Minutes
Architectural Review Board
Supplementary Meeting

April 24, 2017

306 Amelia Street and Council Chambers, City Hall
Fredericksburg, Virginia

Members Present	**Members Absent**	**Staff**
John Harris, Chair	Ken McFarland	Kate Schwartz
Sabina Weitzman, Vice Chair (arrived 6:00 p.m.)		
Susan Pates		
Jon Van Zandt (arrived 6:20 p.m.)		
Kerri S. Barile		
Jonathan Gerlach		

Mr. Harris called the Architectural Review Board meeting to order at 5:37 p.m. at 306 Amelia Street. He determined that a quorum of four members was present and asked if public notice requirements had been met. Ms. Schwartz stated that they had.

The Board members inspected the windows at 306 Amelia Street that are the subject of COA application 2017-29. Ms. Weitzman arrived at 6:00 p.m. After viewing the windows, the Board returned to Council Chambers, City Hall for the remainder of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to approve the agenda as submitted. Dr. Barile seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Harris asked if any members had engaged in any *ex parte* communication. Dr. Barile noted that she had sent pictures of the windows at 306 Amelia Street to a colleague.

Mr. Harris asked if any members had a conflict of interest to report. Ms. Pates noted that she was the listing agent for the property at Frederick and Charles Streets to be discussed informally with Mike Adams.

The Board agreed to discuss COA 2017-29 first to allow the applicants for COA 2017-26 time to arrive.

CONTINUED CASES

i. **COA 2017-29 – 306 Amelia Street** – Philip Robins requests to replace six wood windows on the upper story of this single-family residence with new true divided light wood sash inserts.

David Grover, Harmony Woodworking, was present to represent the applicant.
Ms. Weitzman noted that the windows did not appear to be in worse condition than many windows previously considered in the Historic District. She said the windows appeared to be repairable, though they would certainly require a great deal of work. She also noted that they had submitted a thorough application and were proposing a high quality product.

Dr. Barile agreed, and said she had expected to see the windows in poorer condition. Ms. Pates said she supported repairing the windows over replacing them.

Mr. Harris said he was in support of allowing replacement of the windows, but understood the argument for repair. He noted that the windows did look better than he expected.

Mr. Gerlach asked about the cost of repair versus replacement. Mr. Grover said the cost would be the same and that the desire for replacement was because of noise, energy efficiency, and elimination of the existing triple-track aluminum storm windows. He said the new sashes would be milled to match the existing.

Dr. Barile noted that the varying window profiles are documentation of the history and evolution of the building. The Board also discussed the use of interior storm windows. Mr. Gerlach asked if the property owners would maintain the existing storm windows if the windows were not replaced. Mr. Grover thought they would.

Ms. Weitzman asked for the correct dimensions of the new muntins and how they compared to the existing. New muntins are typically wider to accommodate insulated glass. Mr. Grover thought that would not be the case, but said he would attempt to find the accurate specifications prior to the May meeting.

The Board thanked Mr. Grover for attending.

ii. **COA 2017-26 – 1005 Princess Anne Street** – Chris Huie requests to make exterior alterations to this commercial building including replacing wood veneer and roof-level railings with PVC, installing metal fencing, and replacing the existing awning.

The applicant was not present. Ms. Schwartz summarized the changes to the application resulting from a meeting on site with the applicant.

Mr. Van Zandt arrived at 6:22 p.m.

Ms. Pates asked if additional concrete could be added to the bottom of the storefront wall to reduce the impact of water. Ms. Weitzman and Mr. Van Zandt said that would likely move the moisture issue further up the wall. They agreed that Boral was a good product for this use because it can be in contact with masonry and not absorb water. Ms. Weitzman also noted that adding concrete would result in a greater aesthetic change in the character of the façade.

The Board discussed the potential alterations to the inset entryway. Ms. Weitzman noted that the issues they are currently having would likely be reduced once a business is operating there again.

Ms. Weitzman noted that the proposed changes to the windows were likely expensive and problematic. She also asked what was wrong with the door and why it needed replacement. Ms. Schwartz noted that it was deteriorated and that it was installed without approval. The metal door likely would not have been considered appropriate and the proposed replacement is more in keeping with the character of the building. Dr. Barile said she had no issues with the door replacement.

Ms. Schwartz noted that this application would be continued to the May meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Informal Discussion of Frederick Street Lofts Project

Mr. Van Zandt noted that he also had a conflict of interest for the item as he was a partner in the project. Ms. Pates also had a conflict of interest as the listing agent for the property.
Mike Adams presented preliminary plans for a project that would include restoring the former coffee warehouse at 306 Frederick Street and building new residential units on the site and four adjoining lots on Charles Street.

B. Review of Amendments to the Sign Ordinance

Marne Sherman, Development Administrator, and Rob Eckstrom, Assistant City Attorney, presented proposed amendments to the sign ordinance to the Board for review. Specific sections addressed included exempted signs, a prohibition on architectural outlining, and signs located inside buildings.

Ms. Weitzman said she thought architectural outlining should be prohibited. She noted the brightness of the technology, but also thought this should be addressed through lighting provisions rather than sign regulations. Mr. Harris agreed that it should be prohibited both inside and outside of buildings and said that it detracts from the quality of the city.

Mr. Van Zandt asked if there were provisions for holiday lighting. Ms. Sherman said that seasonal lighting was exempted, though a clear definition for seasonal had not been created.

Dr. Barile said that outlining could detract from the character-defining features of buildings. Ms. Sherman asked the Board to evaluate the use of signs inside buildings and the potential provision that signs would need to be 12 inches inside of windows to be exempted.

Ms. Weitzman noted that historically, signs have been very lively in town, and we should not create new rules that exclude that creativity. The rules should allow room to approve something compelling and creative.

Dr. Barile also noted that neon and other creative signs are character-defining features of a number of architectural styles and should be permitted for buildings of those types. Mr. Harris confirmed that existing non-conforming signs would be grandfathered under the

new rules.

Mr. Gerlach said that businesses could potentially abuse the provisions for public art and suggested adding the phrase "does not advertise a product or service" to the definition. Ms. Sherman said that such determinations would be made administratively prior to the ARB's consideration of an application.

C. Review of Draft Window Policy

Ms. Weitzman noted that she had several comments that she would share via email.

Mr. Van Zandt asked if vinyl windows would ever be considered historic, and if vinyl should be allowed to be replaced with vinyl.

Ms. Weitzman noted that the construction industry has unfortunately ignored the principle of embodied energy. She said we should not allow the use of materials that are designed for obsolescence. She also suggested simply calling it a "window policy" rather than a "window replacement policy." She suggested addressing the issue of newer muntin profiles as well.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Gerlach made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Van Zandt seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

John C. Harris

John Harris, ARB Chair