

Docket Item # 6  
BAR CASE # 2008-0178

BAR Meeting  
October 22, 2008

**ISSUE:** Demolition/encapsulation  
**APPLICANT:** Patrick Camus for Peter Finn Erickson  
**LOCATION:** 1124 Princess Street  
**ZONE:** RB/Residential

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

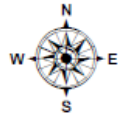
1. That the chimney not be demolished but be retained *in situ*; and,
2. The statements in archaeology conditions below shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
  - a. The applicant/developer shall 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.
  - b. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

**\*\*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 #2008-0178, 0179 10/22/2008**



NOTE: This docket item requires a roll call vote.

**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate portions of the dwelling at 1124 Princess Street for exterior alterations. The applicant is proposing to remove a portion of the rear (south) elevation measuring approximately 8.5' by 7.5' on the first story. The applicant is also requesting approval to demolish an existing chimney.

**II. HISTORY:**

1124 Princess Street is the westernmost of a series of four two-story, two-bay frame rowhouses at the corner of Princess and Fayette streets. The earliest map on which these rowhouses appear is the 1891 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map which describes the four dwellings as “negro tenements.” The 1891 map also shows the presence of one-story frame rear additions on all four dwellings. An architectural cohesion among the rowhouses is formed by the ornamentation of a common cornice with brackets across all four dwellings. The cornice and brackets represent the only ornamentation on these buildings, which have minimal decoration on door and window surrounds. The current form of the house appears by the 1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

Staff did not locate any prior approvals from the Board.

**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 amount of demolition and encapsulation on the first story does not meet the above criteria. The proposal impacts only a small portion of the rear of the dwelling. Regarding the proposed demolition of the chimney, the *Design Guidelines* note that “existing chimneys should be maintained *in situ* and not removed without a compelling reason and substantial justification.” In speaking with the applicant, the reason for the removal is to

accommodate internal changes. Staff does not find a compelling reason for removal of the exterior chimney at a highly visible location.

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish and Capsulate for the rear elevation but not for the chimney.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

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

1. That the chimney not be demolished but be retained *in situ*; and,
2. The statements in archaeology conditions below shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
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  - b. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

## **V. 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.
- C-2 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-3 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 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-5 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-6 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-7 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:

Approve.

### Alexandria Archaeology:

#### **Finding**

The Sanborn Insurance map indicates that a house was present on this lot by 1907. It is possible that this structure was built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Alexandria.

#### **Recommendations**

1. The statements in archaeology conditions below shall appear in the General Notes of all

site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:

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b. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

**VI. IMAGES**



**Figure 1. Existing front (north) elevation.**



**Figure 2. Existing side (west) elevation.**





Figure 3. Existing rear (south) elevation.

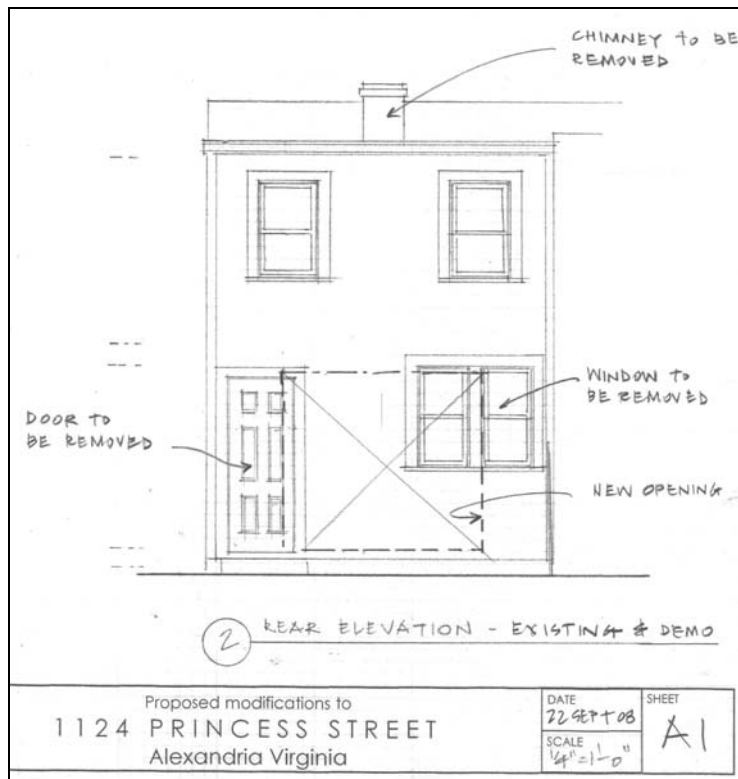


Figure 4. Proposed demolition.