

Docket Item #6
BAR CASE #2003-0217

BAR Meeting
May 26, 2004

ISSUE: Demolition/capsulation
APPLICANT: Sheila Farrell
LOCATION: 409 North Henry Street
ZONE: CL/Commercial

BOARD ACTION, February 25, 2004: Deferred for restudy, 7-0.

The Board combined the discussion of docket item #s 2 & 3. On a motion by Mr. Meick, seconded by Mr. Zuckerkandel, the Board deferred for restudy the Permit to Demolish and the Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition. The vote on the motion was 7-0.

REASON: The Board agreed with the Staff recommendations but felt that there were too many unresolved issues to approve the project. In addition to the Staff recommendations, the Board had the following concerns and recommendations:

1. That the design has no basis in the historical architectural idiom of the Parker-Gray District;
2. That the first and second stories of the rear elevation do not relate well to each other;
3. That the design should be simplified and made more symmetrical;
4. That the first story could be improved by the addition of a second window, perhaps ganged together with the first;
5. That the fanlight above the sliding door is not typical of the district and should be omitted;
6. That a rectangular transom would be appropriate above the sliding door;
7. That the roof drainage system should be redesigned to avoid encroachment on the property to the north;
8. That a shed or flat roof which slopes to the south could address the drainage issue and create a flounder form addition, which is more historically typical of the district;
9. That the exterior light fixtures should be smaller than shown on the elevation and that the first story light be located to the side of the door rather than above it, if possible;
10. That the windows could be simplified by removing the muntins;
11. That vertical trim boards should separate the addition from the new construction on the side walls;
12. That care should be taken to ensure that the interior plans and exterior elevations correspond;

13. That the applicant may want to consider seeking the assistance of a design professional.

SPEAKERS: Brad Novak, property owner, spoke in support of the project and indicated that he was willing to consider any changes the Board might suggest.
Brian Carr, contractor, spoke in support.

****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.

NOTE:

As there have been no changes in the extent of the demolition/capsulation proposed, Staff here repeats the Staff report from February 25, 2004.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate.

NOTE: In accordance with Board of Architectural Review Bylaws, this docket item requires a roll call vote.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate for a two story addition to be located at the rear of the house. The addition will be the same width as the existing building. The entire rear (east) wall of the existing house will be capsulated and/or demolished. The proposed new addition will also entail the capsulation of a portion of the rear of the roof of the existing house.



Figure 1 - Front view



Figure 2 - Rear view

II. HISTORY:

The two story frame house was constructed circa 1903 (Building Permit #37, 4/21/1903). It replaced a smaller frame dwelling which had existed on the site from at least 1891. When the present house was first constructed, it consisted of a two story front portion 26' long and a narrower, one story rear ell 12' long. The house was clad in "rustic weather boarding" and its flat roof was covered in tin. The estimated construction cost was \$300. The rear addition was expanded to its present footprint and two story height in 1931 (Building Permit #302A, 7/16/1931). In 1981, a permit was issued for various repairs, including two new front windows (Building Permit #37101, 6/2/1981). According to the minutes of the September 6, 1988 Board hearing, the Board approved unspecified alterations at the property, which then still served as a dwelling. In 2000, Staff gave administrative approval to interior alterations and historically appropriate window repair/replacement as part of a renovation of the building for commercial use

(BLD2000-01231, 4/12/2000).

While the building retains its original massing when viewed from the front, there is little original exterior fabric extant. The walls are clad in aluminum siding. The one-over-one wood windows appear to be modern, probably dating to the renovation in 2000. The front door is a modern wood six panel door. If there was once a cornice or any other trim, it has been removed or concealed by the siding.

III. ANALYSIS:

In considering a Permit to Demolish, 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?
- (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, the proposed demolition does not meet any of the above criteria. The rear section of the house, where the rear wall and small section of roof will be demolished and/or capsulated, dates to circa 1931 and has no significant architectural features.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff 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 All exterior walls within 3 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.

- C-2 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-3 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.

- C-4 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.

- C-5 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

- C-6 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

- C-7 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully detail the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.

- C-8 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-9 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:

It is difficult to judge if the open space requirement is met. There is no calculation included.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 The Sanborn Insurance Map indicates that a house was present on this lot by 1891. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources which 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 statement must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.