

Docket Item # 14
BAR CASE # 2007-0179

BAR Meeting
September 19, 2007

ISSUE: Permit to Demolish
APPLICANT: FMA Holdings by William Cromley
LOCATION: 915 King Street
ZONE: KR/King Street Urban Retail

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish with the following conditions:

1. That the reconstructed wall match the exterior historic configuration and design;
2. That the mortar to be used on the exterior brick is a 93% lime based mortar;
3. That the existing historic bricks be salvaged and re-used to the greatest extent possible in the reconstruction; and,
4. That the exterior brick work pattern be replicated to match the existing.

(Insert sketch here)

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish to remove selective sections of the exterior east brick wall of 915 King Street. This historic wall runs along an alley between 915 King Street and 913 King Street and is visible from King Street.

The City's Code Enforcement Department became aware that the east wall was severely structurally compromised and notified the owner that it needed to be corrected in a timely manner. The owner began the process to find a qualified contractor to initiate selective demolition in order to repair and structurally fortify the wall.

The applicant's contractor has identified the area where selective demolition is proposed. Existing brick will be reused where possible. The mortar to be used on the exterior brick is a 93% lime based mortar (the other 7% is cement for strength and workability). To increase the structural strength of the wall, the interior of the repaired portions of the wall will be cinder block laid with Portland cement. This is referred to in the Structural Notes on page S.2 of the drawings. By replacing the two existing interior brick wythes with cinderblock, the applicant anticipates having enough original brick to ensure that the exterior wythe is reconstructed using only original brick.

The applicant is also proposing to install brick stars on the east wall, at floor level spaces, 48" on center.

Code Enforcement has reviewed and signed off on the drawings submitted by the applicant, pending approval of the Permit to Demolish by the Board.

II. HISTORY:

The building at 915 King Street was constructed by William Myers between 1798 and 1802. Myers sold the house to John Mills in March 1803. Anthony C. Cazenove then bought the house in January 1816 (Cox, Historic Alexandria Street by Street).

The Board approved new signage for the present retail tenant, Ten Thousand Villages on October 19, 2005 (BAR Case # 2005-0192). Other recent Board actions include a new canvas awning for the current retail tenant (BAR Case #2005-0155, 7/6/05).

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?

Staff certainly recognizes that 915 King Street is an important representative of the City's early 19th-century building stock and that all care should be demonstrated in any alterations to the building. Staff also recognizes the structural deterioration that has occurred to the east wall and the importance of correcting this situation as delicately as possible to ensure that the integrity of the building is maintained. Staff has had an opportunity to view the exterior of the wall.

As stated above, the applicant has retained the services of William Cromley as contractor. The plan set forth in the proposal appears sound and sensitive to the character of the building. Thus, staff supports the Permit to Demolish, emphasizing that all care and attention should be given to reconstructing the wall in such a manner that the character-defining features of brick pattern be retained and appropriate mortar used.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish with the following conditions:

1. That the reconstructed wall match the exterior historic configuration and design;
2. That the mortar to be used on the exterior brick is a 93% lime based mortar;
3. That the existing historic bricks be salvaged and re-used to the greatest extent possible in the reconstruction; and,
4. That the exterior brick work pattern be replicated to match the existing.

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.
- C-2 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-3 A building permit is required for the proposed project.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments.