

Docket Item # 4 & 5
BAR CASE # 2010-0354/0355

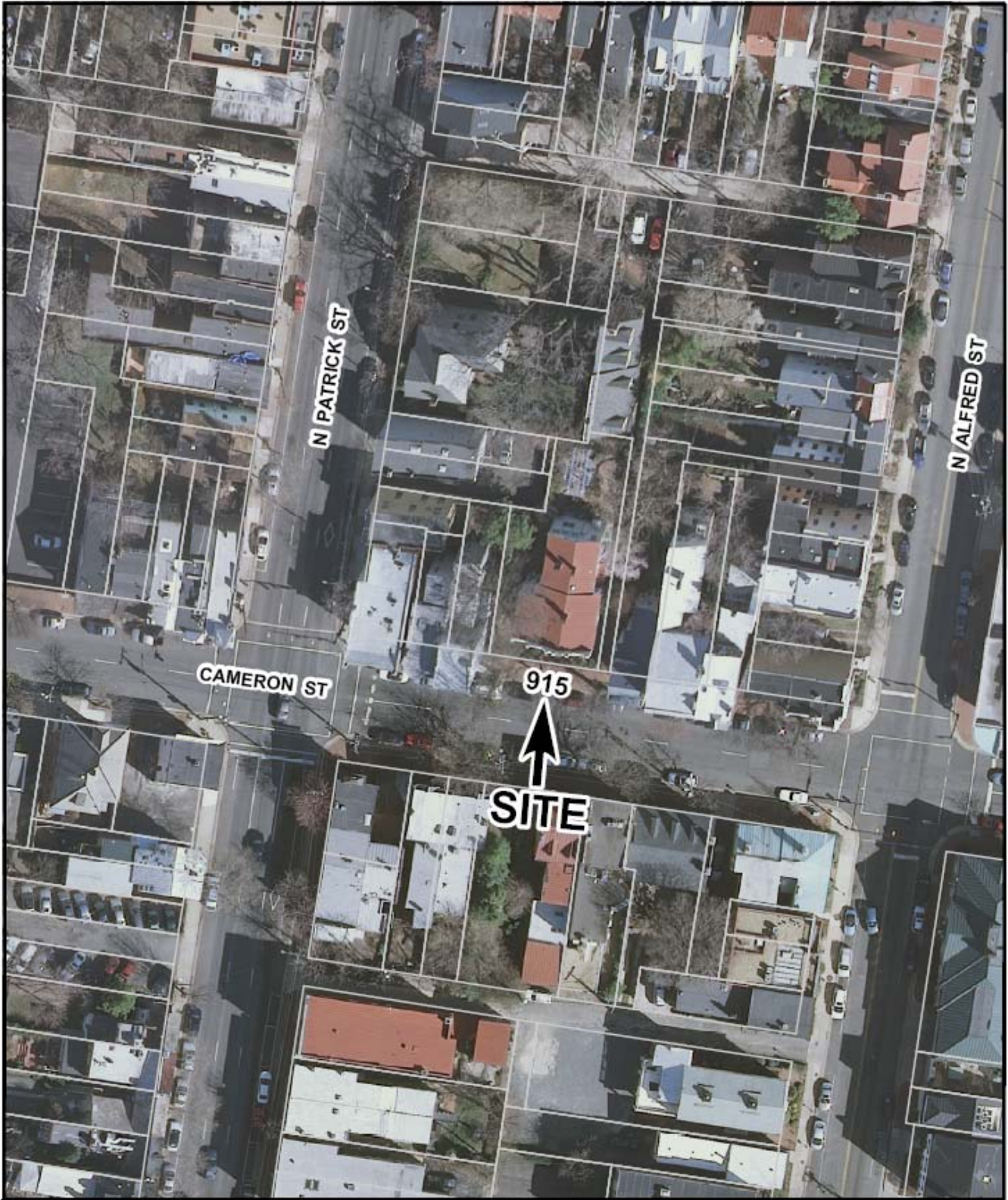
BAR Meeting
January 5, 2011

ISSUE: Permit to Demolish and Alterations (New Windows)
APPLICANT: Craig Miller and Lisa Brock
LOCATION: 915 Cameron Street
ZONE: RM / Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish and the Certificate of Appropriate for alterations as submitted.

****EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.

****BUILDING PERMIT NOTE:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Building and Fire Code Administration (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.



**BAR CASE #2010-0354
#2010-0355**



Note: Staff coupled the reports for BAR #2010-0354 (Permit to Demolish) and BAR #2010-0355 (Certificate of Appropriateness) for clarity and brevity. This item requires a roll call vote.

I. ISSUE

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish and a Certificate of Appropriateness in order to undertake the following alterations at 915 Cameron Street.

Permit to Demolish

- Demolish a 2.5 foot by 4 foot portion of existing brick wall on the west (side) elevation of the main block for the installation of a new window.
- Demolish two, 2.5 feet by 4 feet portions of brick on the east (side) wall of the rear ell for the installation of three new windows.
- Demolish a 2.5 foot by 4 foot portion of the brick wall above the existing door on the north (rear) elevation for a new window.
- Demolish approximately 10 square feet below and around the existing paired first floor windows on the north (rear) elevation for the installation of a new bay window with trim.
- The total area of demolition is approximately 50 square feet.

