



Minutes
Architectural Review Board
June 22, 2020
Electronic Meeting

Members Present

Carthon Davis III, Chair
Jonathan Gerlach
Adriana Moss
Sabina Weitzman

Members Absent

James Whitman
Karen Irvin, Vice Chair
Susan Pates

Staff

Kate Schwartz

Chairman Davis called the Architectural Review Board meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Davis stated that the meeting was being held 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, Jon Gerlach, Adriana Moss, and Sabina Weitzman. 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 noted that a quorum was present, and asked if public notice requirements had been met. Ms. Schwartz confirmed that they had.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Moss motioned to approve the agenda as written. Ms. Weitzman seconded. The motion carried 4-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Davis asked if there were any changes or additions to the minutes of the meeting dated June 8, 2020. Ms. Weitzman motioned to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Gerlach seconded. The motion carried 4-0.

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. No Board members had any conflicts of interest to report.

PUBLIC HEARING

- i. COA 2019-25 – 607-719 Sophia Street – The City of Fredericksburg requests to modify the certificate of appropriateness issued in June 2019 to allow an alternative style of light fixture within the Riverfront Park.

Doug Fawcett, Assistant City Manager, was present to represent the application. No public comments were received in advance of the meeting.

Ms. Weitzman said the appearance of the fixture and the proposed base is acceptable and asked if there were other color options and what the color temperature of the LED lights would be. Mr. Gerlach and Mr. Davis also questioned the brightness of the lights and the color temperature of existing street lights.

Mr. Fawcett said the black finish had been selected to match existing lights and utilities downtown. He also noted that the intensity of the lights would be easily adjustable using an app. He offered to follow up with information on the color temperature and noted that sample lights had been installed at Dixon Park and could be viewed there.

Board members noted their support for the use of solar technology. The application was continued to the July 13 meeting of the ARB to allow for additional public comment due to the electronic meeting format.

- ii. COA 2020-19 – 900 Charles Street – Frederic Howe, III requests to install 14 columbarium structures within the Masonic Cemetery property.

The applicant, Fred Howe, was present to represent the application, as well as engineer Tyler Gross. Mr. Howe provided an overview of the needs of the Masonic Lodge and the plan to use income from the new interment space to help maintain the historic cemetery. He said they agreed with the staff recommendation to reduce the heights of the units to four feet to remain below the perimeter wall, but requested to keep the taller units adjacent to the entry gates. He also noted that they were evaluating different stone colors that could be used.

No public comments were received in advance of the meeting.

Board members asked about the number of new spaces to be provided for interment and the impact on existing trees. Board members noted the contrast between older graves and the new structures and the impact on viewsheds across the cemetery. All agreed that the rectangular structures should be reduced in height. It was noted that the hexagonal structures could be taller, to avoid introducing too much regularity into a space that was traditionally irregular, but some reduction in height should be evaluated.

Mr. Howe did note that they had consulted with staff at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and carefully designed the plan to avoid any existing burials. Board members recommended reducing the width of the paver pathway or altering the material, though this hardscaping was not a specific component of the ARB's review.

Mr. Davis recommended a phased approach to this project, noting that the cemetery had been created over a long period of time. He also asked about an alternate color for the niche covers to reduce the contrast. The rest of the Board agreed that a phasing plan for implementation would be helpful and asked the applicant to return with a modified design for the structure heights, stone colors, phasing, and pathway design.

The application was continued to the July 13 meeting of the ARB to allow for additional public comment due to the electronic meeting format.

- iii. COA 2020-05 – 203 Ford Street – Ed Whelan requests to make alterations to the former Washington Woolen Mills building to use a portion of the building for an event venue by installing rooftop railings, a rooftop mechanical house for an internal elevator, and an exterior stair at the west end of the building.

