

Docket Item # 2
BAR CASE # 2007-0135

BAR Meeting
October 24, 2007

ISSUE: Demolition/encapsulation

APPLICANT: Saharat Prompol

LOCATION: 419 North West Street

ZONE: RB/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish as submitted.

BOARD ACTION, SEPTEMBER 26, 2007: The Board combined discussion of item # 6 & 7. On a motion by Mr. Meick, seconded by Mr. Lloyd, the Board voted to defer the application for restudy.

REASON: The Board agreed with the staff analysis that the design should be restudied to address issues of mass, scale and architectural compatibility. The Board felt that it would be necessary to reduce the size of the proposed addition to achieve compatibility with the existing house and neighboring buildings.

SPEAKERS: Ziad Demian, project architect, spoke in support.
Saharat Prompol, applicant, spoke in support.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish 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.

(Insert sketch here)

Update: The proposed addition and alterations have been modified somewhat in response to the Board's comments at the September 26, 2007 hearing. However, the extent of demolition and capsulation remains unchanged as does the Staff recommendation for approval of the Permit to Demolish.

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 three story addition at the rear of the existing two story brick house. An existing one story brick addition at the rear which measures 10' long by 14.5' wide will be demolished in its entirety. In addition, the proposed new construction will entail the demolition and/or capsulation of nearly all of the rear (east) wall of the existing main block on the first and second stories. A portion of the rear wall will remain exposed where the south side wall of the new addition is inset approximately 3' from that of the existing main block. A portion of the north wall of the existing main block at the rear corner will be demolished as the proposed new addition will wrap around the existing building at this location. Portions of the front (west) wall of the house on the first story will be capsulated by the construction of the proposed new front porch.

The addition is partially visible from the public right of way in views from the north and south through the undeveloped side yards of 419 North West Street and the two adjacent properties.

II. HISTORY:

The free-standing, two story brick house was constructed in 1938 according to city real estate records. This date is supported by the fact that the house is not shown on the 1931 Sanborn map but does appear on the 1941 map. The date of the rear addition is unknown. Visual inspection indicates that it postdates the main block. It does not appear on Sanborn maps dated 1941, 1986 and 1996 and is not found in the BAR records or the city's computerized building permit records. The existing house is representative of the modest housing that was built for and by the predominantly working class, African American residents of the Parker Gray area from the 19th century through the mid-20th century. This house is unusual in that it is completely freestanding. It is very plain but its red brick cladding, gabled portico and six-over-six double hung windows suggest a connection to the Colonial Revival style which was the favored architectural style in Alexandria through much of the 20th century.

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 rear addition is small in relation to the overall house and is of unknown vintage. The other demolition and capsulation will be largely confined to portions of the rear (east) wall of the main block and back of the north side wall. These areas are not visually prominent. The capsulation at the front for the porch will be limited and somewhat reversible. The proposed demolition and capsulation will not result in the loss of any noteworthy architectural features.

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:

- 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 be taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-2 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 110.3).
- C-3 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully details the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-4 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit. Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application. The plans must include all dimensions, construction alterations details, kitchen equipment, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical layouts and schematics.
- C-7 The new handrails must comply with USBC for a minimum/maximum height of 30 to 34 inches. The ends must extend 12" beyond the top and bottom risers. The handgrip position must not be more than 2-1/4" in cross-sectional dimension, or the shape must provide an equivalent gripping surface. The handgrip portion must have a smooth surface with no sharp corners. The space between the wall and handrail must not be less than 1-1/2".
- C-8 The new stairs must comply with USBC for riser and tread dimensions.
- C-9 Guardrail height and openings must comply with USBC 1012.2 and 1012.3.
- C-10 Handrails must comply with USBC 1009.11.
- C-11 Sheeting and shoring shall not extend beyond the property line; except when the developer has obtained a written release from adjacent property owners which has been recorded in the land records; or through an approved encroachment process.

- 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 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-14 All exterior walls within 5 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides of the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance. Openings in exterior walls between 3 and 5 feet shall not exceed 25% of the area of the entire wall surface (This shall include bay windows). Openings shall not be permitted in exterior walls within 3 feet of an interior lot line.
- C-15 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-16 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:

R – Approval as submitted.

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 The G.M. Hopkins insurance map shows that by 1877, at least one structure was present on the block bounded by West, Oronoco, Princess and Payne streets. 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. The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any demolition permit. (T&ES)