Alterations

- Install a new six-over-six, simulated divided light, double-hung wood window on the first floor of the west elevation of the main block, behind the existing six foot wood fence facing Cameron Street.
- Install three new six-over-six, simulated divided light, double-hung wood windows on the east elevation of the two story ell (one window will be installed on the second floor and two windows will be installed on the first floor).
- Install a new six-over-six, simulated divided light, double-hung wood window on the north elevation.
- All windows will be manufactured by Kolbe & Kolbe (Performance Divided Lite) and will have 7/8" muntins with a beveled profile and champagne colored spacer bars.
- On the north elevation a new projecting bay window with trim will be constructed in place of the two double-hung windows on the first floor.
- Where the existing windows and door are being removed, the voids will be filled in with brick painted to match the house. The brick will be butt-jointed, not toothed-in, to retain the ghost of the previous opening.

II. HISTORY

The two story, five bay brick house at 915 (formerly 913) Cameron Street dates from the **early 19th century**. Ethelyn Cox's book *Historic Alexandria, Virginia: Street by Street* includes the following description: "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.'"

Sanborn Fire Insurance maps show a series of additions to the rear of the house 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.

On December 29, 2007, the BAR approved a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and an addition and alterations at 915 Cameron Street (BAR Case #2007-0261 & 0262). The project included a one story addition on the west façade and alterations to the formerly enclosed second story rear porch. In May 2010, BAR Staff approved revisions to the BAR approved plans for the installation of at-grade grates for a basement renovation project and a new basement a railing on the east elevation, both which were functionally not visible from the public right-of-way.

III. ANALYSIS

Staff has no objection to the proposed demolition of portions of the existing walls for new window openings and, furthermore, finds that the proposed minor alterations are compatible with the existing building and surrounding area. The proposed project complies with zoning ordinance regulations.

Permit to Demolish

In considering a Permit to Demolish, 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, none of the criteria for demolition are met and the Permit to Demolish should be granted. The areas proposed for demolition are minimal, and are located on secondary elevations and/or are not visible from the public right-of-way. No character defining features of uncommon design or historic merit are impacted, nor do the small areas of demolition compromise the integrity of the building as a whole.

Alterations

Staff has no objection to the proposed alterations, as they are both minor in scale and will be minimally—if at all— visible from the public right-of-way. Although the windows proposed by the applicant are being installed in new openings and are not replacement windows, they are none-the-less consistent with the Board’s recently adopted Window Policy, which permits the use of simulated divided light windows on secondary elevations. In the opinion of Staff, the proposal to remove existing windows and fill in the voids, and to add new windows, are appropriate modifications which demonstrate how historic buildings are adapted for modern needs over time. This evolution is not unlike the evolution of the house described by Ethelyn Cox in her book *Historic Alexandria Virginia Street by Street* (see excerpt above).

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish and the Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations as submitted.

STAFF

Stephanie Sample, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Administration:

- C-1 A building permit is required to be issued prior to start of any work.
- C-2 The permit application shall include;
- The use of the rooms where new windows/brick infill will occur.
 - Sill height and clear opening dimensions for any bedroom window
 - The “U”, “R”, and Solar Co-efficient
 - Framing detail of new bay window
 - Lintel schedule
- C-3 No new openings are permitted in exterior walls located between zero and five feet from a property line.

V. IMAGES

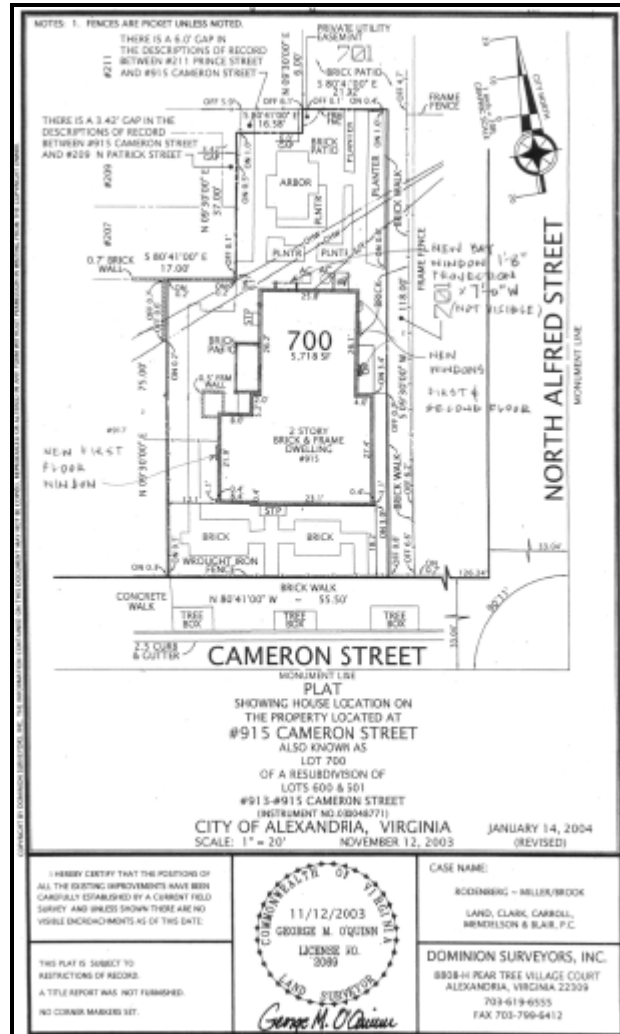


Figure 1. 915 Cameron Street plat.



Figure 2: Front façade of 915 Cameron Street (no changes proposed).



Figure 3: East (side) elevation, looking south.



Figure 4: East (side) elevation facing north.



Figure 5: North (rear) elevation.



Figure 6. Proposed alterations.