition of portions of the rear flounder, but agreed to defer the application for restudy to give the applicant time to revise the overall scope of the project.

SPEAKERS: Stephen Kulinski, project architect, spoke in support
Larry Hirsch, project applicant, spoke in support
John Hynan, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation, spoke in opposition

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, JUNE 20, 2007: Staff recommends denial of the Permit to Demolish and Capsulate.

In the alternative, if the Board recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish and Capsulate staff recommends the following conditions:

1. Large scale 4" x 5" negative black and white record photographs to Historic American Building Survey Standards are to be made of the facade and rear of building as well as interior and exterior of the area to be demolished. These photographs are to be approved by staff prior to the issuance of a building permit. Two sets of these photographs together with the one set of negatives are deposited at both the Special Collections, Alexandria Pubic Library as well as the Alexandria Archives and Record;

2. Measured drawings prepared to Historic American Building Survey Standards of the interior and exterior of the area to be demolished are to be made and approved by staff prior to the issuance of a building permit. The drawings are to be deposited at both the Special Collections, Alexandria Pubic Library as well as the Alexandria Archives and Record; and,
3. Physical design detail elements that are to be removed may be retained by the City of Alexandria to be determined at the discretion of the Director of the Lyceum and deposited in the collections of the Lyceum in consultation with staff of the Department of Planning & Zoning.

BOARD ACTION, JUNE 6, 2007: Deferred due to lack of public notice.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION, JUNE 6, 2007: Staff recommends denial of the Permit to Demolish and Capsulate.

In the alternative, if the Board recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish and Capsulate staff recommends the following conditions:

1. Large scale 4" x 5" negative black and white record photographs to Historic American Building Survey Standards are to be made of the facade and rear of building as well as interior and exterior of the area to be demolished. These photographs are to be approved by staff prior to the issuance of a building permit. Two sets of these photographs together with the one set of negatives are deposited at both the Special Collections, Alexandria Pubic Library as well as the Alexandria Archives and Record;
2. Measured drawings prepared to Historic American Building Survey Standards of the interior and exterior of the area to be demolished are to be made and approved by staff prior to the issuance of a building permit. The drawings are to be deposited at both the Special Collections, Alexandria Pubic Library as well as the Alexandria Archives and Record; and,
3. Physical design detail elements that are to be removed may be retained by the City of Alexandria to be determined at the discretion of the Director of the Lyceum and deposited in the collections of the Lyceum in consultation with staff of the Department of Planning & Zoning.

(Insert sketch here)

Update: Since the public hearing of June 20th the applicant has substantially revised the extent of the alterations and addition to this property.

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting a Permit to Demolish and Capsulate several sections of the existing structure in order to allow for the construction of alterations and new additions. The sections that are proposed to be capsulated and demolished include:

- **East wall of existing flounder and rear (south) wall of the main historic block**
A new one story addition will capsulate a portion of this area. An existing window on the second level will be enlarged and converted to a door.
- **East wall of existing flounder**
Three windows on this elevation (two on the first level and one on the second level) will be altered to accommodate interior alterations.
- **Rear (south) wall of the existing flounder ell and rear porch**
The rear wood deck/porch will be demolished. No addition is proposed to be constructed in its place. The windows of the rear wall will be re-arranged and regularized.

II. HISTORY:

The house at 502 Duke Street is a three story rowhouse with a painted brick façade. According to Ethelyn Cox in *Alexandria Street by Street* it dates from the early 19th century. By the mid-19th century it had been modernized in the Greek Revival manner similar to a number of other rowhouses on the south side of Duke Street in the 400 and 500 blocks. The exterior of the house has remained largely unaltered.

The Board approved new brick front steps and metal hand rails for this house in 1987 (BAR Case #87-0020, 3/4/87).

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, this is an important early 19th century residential structure that is significant for its architectural contributions to the patrimony of the historic district. In the opinion of staff, portions of the demolition application are acceptable, while other sections proposed for demolition and capsulation are, in the opinion of staff, significant and deserve preservation.

Staff has no objection to the removal of the rear porch/deck or to the alterations of the window on either the south or east elevation. However, staff has serious reservations regarding the proposal to demolish and capsulate portions of the rear (south) wall of the historic main block and the east wall of the flounder on the first level. Staff believes that these sections proposed demolition and capsulation and meet criterion #'s 1, 2, 3, 5 & 6. The *Design Guidelines* state: "The Boards actively seek to retain the existing historic fabric of the historic districts and strongly discourage the demolition of any portion of an 18th or early 19th century structure." Therefore, staff does not support the demolition and capsulation of these sections.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends:

1. Approval of the demolition of the rear porch/deck and alterations of the window on the south and east elevations; and,
2. Denial of the demolition and capsulation of the rear (south) wall of the historic main block and the east wall of the flounder on the first level.

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:

No comments were received.