

Docket Item # 8
BAR CASE # 2008-0114

BAR Meeting
September 17, 2008

ISSUE: Permit to Demolish/Capsulate
APPLICANT: Tony Chan, Falston Development
LOCATION: 532 N. Washington Street
ZONE: OC/Office Commercial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. To insure that significant information is not lost as a result of the current development project, the applicant shall hire an archaeological consultant to complete a Documentary Study. The applicant shall contact Alexandria Archaeology to obtain a scope of work for this investigation **by the next concept submittal.**
2. If the Documentary Study indicates that the property has the potential to yield significant buried resources, the applicant shall hire an archaeological consultant to complete an Archaeological Evaluation. **The Documentary Study and Archaeological Evaluation shall be completed prior to submittal of the site plan for preliminary review.** If significant resources are discovered, the consultant shall complete a Resource Management Plan, as outlined in the *City of Alexandria Archaeological Standards*. Preservation measures presented in the Resource Management Plan, as approved by the City Archaeologist, will be implemented.
3. The statements in archaeology conditions below shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
 - a. All required archaeological preservation measures shall be completed prior to ground-disturbing activities (such as coring, grading, filling, vegetation removal, undergrounding utilities, pile driving, landscaping and other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of the Zoning Ordinance) or a Resource Management Plan must be in place to recover significant resources in concert with construction activities. To confirm, call Alexandria Archaeology at (703) 838-4399.
 - b. The applicant/developer shall 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

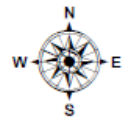
finds.

c. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

4. The final site plan shall not be released until the City archaeologist confirms that all archaeological field work has been completed or that an approved Resource Management Plan is in place.
5. Certificates of Occupancy will not be issued for this property until the final archaeological report has been received and approved by the City Archaeologist.



BAR CASE #2008-0114,0115,0116 9/17/2008



NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

UPDATE: The three related cases for this project (BAR Case #2008-0114, 2008-0115, and 2008-0116) were first docketed for the July 30, 2008 Board hearing. The applicant requested a deferral prior to the hearing to address concerns raised by Staff. Since then, the applicant's team has met with Planning and Zoning Staff (BAR and Development) to discuss concerns raised by Staff and examine alternative schemes. The focus of the restudy of the front façade has considered the reconstruction of the front porch on 532 North Washington Street and the architectural expression of the infill addition on Washington Street.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval for a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate to fully encapsulate the rear (west) and (south) elevations of the building at 532 North Washington Street, to construct a side and rear addition. The applicant also proposes to demolish portions of the masonry wall on the front (east) and side (north) elevations to accommodate new window and door openings. In addition, the applicant proposes to demolish the existing non-historic front porch and steps.

II. HISTORY:

532 North Washington Street is a freestanding, two-story brick building at the southwest corner of North Washington and Pendleton streets. It is a Washington-style rowhouse that was originally constructed as a residence approximately in the late 1920s. The building first appears on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from 1941, but not on the 1921 edition. The 1941 map depicts the building as a dwelling with a one-story front porch and a one-story rear porch, as well as depicting several two-story dwellings with one-story front porches on the west side of the 500 and 600 blocks of North Washington Street. An undated photograph confirms the presence of a one-story front porch with a standing seam metal porch roof. The building retains its original one-over-one double hung wood windows and concrete sills. The front elevation of the building is notable for its use of a textured brick set in deeply recessed mortar joints.

In 2002, the Board approved an application with conditions for alterations to the windows and doors (BAR Case # 2002-00224, September 4, 2002). In this case the Board conditioned that the applicant retain and repair the existing wood windows. In 2004, the applicant made an application for demolition/encapsulation and an infill addition (BAR Case # 2004-00244 and BAR Case # 2004-00245). The application was deferred from the November 17, 2004 hearing due to unresolved zoning issues. The cases were determined inactive by March 9, 2006. BAR files include a letter of opposition from the property owner at 528 North Washington, citing concerns that windows would be blocked.

The initial submission was reviewed by the Old Town North Urban Design Advisory Committee (UDAC). On July 25, 2008, Sally Ann Greer, chair, provided comments from UDAC regarding the project and requesting that the Board defer the application. UDAC was concerned about the waiver of the rooftop screening requirement for HVAC equipment, as well as the parking reduction and encroachment on Washington Street. The latter two concerns will be addressed through the development review process.

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?

While the proposed demolition/encapsulation encompasses more than 50% of the historic building, Staff finds that the historic integrity is generally maintained on the two most important and visible elevations. Furthermore, the side (south) elevation is one that typically would have been a party wall and thus not visible. Staff has determined that the existing front porch is not historic.

