



Minutes

Architectural Review Board

November 9, 2020

Electronic Meeting and Council Chambers, City Hall

Members Present

Carthon Davis III, Chair
Karen Irvin, Vice Chair (electronic)
Jonathan Gerlach (electronic)
Adriana Moss
Sabina Weitzman (electronic)
James Whitman

Members Absent

Susan Pates

Staff

Kate Schwartz

Chairman Davis called the Architectural Review Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Davis stated that the meeting was being held both in person and electronically through the “GoTo Meeting” application, pursuant to City Council Ordinance 20-05, An Ordinance to Address Continuity of City Government during the Pendency of a Pandemic Disaster. The members participating were Carthon Davis, Karen Irvin, Jonathan Gerlach, Adriana Moss, Sabina Weitzman, and James Whitman. Members of the public have been invited to access this meeting by public access television Cox Channel 84, Verizon Channel 42, online at www.regionalwebtv.com, or on Facebook Live at www.facebook.com/FXBGgov.

Chairman Davis determined that a quorum of 6 members was present, and asked if public notice requirements had been met. Ms. Schwartz confirmed that they had.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Davis added a discussion of the City’s Racial Equity Plan questionnaire to Other Business. Mr. Gerlach requested to add a discussion of the revised FEMA flood zone maps to Other Business as well. Mr. Whitman made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Ms. Moss seconded. The motion carried 6-0.

DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Davis asked if any Board member had engaged in any *ex parte* communication on any item before the Board. No Board members had any *ex parte* communication to report.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Chairman Davis asked if any Board member had a conflict of interest for any item before the Board. Mr. Gerlach said that he provided legal services to the property owners of 1205 Charles Street and would not participate in the discussion or vote for COA 2020-55.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. COA 2020-61 – 218 William Street – Sign Installation
- B. COA 2020-62 – 200 Prince Edward Street – Sign Installation
- C. COA 2020-63 – 200 William Street – Sign Installation
- D. COA 2020-64 – 304 Caroline Street – Fence Installation

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to approve the consent agenda as submitted. Mr. Gerlach seconded. The motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

Continued Applications

- A. COA 2020-38 – 107 Amelia Street – Community Property Group, LLC requests to replace the existing Masonite siding at this commercial building with new composite siding.

The applicant was not present. There was no public comment.

Ms. Moss made a motion to deny the request to replace siding on the original portion of the structure because the original siding is in repairable condition. Ms. Weitzman seconded. Mr. Gerlach requested to amend the motion to add that the replacement would not meet standard 2 in City Code §72-23.1(D)2. Ms. Moss accepted the amendment. Ms. Weitzman seconded the amended motion. The motion carried 6-0.

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to approve the replacement of Masonite siding on the rear addition with LP Smartside composite on condition that the siding has a smooth finish and reveal/profile to match the wood siding on the original portion of the structure. Mr. Whitman seconded. The motion carried 6-0.

New Applications

- B. COA 2020-55 – 1205 Charles Street – Kenneth and Delores Lecky request to make alterations to this residence, including enclosing a portion of the side porch and replacing non-historic windows and door at the rear addition.

Melissa Colombo was present to represent the application.

Ed Sandtner, 132 Caroline Street, speaking on behalf of HFFI, submitted comments in support of the application and said they agreed with the staff recommendations.

Ms. Weitzman commended the applicant for the sensitive treatment of materials. All Board members spoke in support of the application.

The application will be included on the November 23, 2020 meeting agenda for action.

- C. COA 2020-57 – 111 Caroline Street – Christopher Schmidt and Christi Carver request to install roof-mounted solar panels at this residence.

The applicants were present along with contractor Zachary Campbell.

Ed Sandtner, 132 Caroline Street, speaking on behalf of HFFI, recommended that no solar panels be installed above the side elevation, which will be visible from Caroline Street.

Mr. Gerlach said he supported the application and, while some of the panels would be visible, they don't detract from the character of the structure. Ms. Moss agreed and said it was exciting that more people were looking to install this technology. Ms. Weitzman noted that it was completely reversible, not overwhelming in appearance, and said the ARB should embrace this technology.

Ms. Irvin said she supported setting the panels back from the eave. Mr. Davis asked Ms. Schwartz if the 6-inch setback was a standard or just intended to reduce visibility. Ms. Schwartz stated that it was the latter.

The application will be included on the November 23, 2020 meeting agenda for action.

- D. COA 2020-58 – 222 Princess Anne Street – Peter Morelewicz and Christine Henry request to install roof-mounted solar panels at this residence.

The applicants were present along with contractor Zachary Campbell.

Ed Sandtner, 132 Caroline Street, representing HFFI, submitted comments in support of the application.

The Board spoke in support of the application and the introduction of solar technology to the district.

The application will be included on the November 23, 2020 meeting agenda for action.

- E. COA 2020-59 – 1102 Prince Edward Street – David and Susan Morgan request to install roof-mounted solar panels at this residence.

Contractor Zachary Campbell was present to represent the application. Mr. Campbell noted that visibility of the roof was very minimal.

Ms. Moss asked if the meter location needed to be verified. Chairman Davis noted that the ARB could not recommend a change to a Dominion utility meter.

The Board spoke in support of the application and the introduction of solar technology to the district.

The application will be included on the November 23, 2020 meeting agenda for action.

- F. COA 2020-60 – 501 Wolfe Street – Tina Oliver requests to construct a one-story rear addition and construct a deck and pergola at the rear of the property.

