



Minutes
Architectural Review Board
April 9, 2018
Council Chambers, City Hall
Fredericksburg, Virginia

Members Present

Jonathan Gerlach, Chair
Sabina Weitzman, Vice Chair
Susan Pates
Kerri S. Barile
Carthon Davis, III
Karen Irvin
James Whitman

Members Absent

Staff

Kate Schwartz
Camilla Jacobs

Mr. Gerlach called the Architectural Review Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

OPENING REMARKS

Mr. Gerlach determined that a quorum of seven members was present and asked if public notice requirements had been met. Ms. Schwartz stated that they had.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Pates requested to have a discussion regarding building heights and how they are measured at the end of the meeting. Mr. Davis made a motion to approve the agenda with the additional discussion item. Ms. Weitzman seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Gerlach asked if there were any changes or additions to the minutes of the regular meeting dated March 12, 2018. There were no changes or additions. Ms. Irvin made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Whitman seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Gerlach asked if there were any changes or additions to the minutes of the supplementary meeting dated March 26, 2018. There were no changes or additions. Ms. Weitzman made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Pates seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Gerlach asked if any Board member had engaged in any *ex parte* communication on any item before the Board. Ms. Weitzman advised the applicant for the application COA 2018-16 at 228 Princess Anne Street. She said there was financial relationship, but that she would recuse herself.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Mr. Gerlach asked if any Board member had a conflict of interest for any item before the Board. No Board members had any conflicts of interest to report.

PUBLIC HEARING

A. New Business

Signs

- i. **COA 2018-14 – 2800 Princess Anne Street** – Hope Reents requests to install signs, including one freestanding monument sign and one wall-mounted sign, for the Edward Jones Investments business.

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

Ms. Schwartz noted that the applicant was requesting approval of the wall-mounted sign, but a continuation of the freestanding sign to allow them to continue to work on the design.

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to approve the wall-mounted sign on condition that the sign is attached through the mortar joints rather than the brick. Dr. Barile seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to continue the discussion of the monument sign to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the ARB. Dr. Barile seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

- ii. **COA 2018-18 – 806 Caroline Street** – Tamara Villegas requests to install signs, including vinyl window decals and one projecting sign, for the Gersemi & Hnoss retail business.

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

Dr. Barile made a motion to approve the application as presented. Ms. Weitzman seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

Fences

- iii. **COA 2018-17 – 422 Dunmore Street** – James Huber requests to install a six-foot wood privacy fence surrounding the rear yard of this single-family residence.

The applicant, James Huber, 519 Dunmore Street, was present. Mr. Huber noted that he concurred with the staff report and was present to answer any questions. There was no public comment.

Mr. Davis made a motion to approve the application in accordance with the staff recommendation to paint or stain the fence once it has weathered sufficiently. Ms. Weitzman seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

Exterior Alterations

- iv. **COA 2018-13 – 211 Fauquier Street** – Kate Moga requests to demolish the existing brick steps and landing and construct a new partial-width front porch at this single-family residence.

The applicant, Kate Moga, was present. She said they have an alternate design prepared, but she prefers the submitted design and thinks it is appropriate for the house. Ms. Moga stated that this is a very attractive porch with nice proportions, and it doesn't diminish the quality of the area or of the street. She said they chose the partial-width porch to avoid crowding the neighboring house. She asked that the design be approved.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Davis said the standing seam roof should be mechanically seamed along ridge lines, rather than using a snap lock system. Dr. Barile noted that this was consistent with what the ARB has been recommending for the past several years. Mr. Davis explained the differences between the interlocking and mechanically seamed roof types for the applicant.

Ms. Weitzman commended the applicant for a very thorough application, showing clear dimensions and detail. She noted that a simple porch form would be in keeping with other properties, but that it was not uncommon for a porch to be the only detail or embellishment on an otherwise simple home. She also said that the gable design distracts from the smaller window on the left side of the upper story.

