

Docket Item # 2  
BAR CASE # 2008-0030

BAR Meeting  
June 25, 2008

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish  
**APPLICANT:** Michael Bergner  
**LOCATION:** 927 Oronoco Street  
**ZONE:** RB/Residential

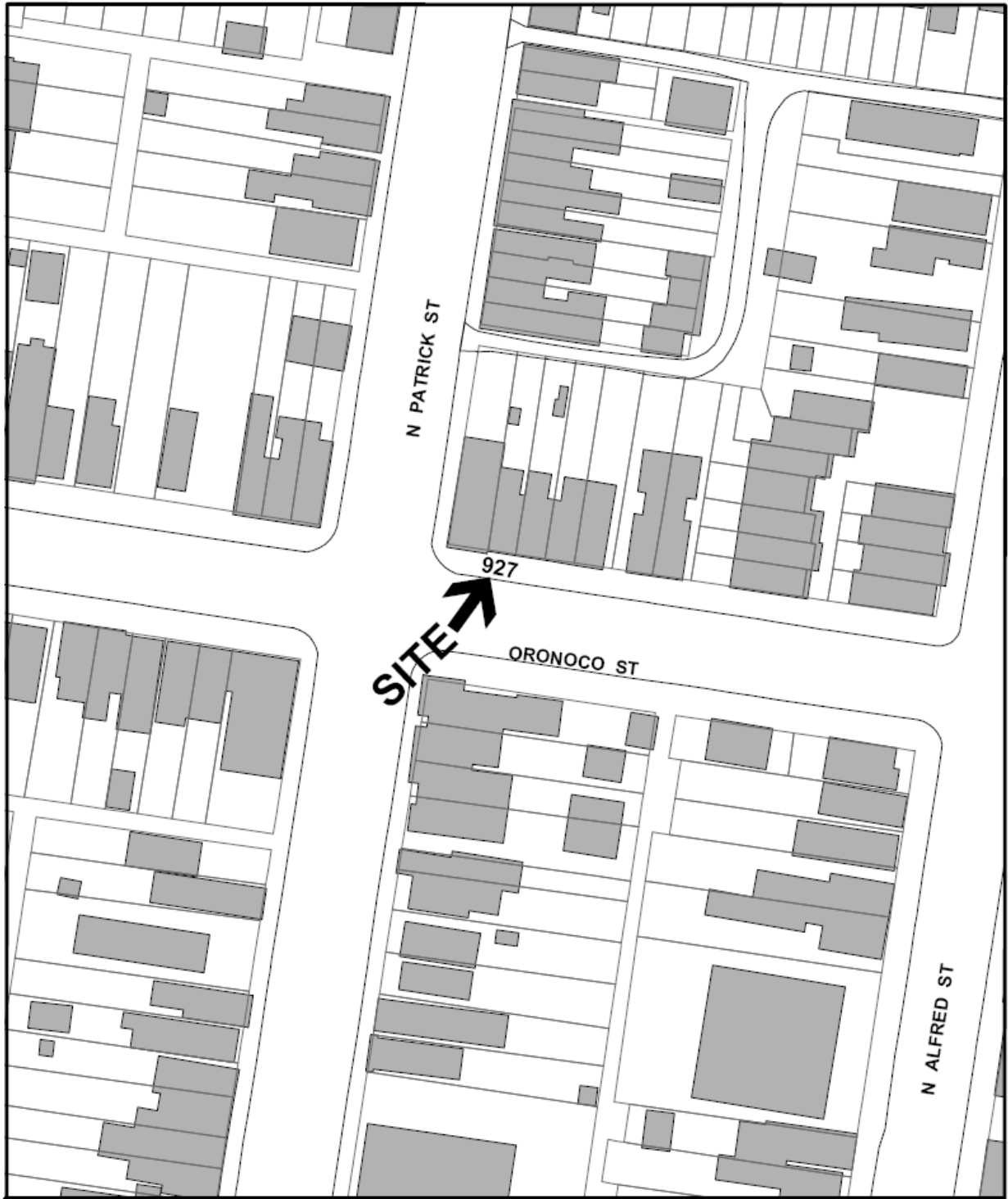
---

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant work with Staff to ensure that the reconstructed front façade is appropriate to the era of the building;
2. That as much of the existing historic brick be salvaged and reused to the greatest extent possible, and remain unpainted;
3. That any new brick used on the front façade be approved by Staff prior to use;
4. That the existing corbelled brick parapet be retained and repainted; and
5. That a control joint be placed sensitively where 927 Oronoco abuts 925 Oronoco Street.