The designer Bob Oberlin was present to represent the application.

Ed Sandtner, 132 Caroline Street, representing HFFI, submitted comments recommending some modification to details of the design, including aligning the new addition with the location of the original rear porch.

Ms. Moss noted some concern with the addition of roof windows and asked Mr. Oberlin for clarification on the installation. Mr. Oberlin said he understood that these could be an issue and highlighted his experience with sealing these properly.

Ms. Weitzman said the addition was nicely scaled and confirmed with Mr. Oberlin that the new handrails at the front would be wrought iron. She said she agreed with the staff recommendation for using wood or paintable composites rather than Trex for visible elements of the deck and pergola. She noted that the location is highly visible from Prince Edward Street. Ms. Irvin agreed.

Chairman Davis asked the applicant to provide a full site plan for the project, but said he was in support of the design. Mr. Gerlach noted that he agreed with the material recommendations as well.

The application will be included on the November 23, 2020 meeting agenda for action.

- G. COA 2020-46 – 100 Hanover Street – Thomas Mitchell requests approval of the detailed architectural design of a new, mixed-use, three-and-one-half story building on this vacant property.

The applicant was present, along with Burt Pinnock and Angelo Phillos of Baskervill Architects.

Ed Sandtner, 132 Caroline Street, representing HFFI, submitted comments in support of the application, but recommended changing the material used for railings and for the screening wall along Hanover Street.

Ms. Moss said she supported the new organization of dormers on the roof slope, agreed that clarification was needed on the window and door specifications, and said she agreed with HFFI's comments regarding railings. Mr. Gerlach agreed.

Ms. Weitzman commented on the material specifications and noted that the selected materials might not accurately reflect the way the building is rendered. She recommended using a thicker fiber cement siding to achieve additional dimension on the large-scale building and enhancing some trim elements. She asked for additional detail on the material and design of the timber-framed porches and recommended using a standing seam metal roof over the primary roof as well as porches and intermediate roofs.

Ms. Irvin agreed with the need for more detailed specifications on the porch framing. She also noted that the stone base was a substantial feature of the reference buildings shown and noted that the board-formed cast concrete finish proposed might appear too flat for this building.

Chairman Davis agreed with the points raised by Ms. Weitzman and Ms. Irvin and asked the applicants to ensure that the metal roofs would have mechanically crimped seams. He said he was not concerned with the use of the siding wall as a mechanical screen, but recommended an alternate material for the wall on Hanover Street.

The application will be included on the November 23, 2020 meeting agenda for action.

- H. COA 2020-56 – 307-313 Charles Street – Michael Adams requests approval of the detailed architectural design of four new townhomes to be constructed on this vacant property.

The applicant was present. Mr. Adams noted that the comments from staff were helpful and said he planned to incorporate a 10-inch band board above the foundation level. He explained that alterations to the window proportions weren't feasible.

David and Terrie James, 213 Princess Anne Street, submitted comments recommending alterations to details of the structures to better align with historic properties in the neighborhood.

Mr. Gerlach complimented the adjacent Lofts at Frederick Street project and asked if industrial details could be incorporated that assist in transitioning that construction to the surrounding neighborhood. He also noted that changes to the FEMA flood maps planned for 2021 would remove this property from the 100-year floodplain.

Ms. Moss agreed that industrial details could link the project to the neighboring new construction. She agreed with the staff recommendations and comments from the public and noted that the multiple siding types make the elevations appear busy and don't closely reflect the character of the neighborhood. She suggested using masonry to more clearly divide the units.

Mr. Whitman said he supported the project as submitted and thought the more residential character melded better with the neighborhood.

Ms. Weitzman noted that it was difficult to negotiate between the industrial context and very simple residences in the area. She agreed that the siding was too busy and noted that introducing regularity to the elevations and simplifying some elements would better coordinate with both contexts. Ms. Irvin agreed and added that the metal roofs should have mechanically crimped seams. She noted her support for the street-level entries.

Chairman Davis said he would not agree with an industrial approach to the design of the residences, but said he would like to see more variation from the newer residences further south on Charles Street. Mr. Adams said he would seek ways to simplify the design and accommodate the Board's comments.

The application will be included on the November 23, 2020 meeting agenda for action.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Racial Equity Plan Questionnaire

The Board discussed the questions that were sent to all City boards and commissions. Chairman Davis advised that Board members could respond to the questions individually and send the responses to Ms. Schwartz rather than responding as a group. There was some discussion of how the racial equity plan intersected with the ARB's purview. Mr. Gerlach noted that the City Code does authorize the ARB to advise on land use issues. Ms. Schwartz noted that the ARB does play a role in the City's racial

equity in terms of representation and determining what types of places are considered significant. Board members will send their responses directly to Ms. Schwartz.

B. FEMA Flood Maps

Mr. Gerlach reviewed some of the changes to the FEMA flood maps that will take effect in 2021, removing many areas of the Historic District from the floodplains. He recommended forming an ad hoc committee. Ms. Schwartz recommended that the City's Senior Environmental Planner could provide a more thorough overview and that a presentation and discussion with the ARB could be arranged. Board members were in support of this.

STAFF UPDATE

Ms. Schwartz suggested that the December action meeting occur on Monday, December 21 rather than Monday, December 28 due to the holiday schedule. Board members agreed that this schedule would be preferable.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Davis adjourned the meeting at 8:52 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CD III". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "C" and "D".

Carthon Davis III, Chair