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to approve the request as submitted on condition that the metal roof ridges are mechanically seamed rather than using a snap lock system. Mr. Whitman seconded.

Dr. Barile commented that if the building were historic she would absolutely concur with staff's recommendation. Because it was built in 2006 and is a non-contributing element to the district, she believes the design clearly shows that it is a modern building.

The motion carried 7-0.

- v. **COA 2018-16 – 228 Princess Anne Street** – Andrea Smith requests to rebuild a damaged rear addition with some alterations, including adding a second floor to a portion of the addition, installing new siding, and adding a window to the south side elevation.

The applicant, Andrea Smith, was present. Ms. Smith said that due to financial constraints, they would not be able to proceed with the more extensive renovation option. She said they would be adding the window as proposed. There was no public comment.

Ms. Pates asked for clarification of option 2. Ms. Schwartz commented this would be rebuilding the additions as they exist and the two alterations would be altering the siding on the rear addition portion and adding a window to the second floor of the original portion of the house on the south side. The new siding would be lapped fiber cement siding.

Mr. Davis made a motion to approve either option in accordance with the staff recommendation. These conditions included aligning the new window with those on the second floor at the front elevation, and using a solid wood, six-over-six, double-hung sash window to match the existing for the replacement. Dr. Barile seconded. The motion carried 6-0-1, with Ms. Weitzman abstaining.

- vi. **COA 2018-19 – 1108 Caroline Street** – Josh Mosser requests to make alterations to doors, including changing the installation details of the main entry door and installing a larger exit door on the north side elevation, for the Pimenta restaurant.

The applicant, Josh Mosser, was present. Mr. Mosser said he would prefer option one on the front door, which would include removing the brick to allow the door to swing out. For the rear exit door, he said that side of the building had a larger opening originally that was enclosed. The current door is 32 inches wide. He said they were proposing to take it back to the original opening with wood framing and a new door.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Irvin said she would need to see scaled drawings to understand that this design is truly code-compliant. Ms. Weitzman agreed and said she would need to understand the details better, because the change would alter the symmetry of the storefront. She asked if the change would impact the glass storefront. Mr. Mosser said his intention was to avoid impacting the windows at all.

Dr. Barile asked if there was any opportunity for the building to retain the door since it was a historic building. Ms. Schwartz said she would follow up with Building Services staff. Mr. Mosser noted that it might be sufficient for them to modify the rear door. Mr. Davis said that it may be possible to secure the front door at the top and bottom to avoid impacting the plate glass windows. Ms. Weitzman explained the code requirements of a change in use of a building.

Mr. Gerlach asked if the alley along the side of the building was a public right-of-way. Ms. Schwartz stated that it is not a public right-of-way and the visibility of the door is very limited. She said the opening is visible, but the door is not.

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to continue the application to the next regular meeting so the applicant can provide additional details. Mr. Davis seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

- vii. **COA 2018-20 – 417 William Street** – Will Dickinson requests to install lighting fixtures at the front and rear entries for this commercial building.

Lawrence Henderson, 12 Blue Spruce Circle, Stafford, Virginia 22554, was present to represent the applicant. There was no public comment.

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to approve the light fixtures with the condition that the light fixture at the rear of the building is mounted through the mortar joints rather than through the brick. Ms. Pates seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

- viii. **COA 2018-12 – 506-516 Sophia Street** – Stephen DeFalco requests to demolish the existing townhomes at 506-516 Sophia Street and requests approval of the site planning, scale, massing, and architectural details of seven three-story townhomes, and the site planning, scale, and massing of one four-story apartment building to be constructed on the site.

The applicant, Stephen DeFalco, and the project architect, Lee Shadbolt, were present to represent the application.

Mr. Shadbolt reviewed the new drawings that were created since the last work session two weeks prior. He noted some challenges of the software, including inserting the current design into the perspective model built previously. Some portions are not accurate, including the size of trim and cornice details, but the heights of the buildings are correct. The site contours were added as well. He summarized the project for the Board.

