

Docket Item # 9  
BAR CASE # 2007-0261

BAR Meeting  
December 19, 2007

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate

**APPLICANT:** Craig Miller

**LOCATION:** 915 Cameron Street

**ZONE:** RM/Residential

---

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval as submitted.

(Insert sketch here)

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish/ Encapsulate for areas of the rear and side of the residential, detached house at 915 Cameron Street for alterations and a one-story bay addition. There are views from North Patrick Street, through a drive and parking lot, allowing visual access to some of the rear and side of 915 Cameron Street. A wood fence encloses the property so the lower sections of the proposed demolition and encapsulation will largely be blocked from public views.

On the rear elevation, the enclosed second story area that appears to have once been a porch area will be reconfigured with the existing wood siding and casement style windows to be removed. Also on the rear elevation, on the first level, a paired window will be removed and an area 5' x 5' below the window will be demolished to install a paired set of French-style doors (total area 5' x 8' or 40 square feet).

On the side/west elevation, an area containing a single French-style door and a double-hung window will be demolished to construct a one-story bay addition. The area to be demolished is approximately 8' x 10' (80 square feet).

**II. HISTORY:**

915 Cameron Street is a two-story detached brick residential structure. At the time of Ethelyn Cox's book: *Historic Alexandria, Virginia: Street by Street*: 913 Cameron Street was used as the address and the citation for this property. The book states: "A house dating from around 1810, combined with another house bought in 1826, formed the nucleus of the present house. First house bought in 1816 by James and Jacob Douglass. Jacob conveyed his interest to James in 1825. James bought the second house in 1826, and he and his heirs added three other parcels of land. Later additions were made, and in 1878, it was described as a "two-storied Brick dwelling house."

In examining Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, 913/915 Cameron Street has had a series of additions to the rear over the years. The 1921 map shows a one-story brick addition with an open porch. By 1941, the one-story addition had a second floor and another one-story addition and new side porch was added. By 1958, a second story was added to the 1941 era addition and a two-story porch had been enclosed. This footprint closely matches the existing footprint of 915 Cameron today.

Staff did not locate any recent approvals by the Board for 915 Cameron Street.

**III. ANALYSIS:**

In considering a Permit to Demolish or Capsulate, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, Sec 10-105(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 an 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?

Staff does not believe the amount of demolition/encapsulation proposed in this application rises to the level that meets any of the above criteria. The proposed areas to be demolished are on the rear and side elevations and impact areas in additions that were apparently constructed in the mid 20<sup>th</sup>-century. Therefore, Staff supports the application and recommends approval.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval 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 be taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-2 Before a building permit can be issued on any proposed future alterations, a certification is required from the owner or owner's agent that the building has been inspected by a licensed asbestos inspector for the presence of asbestos (USBC 110.3).
- C-3 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully details the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-4 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit. Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application. The plans must include all dimensions, construction alterations details, kitchen equipment, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical layouts and schematics.
- C-8 Sheeting and shoring shall not extend beyond the property line; except when the developer has obtained a written release from adjacent property owners which has been recorded in the land records; or through an approved encroachment process.
- C-9 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-10 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-11 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-12 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Historic Alexandria:  
Comments Pending