The applicant was present. No public comments were received in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Whelan reviewed the changes to the project since it was initially considered by the ARB in February. He noted the limited visibility of the proposed rooftop additions and that he had made an effort to differentiate the materials used. He also noted that he would like to modify the request for two sets of paired doors at the rear elevation rather than single doors with sidelights.

Ms. Weitzman recommended the use of metal cladding on the rooftop additions rather than horizontal board siding, given the industrial nature of the building. Mr. Whelan said he would be willing to use this and asked for direction on product or color.

Ms. Moss said she appreciated the incorporation of earlier recommendations from the Board. Mr. Davis asked about door specifications and asked several questions to clarify the design of the new egress stairs.

The application was continued to the July 13 meeting of the ARB to allow for additional public comment due to the electronic meeting format.

- iv. COA 2020-21 – 525 Caroline Street – Van Perroy requests approval of the site planning, scale, and massing of new three and four-story additions to be constructed at the sides and rear of the Fredericksburg Square building to accommodate mixed residential and commercial use.

Van Perroy, project partner Steve DeFalco, and architect Lee Shadbolt were present to represent the application. Mr. Perroy provided an overview of the project and noted the ways in which the project aligns with the goals of increased density, vitality, and mixed uses in the Comprehensive and Downtown Plans. Mr. Shadbolt provided a review of the drawings and details of the project.

No public comments were received in advance of the meeting.

Ms. Weitzman said she concurred with the staff recommendation that the rear addition is one story too tall. She complimented the design details of the additions, but said they overwhelmed the original building. Mr. Gerlach said he shared the same concerns about the overall height and agreed that it was one story too tall. Though outside of the ARB's review, Mr. Gerlach also recommended incorporating smaller units as more affordable housing and a benefit to downtown.

Mr. Gerlach was also concerned that the infill section on Caroline Street blocked the view of the gable end of the Fredericksburg Square building, which is a character-defining feature. He asked the applicant to consider an alternative roofline to avoid obscuring the gable end. He also said he was concerned about the proposal to inset balconies into the original roof. Ms. Moss agreed with the concerns already voiced by Ms. Weitzman and Mr. Gerlach about the overall height, gable end visibility, and modifications to the original roof.

Mr. Davis said he appreciated the response to previous ARB comments and noted his concern about the future use of Mia Street, stating that any gate should be avoided. He agreed that the overall addition height should be reduced, at least to be in line with or below the height of the original structure. He said he had no concerns with the Caroline Street infill section.

Mr. Perroy noted that the Fredericksburg Square building was substantially increased in size when the current façade was added in 1925 because the Elks wanted to make an impact. He said he did not believe that the height had an impact on the streetscape and did not believe that any reductions could be made.

The application was continued to the July 13 meeting of the ARB to allow for additional public comment due to the electronic meeting format.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comments for an electronic meeting may be submitted in one of the following ways: (1) dropping them in the Deposit Box at City Hall, (2) U.S. Mail, or (3) email to ksschwartz@fredericksburgva.gov. Comments received before 4:00 p.m. on June 8, 2020 will be read into the record at the meeting. Comments must include your name and address, including zip code, be limited to 5 minutes or less (read aloud), and address a topic of ARB business. Public comments will not be accepted on video feeds during the meeting.

No public comments were received.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Transmittal of Planning Commission Public Hearing Ad for June 24, 2020

Board members expressed their support for the creation of the Creative Maker District in Area 6.

B. Review of Agenda for July 13, 2020 Public Hearing

Ms. Schwartz noted that all public hearings opened during the current meeting were continued to July 13 and reviewed the options for public comment.

C. Pre-application Discussion: 1408 Sophia Street

Ms. Schwartz reviewed the proposal to construct a new residence on this vacant property. Board members expressed support for retaining the historic wall and for the overall site plan, scale, and massing proposed. Board members suggested that simplification of some of the architectural details and stylistic influences may be needed during the review of the detailed design elements to better fit with the neighborhood.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Davis adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.



Carthon Davis III, Chair