Staff recommends approval for the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate as submitted.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. To insure that significant information is not lost as a result of the current development project, the applicant shall hire an archaeological consultant to complete a Documentary Study. The applicant shall contact Alexandria Archaeology to obtain a scope of work for this investigation **by the next concept submittal.**
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3. The statements in archaeology conditions below shall appear in the General Notes of all

site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheet piling and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:

- a. All required archaeological preservation measures shall be completed prior to ground-disturbing activities (such as coring, grading, filling, vegetation removal, undergrounding utilities, pile driving, landscaping and other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of the Zoning Ordinance) or a Resource Management Plan must be in place to recover significant resources in concert with construction activities. To confirm, call Alexandria Archaeology at (703) 838-4399.
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 - c. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
4. The final site plan shall not be released until the City archaeologist confirms that all archaeological field work has been completed or that an approved Resource Management Plan is in place.
 5. Certificates of Occupancy will not be issued for this property until the final archaeological report has been received and approved by the City Archaeologist.

V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The proposed project impacts on existing window openings for the adjacent property on the north interior lot line. The applicant shall meet with Code Enforcement Engineering section to resolve this conflict. Proposed construction shall comply with C-1 below.
- F-2 Verification is required from the adjacent property owner affected in F-1 above that the existing windows are not Code requirements for ventilation or emergency egress.
- C-1 All exterior walls within 5 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides, with no openings permitted within the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. (USBC 704.5).
- 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).
- C-3 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- 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 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-7 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-8 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-9 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.
- C-10 Required exits, parking, and accessibility within the building for persons with disabilities must comply with USBC Chapter 11. Handicapped accessible bathrooms shall also be provided.
- C-11 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-12 A demolition permit is required for the proposed project (USBC 108.1).
- C-13 Where appliances are located $\leq 10'$ from a roof edge or open side with a drop $\geq 24"$, guards shall be provided (USBC 2801.1)

Alexandria Archaeology:

Archaeology Conditions

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Open Space

The developer shall integrate aspects of the historic character of the property into the design of open space for this project and shall provide and erect interpretive signage that highlights the history and archaeology of the site. The archaeological consultant (see Archaeology Conditions) shall provide information about the history of the site for use by the designers as early as possible during the concept review process prior to submittal of the site plan for preliminary review. Preliminary plans shall indicate themes and possible locations of interpretive markers. The actual locations shall be part of the first submission of the final plan for review. Prior to release of the final site plan, the consultant shall provide text and graphics for the signage subject to approval by OHA/Alexandria Archaeology, the Planning Department, and the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities.

Code

C-1 All required archaeological preservation measures shall be completed in compliance with Section 11-411 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Archaeology Findings

F-1 This development property is located on the City block that was part of the late 18th/early 19th-century estate of John Dundas, a prominent citizen and early mayor of the town. Known as Dundas Castle or Castle Thunder, the mansion that stood on the block was constructed on the south side of Pendleton Street for Dundee by Newton Keene between 1785 and 1790. The estate had extensive gardens and towering trees and was surrounded by a picket fence. At least two out-buildings were present on the block; these are shown on an 1853 lithograph and on the 1877 G.M. Hopkins insurance atlas. The structure was abandoned after the Civil War and continued to decay until it was razed in 1903. The current development property would have been part of a side yard of the mansion. It does not appear to have been the site of subsequent development. This area has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into life residential life in the late 18th/early 19th-century Alexandria.

Historic Alexandria:

Approve.

