

Docket Item #7  
BAR CASE #2004-0276

BAR Meeting  
January 26, 2005

**ISSUE:** Re-approval of demolition/capsulation

**APPLICANT:** Kevin Abbott

**LOCATION:** 330 North Patrick Street

**ZONE:** RB Residential

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**\*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 the rear shed and portions of the front porch and denial of the request to demolish the first story front wall.

**NOTE:**

This docket item requires a roll call vote.

**UPDATE:**

This project has come before the Board in 1999, 2002, and 2003 (BAR Case #99-0098 & 0054, 4/28/1999 & 10/27/1999; BAR Case #s 2001-292 & 279, 3/27/2002; BAR Case #s 2003-181 & 182, 8/27/2003). In the first case, portions of the project were approved and portions deferred for restudy. The applicant submitted again in late 2002 and after a deferral for restudy, the Board approved the project with conditions. As a year had elapsed without the project commencing, the applicant submitted for re-approval in 2003 and the project was again approved with conditions. The current project is nearly identical to that approved in 2002 and 2003 except that in addition to encapsulating the first story front wall by enclosing the open front porch, the applicant is now proposing to demolish a significant portion of that wall. A second departure from the previously approved plans is the demolition of the rear shed.

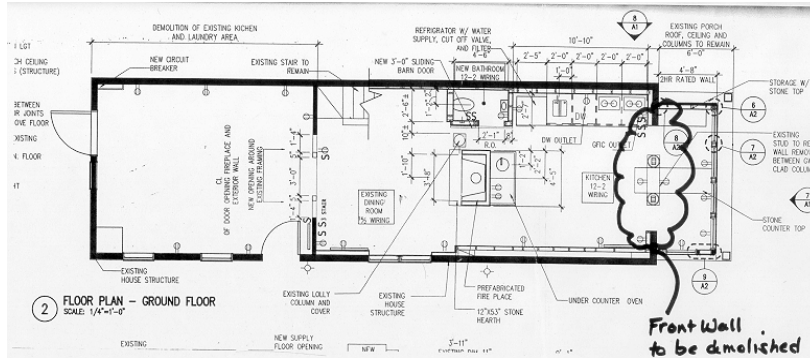
**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting a permit to demolish a section of the front wall on the first story measuring approximately 8' wide and 7' high. This section includes the front door and doorframe, window and window frame and the wall between them, with the exception of two studs to remain. The existing front porch railing will be removed, but all other portions of the porch will remain intact. The porch will be enclosed on three sides, encapsulating most of the front wall on the first story. In addition, the applicant is requesting approval of the demolition of the single story shed at the rear of the property.

The frame shed is 20' wide by 15' deep and is clad in corrugated metal.



**Figure 1- 330 North Patrick front**



**Figure 2 - Plan showing front wall**

The front of the property is visible from Patrick Street. The rear is visible from the north-south public alley behind the property.

**II. HISTORY:**

The two-story, two-bay, frame, vernacular Second Empire residence at 330 North Patrick Street appears to be present on the 1877 Hopkins Atlas and is certainly present on the 1891 Sanborn Atlas. The modest dwelling had a one-story rear ell which was replaced sometime in the 20th century with the present two-story rear addition. Based on map and building permit research, the front porch appears to have been constructed between 1931 and 1939. A shed first appears on the 1902 Sanborn Map. The mapping suggests that the frame shed was extended in depth and was clad in metal siding by 1941.

As explained above, the Board has approved removal of the porch railing and capsulation of the front wall on two prior occasions (BAR Case # 2001-292, 3/27/2002; BAR Case # 2003-181, 8/27/2003).

**III. ANALYSIS:**

In considering a Permit to Demolish or Capsulate, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, Sec. 10-205(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, the demolition of the railing of the front porch and of the rear shed do not rise to the level of any of the above criteria. The porch postdates the house by at least forty years and the railing does not exhibit noteworthy design or craftsmanship. Similarly, Staff does not believe the shed possesses any particular architectural or historical significance. Like many sheds of the period, it was most likely constructed in a somewhat haphazard manner of the materials at hand with little thought to design or craftsmanship and has been subject to various alterations over the years. Thus, Staff has no objection to the demolition of the porch railing and rear shed.

However, the demolition and capsulation of the front wall of the house on the first story is of great concern to Staff. The area to be removed and capsulated constitutes nearly one-half of the most significant and prominent facade of the house. The demolition and capsulation will destroy original or early building fabric, including a door, window and siding, and seriously alter the historic character and appearance of this facade. As stated in the *Design Guidelines*, "a central tenet of the philosophy of historic preservation is that original historic materials should be retained and repaired..." (Siding - Page 1, Windows - Page 2, Doors - Page 2). The Boards have been more accepting of additions and even somewhat experimental treatment of rear elevations because it has been the traditional pattern to add onto the rear of existing buildings instead of the front.

Staff acknowledges that the Board has approved the capsulation of the front porch at 330 North Patrick Street on two previous occasions, despite Staff recommendations for denial and the concerns of some Board members that capsulation could allow for the eventual demolition of the wall. Now with more fully developed drawings, it is clear that the front wall *will be demolished*. Staff recommends denial of the capsulation and demolition of the front wall and believes it is now appropriate for the Board to reconsider the previous approvals.

#### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the permit to demolish the rear shed and portions of the front porch and denial of the request to demolish the first story front wall.

## 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 taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.

### Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”