

Docket Item #7  
BAR CASE #2006-0165

BAR Meeting  
July 26, 2006

**ISSUE:** Demolition/capsulation  
**APPLICANT:** Robert A Bunn by John E. Cole  
**LOCATION:** 1101 Queen Street  
**ZONE:** CL/Commercial

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the application 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 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: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate to remove portions of the one story masonry building at 1101 Queen Street at the northwest corner of Queen and North Henry Streets in order to convert the building to new retail uses. Those portions of the building to be demolished include:

- New punched openings on the first level for new retail storefronts and entries. Three retail storefront spaces will be created along the North Henry Street facade and one on Queen Street.
- New punched openings will also be created on the second level. Along the North Henry Street facade 20 new openings will be created for new windows to match those existing on the north end of the building nearest Queen Street. An additional two windows will be punched through on the Queen Street facade.

**II. HISTORY:**

The commercial building at 1101 Queen Street was originally built in 1939 as the Lincoln Theater, a "colored theater". It is a two story brick art moderne building with a rounded corner and tower. The building has a facade of blond brick with contrasting red brick striping at the second level and at top of the corner turret and a watertable of red brick. Originally, the theater ticket booth was located at the corner apex and was flanked by entrances on Queen and North Henry Streets. The Queen Street entrance has been infilled with brick and the North Henry Street entrance doors have been replaced with new aluminum and glass doors. New windows have been added on the second level along North Henry Street. However, overall, the exterior of the building is remarkably unaltered from its original appearance as a movie theater.

It was designed by John J. Zink for H.A. Wasserman and built by local builder D.E. Bayliss (Building Permit #2224, 8/3/1939). Zink was one of the best known theater designers on the east coast in the 1930s and 1940s. In the 1960s the theater operated on the site in conjunction with a "pool hall and amusement arcade." The building was converted to its present use as a automobile parts store in 1971 (SUP #851, 10/6/1971).

According to a Washington, DC history web site:

'John J. Zink (1886-1952) was a native Baltimore architect who designed numerous movie houses in the Mid-Atlantic region during the early to mid 20th Century. "Zink was considered a top 'Moderne' architect at a time when many architects were designing in elaborate, emotional styles. Employing modest designs, Zink's attentions were directed toward technical aspects of theater architecture, such as clear views for all movie-goers, ideal lighting and acoustics. Often having his designs published in theater trade catalogues, Zink typically incorporated such amenities as nurseries, lounges and smoking rooms in his movie house plans."

"Zink began his architectural training at the Maryland Institute, practicing for a short time with Baltimore architects Wyatt and Nolting. By 1910, Zink had established an office in the Builder's Exchange Building, and was advertising in Baltimore's Business Directory. Prior to World War I, Zink relocated to New York to attend the Columbia School of Architecture. During this period, he worked closely with renowned theater architect Thomas W. Lamb. Returning to Baltimore in 1916, Zink worked in the office of Ewald G. Blanke, where he was involved in numerous movie house renovation projects and new design projects. After the early 1920s, Zink worked independently, winning commissions for the Takoma Theater at 6833 4th Street N.W. (1922); the Uptown Theater on Connecticut Avenue, N.W. (1936). The Uptown, designed for Warner Brothers, was part of a significant social change in Washington. It was built one block down Connecticut Avenue from Washington's first 'Park and Shop' center, in response to the car-driving public. The Art Deco Uptown was praised not for its architecture, but because it had been so cheap to build and because easy parking was already established.

The Senator Theater on York Road in Baltimore, one of the most-celebrated of Zink's theater designs, was constructed for Durkee Enterprises in 1939." Having made a name in the theater world as a prominent architect, Zink designed the Atlas Theater and several others for K and B Amusement Company.

The Baltimore firm of Zink, Atkins and Craycroft designed over 200 movie theaters in eastern cities during the heyday of movie theater design including the Uptown Theater on Connecticut Avenue in North West Washington. In addition to the Atlas Theater (1939) and Uptown (1936) Zink designed the Newton (1937), Apex (1941), Senator (1942), MacArthur (1945) and Naylor (1945) in Washington and the Flower (1950) in Silver Spring, MD."

Zink and also designed the Carver Theater now the Antioch Church of Christ at 1120 Queen Street at the west end of the block at Queen and North Fayette Streets, on the same block as the Lincoln Theater, as a movie theater in 1948.

In 1995 the Board approved the existing second story windows for offices (BAR Case #94-32PG).

The building is an important community landmark within the Parker-Gray District.

### **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?

Because this is a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century building Staff does not believe any of the above criteria are met. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted.

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.

Office of Historic Alexandria:

Alterations seem appropriate. Request for waiver of HVAC screening should be considered as it would disturb the roofline design more noticeably than the HVAC units.