VI. IMAGES

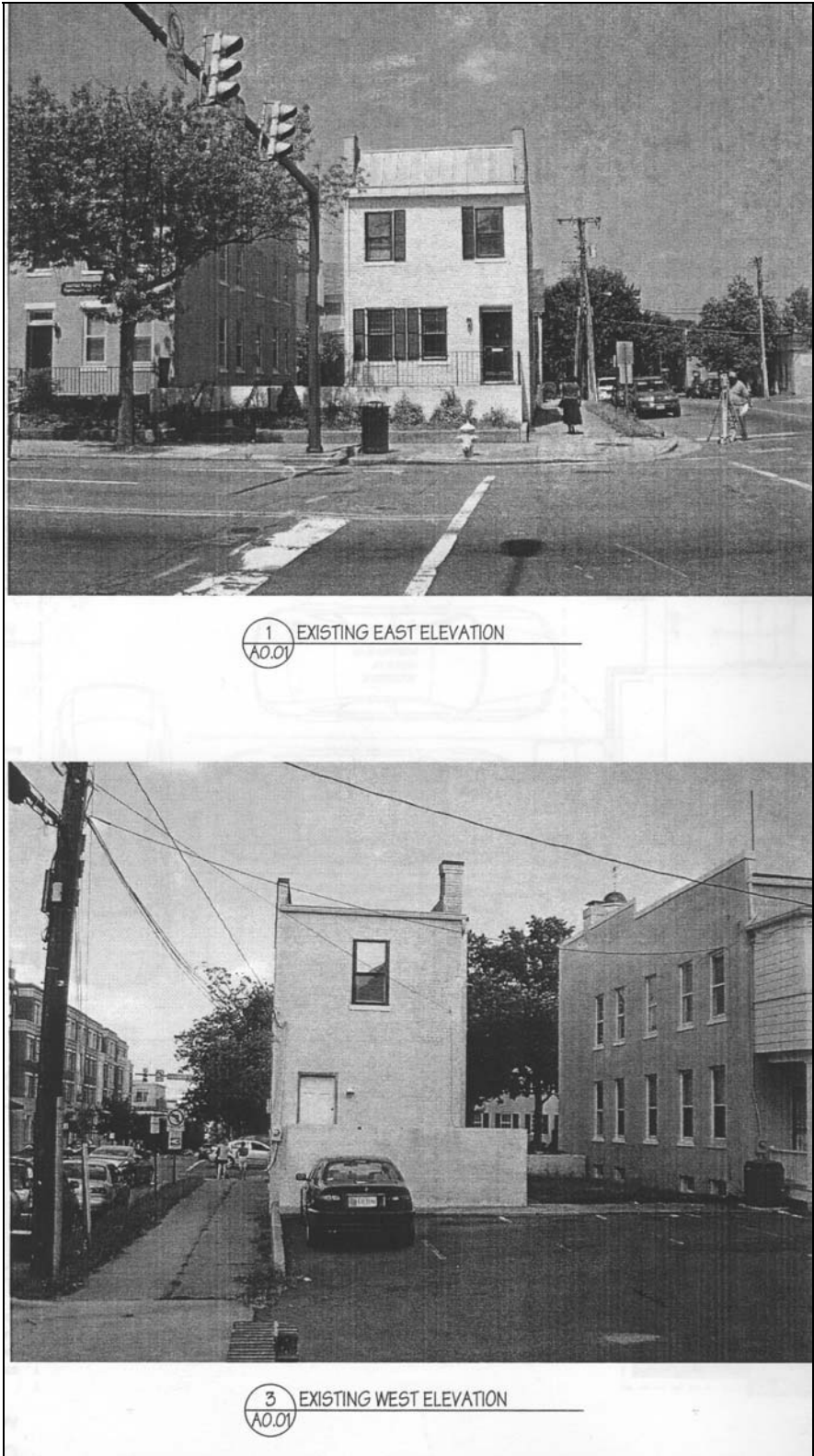


Figure 1. Existing conditions: front (east) elevation and rear (west) elevation.