Public Comment:

Ed Sandtner, 132 Caroline Street, representing the Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc. He has no objection to the demolition of the buildings and agreed that this plan is more compatible than many seen in the Historic District. He commented that he and HFFI support this project.

Van Perroy, 525 Caroline Street, said that he was the original applicant for this project. He is very encouraged to see the final design and the way they accommodated the floodplain issue. He said he supported the project.

Kelly Barnes, 106 Wolfe Street, spoke on behalf of Ellen Ross Gibson, who owns several properties in the 100 block of Wolfe Street. She read a letter from Ms. Gibson and noted concerns that the new project will tower over her buildings, impact their sunlight, and restrict views.

Ms. Weitzman said she would have preferred to see the relationship of the heights of all adjacent buildings and noted that they had received comments from another neighboring property owner regarding sunlight.

Ms. Weitzman asked about the details of the multi-family building. Mr. Shadbolt said the details of that building had not changed. Ms. Irvin and Mr. Davis said they would need more information on that building in order to make a decision. Mr. DeFalco said he would withdraw the building from the Board's current consideration.

Mr. Gerlach and Ms. Schwartz clarified with the applicant they will continue the application for the size, scale, and massing of the apartment building to a later date, not withdrawing the application.

Dr. Barile thanked applicants for the information and commented that organizing it chronologically was helpful. She also commented that normally she is against demolition of any contributing building, but looking at the integrity she does feel that they have severely compromised materials and workmanship. She said she was willing to support demolition for the right project, but she had voted against the project previously, still believed that the buildings were too tall.

Mr. Gerlach said he agreed with Dr. Barile and commented that the Executive Plaza building is an aberration in the Historic District that should not be used as an example of adjacent height. He referenced several average building height calculations and distributed a memo describing the measurement of several buildings in the vicinity. He agreed that this area is ripe for development but said he was concerned that the size of these buildings do not meet

the Guidelines as currently written. He said he would not support the application at this height.

Mr. Whitman thanked the applicant for the materials and said he is in favor of this project. He said the variation in height of a few feet is not significant.

Mr. Davis said he is opposed to this project strictly based on the height, but is in favor of the redevelopment of this parcel. He said a submission at a shorter height would gain his approval.

Ms. Weitzman thanked the applicant for their submission and apologized for not being clear enough regarding her concern regarding my concern about proximity to the backs of the buildings on Wolfe Street. She said the impact to the neighbors is considerable. She noted the historic precedents for height variation in the Historic District, and requested that the applicant look at ways to alter the buildings by lowering floor heights or other elements. She said she was less concerned about specific height numbers or averages, but was concerned about the relationship of context.

Ms. Irvin said she concurs with Ms. Weitzman and is primarily concerned about the impact on the Wolfe Street residences. She requested a streetscape elevation to better understand these relationships.

Mr. DeFalco requested that the application be continued to a work session on April 23. He clarified with the Board the additional materials and drawings that should be provided at this session.

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to continue consideration of the application to a work session on April 23, 2018 to allow the applicant to provide additional information. Mr. Davis seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Transmittal of Planning Commission Agenda for April 11, 2018

There were no comments or questions on the agenda.

B. Height Measurement in the Historic District.

Ms. Pates asked how building heights could be measured. Discussion was held regarding best practices and tools with which to measure buildings. A suggestion was made to compile a listing of measurements for all buildings in the Historic District. There are approximately 1,000 buildings in the Historic District. A suggestion was made to potentially work with University of Mary Washington students to compile a database of building heights. Mr. Gerlach said he would pursue this project.

STAFF UPDATE

Ms. Irvin accompanied Ms. Schwartz to photograph the warehouse at 306 Frederick Street approximately two weeks ago, and those photographs will be saved in the City's files.

COMMITTEE UPDATE


There were no committee updates.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Gerlach had nothing additional to report.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Davis made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Barile seconded. The motion carried 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.



Jonathan Gerlach, ARB Chair