**\*\*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.



BAR CASE #2008-0030

06/25/2008



**NOTE:** This item requires a roll call vote.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting an after-the-fact approval of a Permit to Demolish for the front façade of 927 Oronoco Street due to structural failure, caused by mortar and brick deterioration.

The City's Code Enforcement Department became aware that the front façade was severely structurally compromised following the removal of the paint on the brick surface and notified the owner that it needed to be corrected in a timely manner, to prevent it from being a threat to public safety. Due to extenuating timing issues, the work needed to commence prior to an official approval by the Board. Working with City Staff from Code and the Historic Preservation Section, the owner and his architect began the process to find a qualified contractor to initiate demolition in order to repair and structurally fortify the wall. The owner worked with Staff to address this issue and came before the Board at the April 23, 2008 meeting under Other Business to discuss the issue, and receive guidance.

Staff has discussed and stressed to the applicant the importance of salvaging and reusing historic brick to the greatest extent possible. The applicant has submitted to Staff for review and approval a replacement brick if needed. The applicant intends to reuse the existing front windows and trim, retain the character-defining brick parapet, and add a control joint where 927 Oronoco abuts 925 Oronoco Street.

Code Enforcement has reviewed and signed off on the drawings submitted by the applicant.

**II. HISTORY:**

927 Oronoco Street is a two story, two bay brick residence constructed around 1900 according to Real Estate Records. The building, one in a row of three similar residences, appears on the 1902 Sanborn Insurance Map, the first year this area was mapped. The row of three houses shares a heavy corbelled brick parapet. This row appears to have been altered over the years due to a variety of brick types found on the front facades, the fact that all three have been painted, and now have six-over-six windows, which give a more Colonial era appearance. In 1975, the interior of the three residences at 923, 925, and 927 Oronoco Street were entirely gutted (Building Permit #32074, 11/7/75).

Staff did not locate any prior approvals for 927 Oronoco Street by the Board.

**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 removal would be to the detriment of the public interest?
2. Is the building or structure of such interest that it could be made into an historic shrine?

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 to live?
6. Would retention of the building or structure help maintain the scale and character of the neighborhood?

Staff certainly recognizes that 927 Oronoco Street is a representative of the City's early 20th-century building stock and that all care should be demonstrated in any alterations to the building. Staff also recognizes the severe structural deterioration that has occurred to the front facade and the importance of correcting this situation as delicately as possible to ensure that the integrity of the building is maintained. Staff had an opportunity to view the exterior of the wall once the paint was removed, and believes the façade had been altered over the years due to the different types of bricks and mortar found, and the different bond patterns.

The plan set forth in the proposal appears sound and sensitive to the character of the building. Thus, staff supports the Permit to Demolish, emphasizing that all care and attention should be given to reconstructing the wall in such a manner that the character-defining features of corbelled brick parapet be maintained, and that as much historic brick be reused. The applicant has also indicated the desire to install jack arches over the windows and doors, which would be appropriate to the era of the building. Staff supports this alteration since it appears that the deteriorated façade had been significantly altered over the years.

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

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant work with Staff to ensure that the reconstructed front façade is appropriate to the era of the building;
2. That as much of the existing historic brick be salvaged and reused to the greatest extent possible, and remain unpainted;
3. That any new brick used on the front façade be approved by Staff prior to use;
4. That the existing corbelled brick parapet be retained and repainted; and
5. That a control joint be placed sensitively where 927 Oronoco abuts 925 Oronoco Street.

**V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

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

Code Enforcement:

Code has signed off on the building permits for this project.