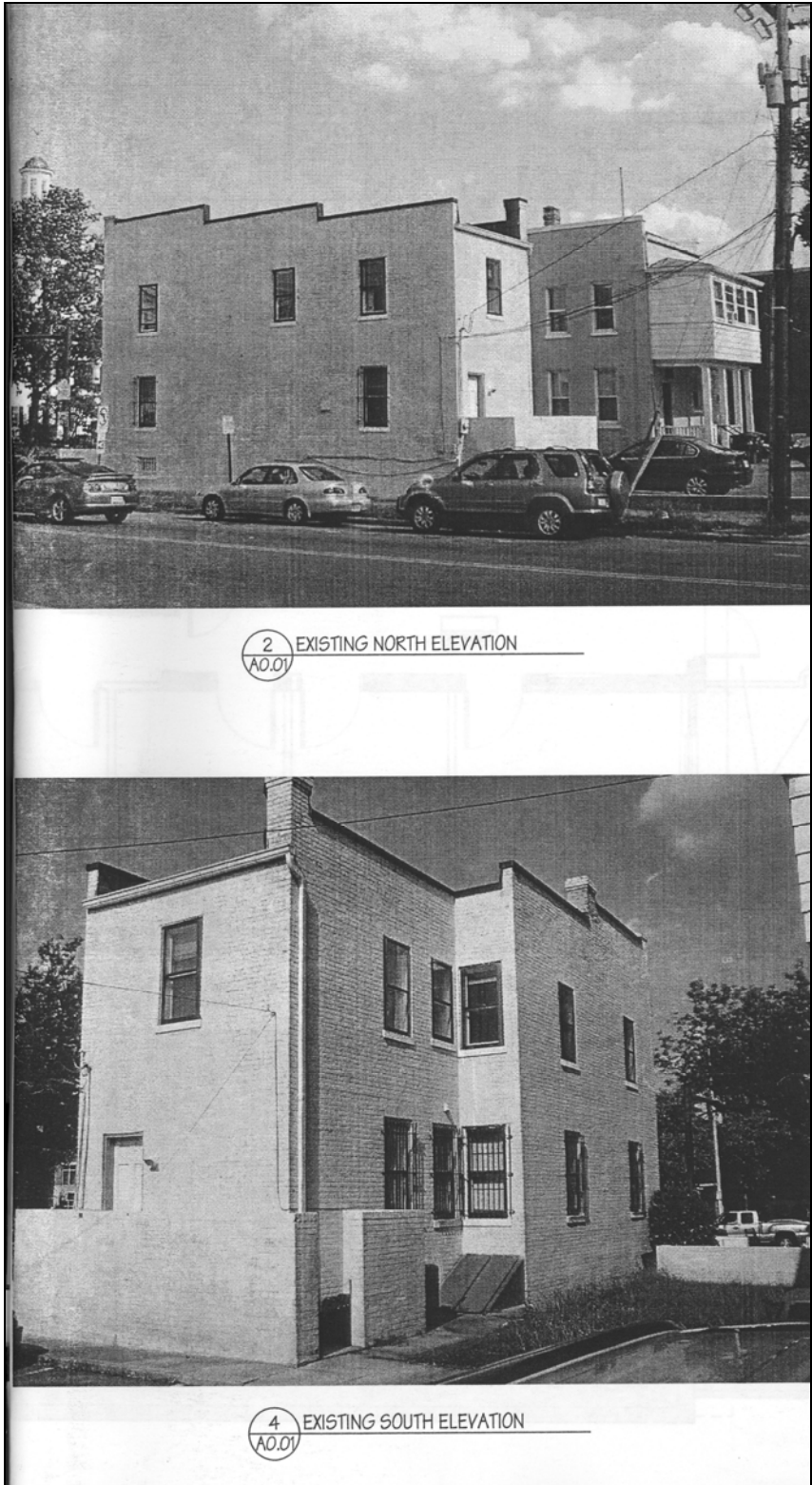


Figure 2. Existing conditions: side (north and south) elevations.

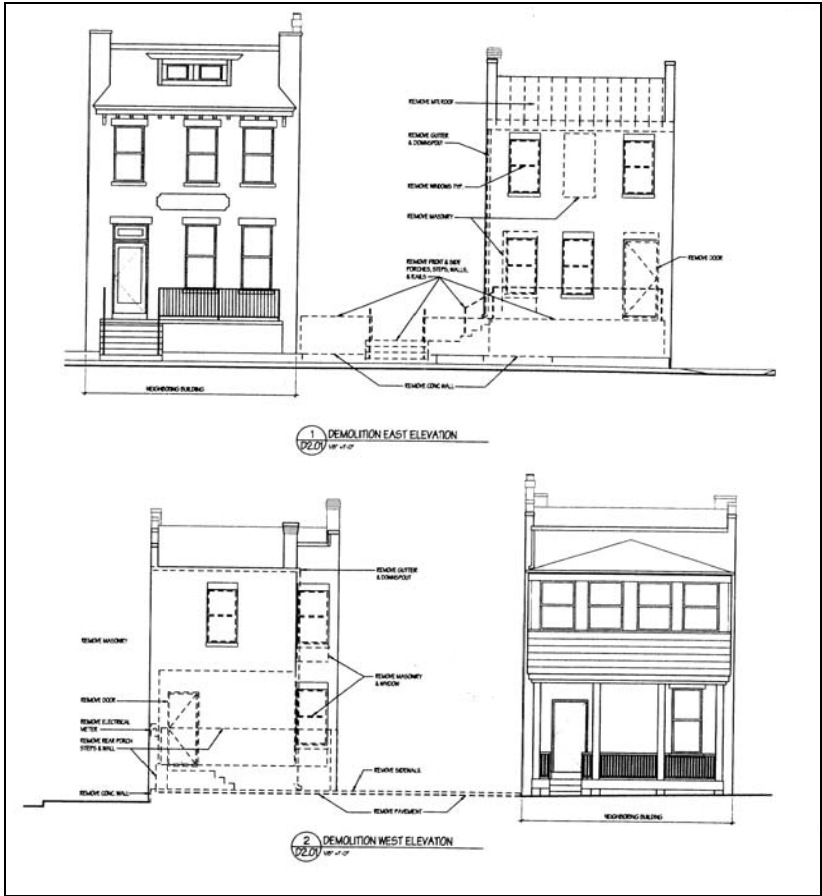


Figure 3. Proposed demolition for east and west elevations.



Figure 4. Proposed demolition for south and north elevations.