

Docket Item #10  
BAR CASE# 2005-00104

BAR Meeting  
May 25, 2005

**ISSUE:** Demolition/capsulation

**APPLICANT:** William Cromley

**LOCATION:** 1210 Queen Street

**ZONE:** CRMU-M/Commercial

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## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

## **I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish for alterations and a third story addition in order to adaptively reuse the early 20<sup>th</sup> century warehouse structure as an 8-unit residential condominium. The existing flat roofed, brick building has two stories above a partially exposed basement and measures 30' wide by 100' long. At the same time, the applicant is also requesting concept approval for the alterations and addition (Docket item #11, BAR Case #2005-105).



**Figure 1 - Front elevation**



**Figure 2 - East side elevation**

## **Demolition for third story addition**

The most extensive demolition is required by the third story addition. The existing roof structure will be removed and replaced by a new floor system/roof deck for the third story. This new plate will be sunk several feet lower than the existing roof. The existing parapet brick parapet obscures view of the roof. A section of this new roof 24' wide by 84' long will then be capsulated by the new third story.

## **Other demolition and capsulation**

- All existing doors and windows will be removed and replaced. For the most part, the existing openings will remain as they are.
- On the front (north) elevation, all openings will remain unaltered, except that the basement window to the left of the stairs will be reopened and extended. The existing front stairs will be demolished and rebuilt.
- The west elevation will remain as is except that two areas of bricked-in openings will be

redone. The existing brick will be removed and new matching brick will be inserted.

- The east elevation will have a number of minor alterations. All basement level window openings will be extended to create longer openings. The two center window openings on the first floor will be extended downward to become doors.
- The rear (south) elevation currently has no openings. Nine new window openings will be inserted in the south elevation, three each in the basement, first and second stories. A metal fire escape will be added to the west side of the south elevation, extending from the ground to the new third story and capsulating small portions of the wall.

The front (north) and east sides of the building are highly visible from Queen and Fayette Streets, while the west and rear (south) sides are visible in more limited views from Payne and Cameron Streets.

## **II. HISTORY:**

When built in 1909-1910, the two story brick building at 1210 Queen Street would have been among the most impressive structures in the Parker Gray neighborhood. Nearly 100 years later, the large, rectangular building with a distinctive tan brick facade, arched windows and doorways and decorative brickwork remains a notable presence in this district of largely small scale frame residences. Although not an obvious example of an architectural style, this utilitarian building is handsome, well proportioned and exhibits brick work of the level typically seen on some of the Alexandria's more high style residential buildings of the era. Its broad arched openings, corbeled cornice and masonry skin are suggestive of the Romanesque Revival style, but this may be more coincidental than intentional.

Building permit records maintained by the City's Code Enforcement division provide a history of numerous minor repairs and alterations from the 1920s to present day, including replacement of the front steps, creating the front basement level entry and repairing the roof and floors. At some point, possibly as early as 1913, a one story boiler house was appended to the rear of the building. It remained through the 1940s. However, despite the various minor alterations and deficient maintenance through the years, the building retains a high level of architectural integrity.

According to the September 1, 1909 construction permit, 1210 Queen Street designed by H. A. Riggs as a warehouse for William Peck. Peck had already established a substantial mercantile business at the southeast corner of Queen and Payne Streets, including a two story frame grocery (circa 1902), a one story frame warehouse (probably circa 1904), one story coal sheds and a coal and wood yard. According to an undated history prepared by BAR Staff, William Peck established his grocery business in 1898 or 1899 when he was in his mid-twenties. The construction of the large brick warehouse suggests that Peck had attained a new level of success.

In addition to the mercantile business, William Peck built a large number houses in the immediate vicinity of his business. Between 1902 and 1909 he was issued 14 building permits

for at least 22 separately addressed properties. Examples of his houses can be seen at 405 - 411 North West Street and at 1315 and 1317 Princess Street, permitted on September 1, 1909 . Most of Peck's houses appear to have been built in pairs and to be two-story, frame, buildings with half mansard roofs. It is not clear whether Peck actually built these houses or the warehouse at 1210 Queen Street. Although his name appears on the construction permits, he is not listed in the city directories under builder or contractor, but as grocer and wood and coal dealer.