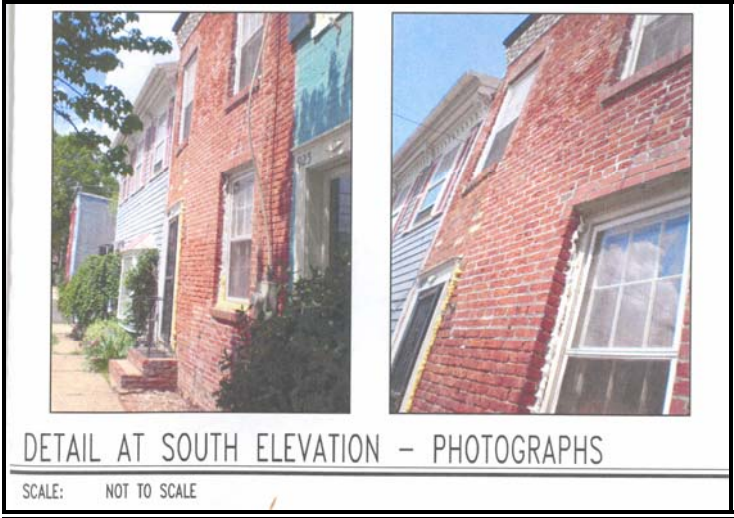
Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

**VI. IMAGES:**



**Figure 1 Photograph of Existing South Elevation**



**Figure 2 Detailed Photograph of South Elevation**

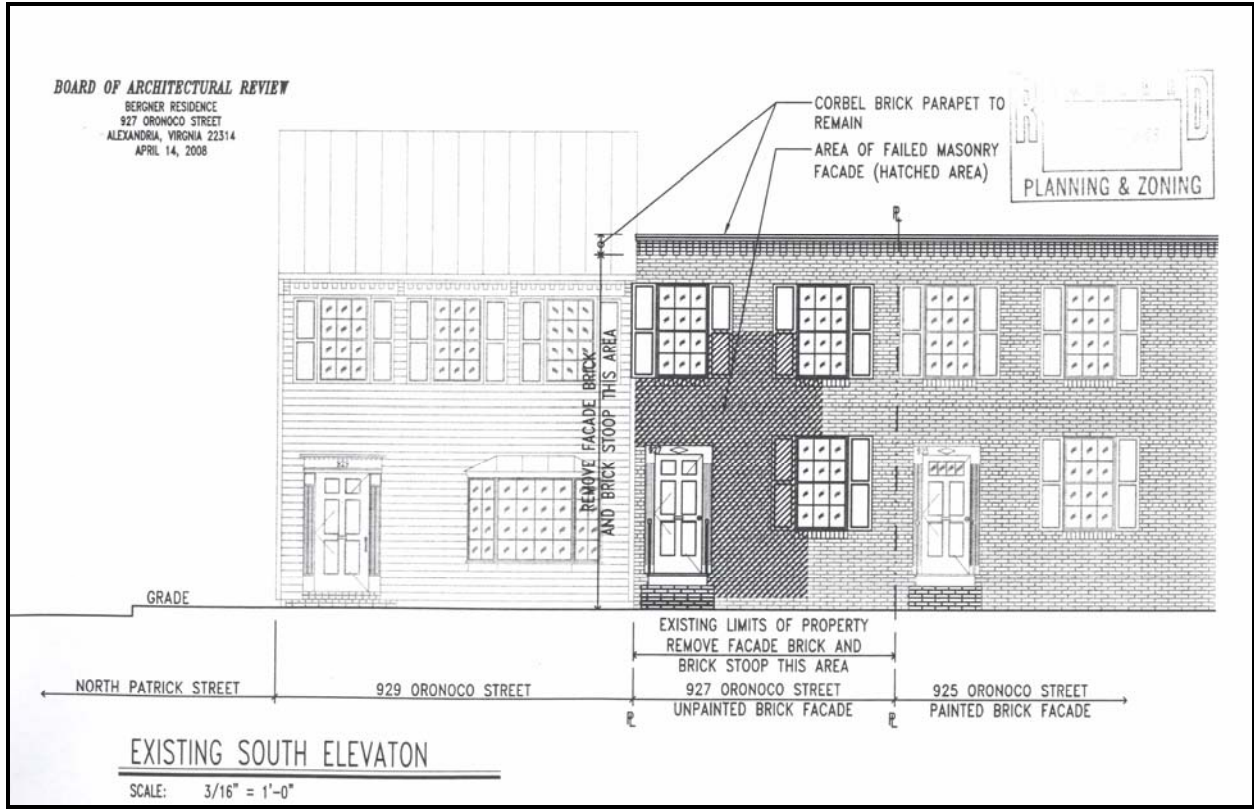


Figure 3 Existing South Elevation