

Docket Item #9
BAR CASE #2003-0301

BAR Meeting
December 17, 2003

ISSUE: Re-approval of demolition/capsulation

APPLICANT: Robert S. Larson

LOCATION: 1119 ½ Queen Street

ZONE: CL/Commercial

****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 the Code Enforcement Bureau (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Enforcement, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate.

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

DISCUSSION:

Applicant s Description of the Undertaking:

Add a 2 story rear addition with new siding, windows & doors.

Update:

The proposed demolition/capsulation is identical to that proposed last year (BAR Case #2002-144) and approved by the Board on June 26, 2002.

Issue:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish the existing one story frame rear addition. In addition, the proposed project includes the capsulation/demolition of the entire rear wall and a portion of the roof and the insertion of three new window openings on the east elevation of the main block.

History and Analysis

The freestanding, two-story, frame, vernacular Italianate dwelling is an excellent example of its type and maintains a high level of integrity. Map research suggests that the house was constructed prior to 1877 and between 1896 and 1902 attained its present configuration with a large, two-story and smaller, one story addition extending out from the main block toward the rear of the lot. By 1931, a small porch off the west side of the one story kitchen addition had been partially enclosed to create a mud room. Today the house at 1119 ½ Queen Street is highly visible due to the adjacent vacant lots. However, throughout most of its existence, it had neighbors to the east and west.

In considering a Permit to Demolish or Capsulate, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, Sec. 10-205(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 and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the city?
- (5) 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?

(6) Would retention of the building or structure help maintain the scale and character of the neighborhood?

In Staff's opinion, none of the above criteria are met and the proposed demolition/capsulation is acceptable. An earlier version of the project, which was reviewed by Staff through the BZA appeal process, entailed the demolition/capsulation of both the two story and the one story additions. Staff felt strongly that preservation of the two story addition was necessary to preserve the distinctive massing of the house and the applicant responded to that request. Staff believes the present proposal, requiring the demolition of the less visually prominent one story rear addition as well as demolition/capsulation of portions of the rear wall and roof and east elevation, is reasonable and recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate.

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.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

F-1 No Comment.

Alexandria Archeology:

F-1 Historic maps indicate that a structure was present on this property by the late 19th century. The lot therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities in 19th- century Alexandria.

R-1 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.

R-2 The above statements must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.