Peck died on September 7, 1913 after his car was struck by a train at Hume Crossing in the St. Elmo subdivision north of town (*Alexandria Gazette*, 9/8/1913). Peck's store remained in use as a grocery for many years after his death, but the new brick warehouse was taken over by the Alexandria Laundry within months of Peck's death. The building was leased by Alexandria Laundry until 1940 when it was sold to the Southern Dry Cleaning Company. Later uses included a transfer and storage facility. In recent years it has housed a combination of commercial uses, including a constructions company office, storage and artist studios. The applicant purchased the property on December 8, 2004.

### **III. ANALYSIS:**

In considering a Permit to Demolish/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

Staff believes Criteria #s 1 & 4 are applicable. Its large size and brick construction make the building a landmark in the neighborhood. It is the most substantial late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century warehouse building remaining in the Parker-Gray District, a neighborhood once ringed by industrial and commercial enterprises that employed many of its residents. The facade with its tan bricks and red mortar, arches composed of triple rows of headers with cast stone keystones and corbeled cornice is uncommonly well detailed for a building of its type. It serves as the anchor and monument to William Peck's impressive achievements. In the space of 15 years, Peck made a substantial contribution to the development of what was then the northwestern frontier of the city, both adding to the stock middle class housing in significant numbers and providing for many of the basic needs of the new residents through his grocery and coal business.

While Staff believes the building is significant, Staff does not feel the proposed demolition rises to a level that would diminish the significance of the building. According to the applicant, physical evidence on the interior of the building indicates that the existing roof was a later alteration and is located approximately 3' above the height of the original roof structure. The flat roof is not a portion of the building that is visible to the public. For these reasons, Staff finds the removal of the existing roof acceptable.

The proposed alterations of existing openings are kept to a minimum and are consistent with the architectural character of the building. The new openings in south elevation and capsulation by the fire escape are acceptable as they are located on the least visible facade.

With respect to demolition, the *Design Guidelines* note that “[t]he Boards are extremely conscious of the need to preserve the existing building resources of the historic districts,” but go on to explain that “the Boards are also sympathetic to the needs of building owners to make contemporary 20<sup>th</sup> century use of a property.” Recognizing this balance, the Guidelines conclude that “[i]t is the policy of the Boards that the absolute minimum of demolition of an existing structure should take place” (Demolition of Existing Structures - Page 1). To conclude, Staff finds the proposed demolition and capsulation to be acceptable and in accordance with the guidelines.

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

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

## CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

### Code Enforcement:

- R-1 Prior to submission of the Final Site Plan #1, the developer shall provide a fire flow analysis by a certified licensed fire protection engineer to assure adequate water supply for the structure being considered.
  
- R-2 An automatic fire suppression system and monitored fire alarm system will be required for this structure. Provide location of fire department connection. FDC shall be within 100 feet of a fire hydrant as measured along the travelway.
  
- C-1 The building height must be kept under 50 feet or ladder truck access will be required.
  
- C-2 Several exterior walls are located within 5 feet of interior lot lines and shall have a minimum 1 hour fire rating without openings.
  
- C-3 This structure will be required to have handicap accessible units in accordance with Chapter 11 of the USBC. Provide information on the structure will comply with required exits, parking, and accessibility for persons with disabilities.
  
- C-4 This project is a Change of use from F-1, Factory to R-2, Residential. A change of use and new Certificate of Occupancy is required..
  
- C-5 Before a building permit can be issued on any proposed future alterations, a certification is required from the owner or owner's agent that the building has been inspected by a licensed asbestos inspector for the presence of asbestos (USBC 112.1.4).
  
- C-6 A separate tap is required for the building fire service connection.
  
- C-7 A Certificate of occupancy shall be obtained prior to any occupancy of the building or portion thereof, in accordance with USBC 119.0.
  
- C-8 The developer shall provide a building code analysis with the following building code data on the plan: a) use group; b) number of stories; c) type of construction; d) floor area per floor ; e) fire protection plan.
  
- C-9 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
  
- C-10 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

- C-11 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-12 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-13 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-14 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.

Historic Alexandria:

“I think this is an interesting concept.”

Transportation and Environmental Services:

No comments.