

Docket Item # 4  
BAR CASE # 2007-0133

BAR Meeting  
September 26, 2007

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish/Capsulate  
**APPLICANT:** Kevin Lanigan by Robert Bentley Adams & Associates  
**LOCATION:** 917 Oronoco Street  
**ZONE:** RB/Residential

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends denial of the application for a Permit to Demolish.

**\*\*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 must be approved by roll call vote.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish to remove portions of the standing seam metal roof at 917 Oronoco Street in order to construct two new dormers: a single dormer on the front slope of the roof and a large shed dormer on the rear slope. The applicant is also requesting approval of a window in the gable end at the third floor of the east elevation and the enlargement of an existing window to install a pair of french doors on the east elevation.

The proposed front dormer would require approximately 4' x 6.5', or 26 square feet of removal of the roof, while the rear shed dormer would require approximately 11' x 6.5' or 71.5 square feet of removal of the roof.

**II. HISTORY:**

917 Oronoco Street is one of a pair of semi-detached, wood townhouses constructed circa 1900. 917 and 919 Oronoco Streets appear on the 1902 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps. This section of the Parker-Gray neighborhood does not appear on the 1896 maps. As shown on the maps, the pair were constructed as mirror images, two-stories in height, with a slight ell shape, as indicated by the footprint on the map. The houses are characteristic of the style and type of house constructed in Parker-Gray at the turn of the century, vernacular with some detailing at the cornice, such as moldings and brackets, and standing seam metal roofs.

Staff did not locate any prior approvals for this property by the Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review.

**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?

Staff believes that 917 Oronoco Street meets the criteria 1,4, 5, and 6. Staff does not support the Permit to Demolish in order to construct new dormers on the front and rear slopes. The proposed dormers introduce a new design element that changes the character of the house and disrupts the historic roof configuration. Furthermore, the proposed dormers would change the visual balance that 917 Oronoco has with its adjacent pair, 919 Oronoco. Staff would support the new window on the east elevation in the gable end.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends denial of the application for a Permit to Demolish.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 The sidewalls of the dormers within 3'-feet of the property line shall have the appropriate UL rated assembly.
- 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 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 Additions and alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit (USBC 108.1). Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application (USBC 109.1).
- C-5 Construction permits are required for this project.
- C-6 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.