

Docket Item #2
BAR CASE # 2007-0040

BAR Meeting
June 27, 2007

ISSUE: Demolition/encapsulation

APPLICANT: Brendan M. Owens

LOCATION: 227 North West Street

ZONE: RB/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following condition:

1. That the following statement appear in the General Notes of all site plans so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement:

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.

****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.

(Insert sketch here)

NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish to allow for the construction of a two story addition at the rear of the two story house. The proposed addition will capsule almost the entire rear facade of the existing house. The extent of demolition within the capsulated area is not shown in the submitted materials. An area on the roof of the existing building measuring approximately 2' by 2' will be demolished for the addition of a skylight. The rear of the house is visible from the two north-south public alleys at the rear.

II. HISTORY:

The two bay wide, two story frame house at 227 North West Street was constructed between 1891 and 1896 as an end unit in a row of five modest rowhouses (227-235 North West Street). When constructed, the houses each had a one story rear ell. Over the years, they have been subjected to a number of exterior alterations and several now have second story additions at the rear. At some point after 1985, the rear ell was removed from 227 North West Street. The house is clad in wood siding and retains its original fenestration pattern and Italianate cornice at the front. The windows and front door are modern replacements.

In 2005, the Board approved a very similar two story rear addition for 227 North West Street entailing an almost identical area and extent of capsulation (BAR Case #s 2005- 0077 & 0078, 7/27/2005). That project was never undertaken. In previous years, the Board has approved similar projects in the same block. In 2004, the Board approved demolition/capsulation and a second story rear addition at 231 North West Street (BAR Case #2004-00239 & 2004-00240, 11/10/2004). In 2003, the Board approved demolition/capsulation, alterations and a full two story rear addition at 209 North West Street (BAR Case #2003-0135 & 0136, 7/23/2003). In 1997, the Board approved demolition/capsulation and a second story rear addition and alterations at 233 North West Street (BAR Case #97-0002, 1/22/1997).

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

In the opinion of Staff, the proposed demolition does not meet any of the above Criteria. The proposed demolition/capsulation is almost entirely confined to the rear. Although the entire rear facade will be impacted, the narrow width of the house (approximately 12') means that a narrower addition, which would allow some of the rear of the original house to remain visible, is not practical. In addition, the rear has already been altered by the removal of the original one story ell.

Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archaeology and recommends that they be included as a condition of the approval.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish as submitted.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The proposed project impacts on existing window openings for the adjacent property on the north interior lot line. The applicant shall meet with Code Enforcement Engineering section to resolve this conflict.
- F-2 Verification is required from the adjacent property owner affected in F-1 above that the existing windows are not Code requirements for ventilation or emergency egress.
- C-1 All exterior walls within 5 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. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance.
- 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:

No comments were received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 This block was part of the African American neighborhood known as Uptown in the late 19th century. Tax records indicate the presence of a free African American household on the property in 1850. The lot therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities of African Americans 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.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

- R1. At the time of application for a building permit the applicant shall provide, to the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services, the information described below on a copy of the house location plat:
- In order to determine the area of disturbance in the absence of a grading plan, the disturbed area will be determined by adding 10' to the perimeter of the building (or addition) footprint and calculating the area within the increased perimeter. In addition a 10' wide access path from the edge of the disturbed area to the street or driveway must be included in the disturbed area calculation. Dumpsters, soil stockpiles and material storage areas must all be within the limits of disturbance as well.
- The annotated house location plat must meet the following criteria:
- No reduced, enlarged or faxed copies will be accepted.
 - The footprint area of the proposed improvements must be drawn to scale.
 - The additional 10' perimeter, construction access and other areas as described above must be shown to scale.
 - The overall dimensions of the proposed improvements must be shown.
 - The actual square footage of the disturbed area must be shown.
- R2. The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 8-1-22 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. [Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (T&ES)
- R3. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)

- R4. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R5. An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R6. No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (T&ES)