



Minutes
Architectural Review Board
January 14, 2019
Council Chambers, City Hall
Fredericksburg, Virginia

Members Present

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

Members Absent

Staff

Susanna Finn
Cathy Eckles
Kate Schwartz
Mike Craig

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

OPENING REMARKS

Mr. Gerlach determined that a quorum was present, and asked if public notice requirements had been met. Ms. Finn noted that they had.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Dr. Barile motioned to add an item to the Other Business agenda regarding an update on the Riverfront Park archaeological dig. Mr. Davis motioned to approve the agenda as amended. Ms. Irvin seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Gerlach opened the floor for nominations for Chair of the Architectural Review Board. Dr. Barile motioned to nominate Jon Gerlach as the 2019 Chair. Ms. Irvin seconded. Motion carried 5-0 (Ms. Weitzman had not come in yet).

Mr. Gerlach then opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair with two candidates, Ms. Weitzman and Mr. Davis. Dr. Barile questioned the candidates if they had a preference and Ms. Weitzman motioned to nominate Carthon Davis as the 2019 Vice Chair and Ms. Irvin seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Gerlach asked if there were any changes or additions to the minutes of the regular meeting dated November 19, 2018. Dr. Barile noted a change to page 5, third line from the bottom wherein she changed "questioned" to "confirmed" regarding the use of metal railings. Ms. Weitzman noted a change to page 3, COA 2018-70, paragraph 1, to correct "Dave" McGhee to "James" McGhee. Dr. Barile motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Weitzman seconded. The motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Gerlach asked if there were any changes or additions to the minutes of the regular meeting dated December 10, 2018. Dr. Barile noted that the reference throughout the minutes to the Historic

Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc. was incorrectly stated as “HHFI” not “HFFI”. Dr. Barile further added the following wording to page 2, third paragraph from bottom – “...parameters of the overall design of the roof with the trim on the porch.” Mr. Gerlach noted a change on page three, third paragraph from the top, the wording “was done” was duplicated and needs to be removed. Lastly, on page 5, paragraph 3, the motion was carried 5-2, not 5-0. No further changes were noted. Ms. Irvin motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Davis seconded. 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. No Board members had any *ex parte* communication to report.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Mr. Gerlach asked if any Board member had a conflict of interest for any item before the Board. Ms. Weitzman noted that she has a conflict with COA 2018-55 and won't be participating.

PUBLIC HEARING

A. New Business

Signs

- i. **COA 2018-88** – 211 William Street – Heather Holt requests approval to install one building mounted sign, for the Sweet Sheep business.

Applicant was not present and there were no public comments. Mr. Davis motioned to approve as recommended by staff. Mr. Whitman seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Exterior Alterations/Additions

- ii. **COA 2018-85** – 407 Fauquier Street – Leah Courtnage requests approval to replace the wood shingles on a rear shed with new asphalt shingles.

Applicant was not present and there were no public comments. Ms. Weitzman motioned to approve as recommended by staff. Mr. Davis seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

- iii. **COA 2018-86** – 309-319 George Street – Michael Adams requests approval to install new barrier arms for the rear alley.

Applicant, Mike Adams, was present and clarified that there will actually be two barrier arms, opposing each other, on the 309 side as the distance was too large to be covered by one barrier arm. Mr. Adams further wanted to stress as stated in the staff report that this request is due to cut-through traffic, oftentimes going too fast and sometimes the wrong direction which is often dangerous due to the jog in the road. He never envisioned that people would use this as a cut-through when he created the project.

J. R. Flatter, 317 George Street, wanted to reiterate and stress Mr. Adams' statement about the inordinate amount of traffic and the high rate of speed often used. He has grandchildren and worries about their safety.

Ron Holmes, 319 George Street, also wanted to reinforce Mr. Adams' and Mr. Flatter's concerns about the amount of traffic and the speed, but also much of it is going in the wrong direction. This is

meant to be a one-way street but traffic often enters the wrong direction from Charles Street. Even pedestrian traffic occurs quite often and the residents believe the arms will deter that also.

Cynthia Korn, 313 George Street, also wanted to reiterate the previous comments regarding the safety issues. Definitely a dangerous situation that needs to be addressed.

Ms. Weitzman questioned staff as to what criteria should be used to evaluate this matter. Ms. Finn feels it should be evaluated more as a fence as a feature of site planning rather than traffic direction. Mr. Whitman motioned to approve gate installation and barrier arms as recommended by staff. Ms. Irvin seconded. Dr. Barile had a few more questions regarding the looks of the actual mechanism of the barrier arms. Discussion ensued regarding the looks of the machine, the setbacks where it will be placed, the least obtrusive materials, and the operations of the mechanism. No specific recommendation was made. No further discussion. Motion carried 7-0.

- iv. **COA 2018-89** – 211 Princess Anne Street – Rachel Wiegghaus requests approval to construct an addition to the back of an existing single family home.

Applicant, Rachel Wiegghaus was present but had no further comments. No public comments. Dr. Barile complimented applicant on her materials and workmanship. Ms. Weitzman seconded those comments and made a motion to approve as recommended by staff. Mr. Davis added a possible amendment to the motion with the condition that it is in line with the setbacks of the City Code. Ms. Schwartz stated this has already been done. Dr. Barile seconded the original motion. Motion carried 7-0. Mr. Gerlach then asked applicants to please let the City staff know if any important archeological finds happen during the renovations.

- v. **COA 2018-87** – 107 William Street – Doug Welsh requests approval to replace two store front windows with aluminum and glass roll up doors on the primary elevation.

