Minutes
Architectural Review Board
Supplementary Meeting

April 25, 2016
Council Chambers, City Hall
Fredericksburg, Virginia

Members Present	**Members Absent**	**Staff**
John Harris, Chair	Jamie Scully	Kate Schwartz
Sabina Weitzman, Vice Chair	John Van Zandt	Mike Craig
Susan Pates		Charles Johnston
Kerri S. Barile		
Kenneth McFarland		

Mr. Harris called the Architectural Review Board meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

OPENING REMARKS

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Harris asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda. There were none.

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Ms. Pates seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Harris asked if any Board member had engaged in any *ex parte* communication on any item before the Board.

No one indicated they had engaged in any *ex parte* communication.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Mr. Harris asked if any Board member had a conflict of interest for any item before the Board.

No one indicated they had a conflict of interest.

NEW BUSINESS

I. Van Perroy – 506-514 Sophia Street and 525 Caroline Street
   a. Review of Special Exception requests and recommendation to the Planning Commission
   b. Informal review of demolition of one contributing building and two non-contributing buildings at 506-514 Sophia Street and site planning, scale, and massing of three new structures, including seven townhomes in two buildings and one seven-unit apartment building.

Van Perroy, property owner, was present.

After presentation of the staff report, Mr. Perroy introduced himself to the Board and provided a presentation on his proposed multi-family residential construction project.

Mr. Harris suggested the Board consider the Special Exception application first, and then discuss the demolition and new construction components.

Mr. McFarland commended the applicant for working towards the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Dr. Barile asked for clarification regarding the height of the "mansion" apartment building. Ms. Schwartz stated that the height would be fifty-five feet two inches, measured as an average of the eave and ridge heights.

Mr. McFarland stated that he would like to better understand the perspective from the train station and the visibility of the new structure. He encouraged Mr. Perroy not to minimize the importance of this viewshed. He also suggested that they not discount the context of the new townhomes on Lafayette Boulevard as they relate to new construction.

Ms. Weitzman questioned the need for including two parking spaces per unit and discussed the need for decreasing automobile dependency in a community that desires walkability.

Mr. Perroy stated that offering two spaces was a significant incentive for potential buyers.

Dr. Barile said that she was not on the ARB when the new townhouses on Lafayette Boulevard were approved, but she believes they are out of context with the district. She stated that 50 feet is the maximum building height, not a right, and this height is far too tall for the surrounding context in this location. The discussion of economic feasibility in the Historic District Handbook is about allowing infill, not maximizing profit.

Ms. Weitzman stated that she agrees with Dr. Barile. She commented on the difficulty of designing infill with floodplain issues, but believes the design is too tall. She suggested that building on the interior of the block may be appropriate in this case because the lot is deep.

Dr. Barile said there are instances where buildings are turned to the side on lots, and this is an appropriate place to hide density.

Ms. Weitzman commented that the building design is a full story taller than anything around.

Mr. Perroy stated that the design accounts for features that many people want and have been used in other historic communities.

Dr. Barile commented that steps or a raised basement would account for the three and a half feet of height needed to get out of the floodplain. The height of a full garage is not a need.

Mr. Perroy stated that he was trying to meet modern needs and was not concerned with historic patterns of development.

Ms. Weitzman clarified that maintaining historic patterns of development is a primary concern for the ARB. She asked if Mr. Perroy might consider a carriage house design or something similar to provide parking on the interior of the lot. This could allow the other buildings to be lower in height.

Mr. Harris said he would be interested to see a perspective of the project from Lafayette Boulevard and Caroline Street.

Ms. Pates asked if green space would be provided as part of this project.

Mr. Perroy said there would be a little behind the apartment building and landscaping in the form of planters along Sophia Street.

Ms. Pates said she could not support the special exception for height and would like to see a shadow plan for the building. She stated that she could not support demolition of the existing structures without knowing exactly what will replace them.

Dr. Barile thanked Mr. Perroy for the thoroughness of his application and said that she thought the concept of development for this block was good, but needed all the data before making a decision.

Mr. Harris commented that he thought the view of the apartment building from the surrounding streets would be extremely limited. He asked Mr. Perroy if he would be able to provide the additional materials requested or if he would prefer the Board vote on a recommendation at the current meeting.

Mr. Perroy confirmed that the architect could provide additional perspectives for the May 9, 2016 ARB meeting.

Mr. McFarland said he would be interested in the perspective from the corner of Sophia Street and Lafayette Boulevard as well as further up Lafayette, closer to Caroline Street.

Dr. Barile said she thought the design was interesting, and a good combination of Craftsman and Colonial Revival elements. She said the fenestration pattern and relation of solids to voids was good, but that the design may be too elaborate given the historic industrial character of the area.

Ms. Pates said that developing a new project without green space is a negative and that overall the project was too tall.

The Board agreed to continue the discussion at the May 9 ARB meeting.

Dr. Barile made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Harris seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

John Harris, ARB Chair