Applicant was not present. No public comments were made. Ms. Weitzman questioned staff as to the nature of the proposed business. Discussion ensued regarding possible nature of the business and the need for roll up glass doors due to no access from the alley.

Jamie Scully, 1309 Prince Edward Street, who is familiar with applicant, stated he knows that Doug is very interested in this project and is unaware of why he would not be present tonight. Discussion then ensued contemplating the continuance of the matter to give applicant another chance to have potential options. Mr. Scully believes the Board should just continue the application to leave this matter open for further discussion. Dr. Barile motioned to continue this application until the February meeting to give the applicant another chance. Ms. Weitzman seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

New Construction

- vi. **COA 2018-55** – 1111-1119 Sophia Street – Claude Rackley, on behalf of Sophia Street Properties, LLC, requests approval of the detailed architectural design of three new single family homes to be constructed on these vacant parcels.

Applicant's representative, Jamie Scully, 1309 Prince Edward Street, was present and feels the project is well presented. Really appreciates the options and fine details that are present but are all appropriate for the style of the homes.

David Primmer, 1509 Caroline St., and President of the Rising Sun Neighborhood Association, was present and questioned the height and the setback. Mr. Scully did not have the particulars but they were all discussed and approved during the previous approval of scale and massing.

Danae Peckler, 1410 Prince Edward St., was present and questioned and took issue with a number of matters: First, the arches – the handbook talks about how details will be related to neighboring buildings and is again requesting to level the Syrian arches as they are not reflected in the neighborhood. Next, the door details – she did a Google street view and finds very few transoms or sidelights and just wonders if there are more details about these. Finally, the siding does not seem to match the context in the surrounding neighborhood buildings.

Ed Sandtner, 132 Caroline Street, was present and stated he still has issues with the Syrian arches (the “eyebrows”), he also believes they should be squared off. In addition, he feels the cantilevering makes it look like it's about to tip over. Feels the addition on the house on the south end seems to overpower the front part of the house and feels it should be the other way around.

Jon Neasham, 1110 Sophia Street, was present and spoke to how much he approves of all the recent changes and how much he feels the project has improved.

Mr. Davis then asked for a clarification on HVAC platforms and the material supporting it. Mr. Scully confirmed they are suspended, or cantilevered, and so the under material of the finishing on the foundation will be the same under these. Mr. Gerlach questioned the arches and Mr. Scully explained it was just an aesthetic choice. Ms. Irwin questioned had there been more and Mr. Scully confirmed they did eliminate some. Discussion ensued regarding other projects with arches and some projects they had requested the elimination of arches from. Dr. Barile questioned the detailed representation of the column types and discussion ensued about how the buyers will have that choice. These are all choices the buyers can choose. What gets approved tonight will be all the actual detailed choices.

Mr. Davis questioned that although he has no issues with any of the details of the project, given the level of comments on the arches, can it be changed, leveled out? Or are they firm. Mr. Scully has no other answers and the applicant wants the Syrian arches in the three bay concept.

Mr. Davis then motioned for approval as submitted. Mr. Whitman seconded. Dr. Barile requested the Board consider some possible amendments to the motion, specifically regarding the brick arches on the primary elevation. Mr. Gerlach questioned whether she was requesting making it a condition of the approval or just a recommendation? Ms. Finn also recommended that the motion should include the fact that there are options. Mr. Gerlach then opened the floor to discussion as to whether they should make the approval conditional upon the openings converting from arched to squared. Mr. Whitman approves of how they look and Mr. Davis did not care to change them either.

Mr. Davis then amended his motion to approve the application as submitted with all included options. Mr. Whitman seconded. The motion carried 5-1-1 with Dr. Barile opposing and Ms. Weitzman abstaining.

B. Old Business
New Construction

- vii. **COA 2018-12 –506-516 Sophia Street** – In October, 2018, the ARB granted Stephen DeFalco a certificate of appropriateness for 13 new townhomes. Mr. DeFalco now seeks to amend this approval in order to increase the height of the 13 new townhomes in order to raise the units above the base flood elevation.

Applicant, Stephen DeFalco, was present and did a summary clarification of the project. They were attempting to take it partially out of the flood plain through a remapping process with FEMA. They took that to the City but the City did not agree. The building needs to be elevated an additional foot to meet the requirements of construction in the floodplain. They added two more steps, but otherwise nothing has changed with the design.

No public comments.

Mr. Gerlach questioned the addition of the two front steps which Mr. DeFalco clarified were actually in the garage, not the front steps. Mr. Gerlach then questioned why there is one more front step in these drawings than what the Board approved and does it now project further in the walkway which Mr. DeFalco stated it does not but that the footprint of the buildings moved back to accommodate the extra step.

Ms. Irvin questioned the heights on the approved drawings and wonders why Units 1-7, the element on the roof has now grown by over a foot? Discussion ensued regarding comparisons of the previous approvals and what is being approved here. Ms. Finn suggested making a recommendation that approving the increase in height is conditional that the ratios of the floors aren't changing above the first floor through the loft.

Ms. Irvin then motioned to approve as submitted with the condition that the overall height increase of the building to the top of the loft level roof does not exceed 12 inches. Mr. Whitman seconded. Motioned carried 7-0.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Danae Peckler, 1410 Prince Edward Street, Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc. (HFFI) board member, spoke regarding a request that the ARB communicate with HFFI as there are times when people are making changes without any regard or communication with HFFI. HFFI would like to make a friendly request that the ARB communicate with HFFI on all projects wherein the HFFI has an easement. Currently there are 44 properties in the historic area that HFFI has an easement on. HFFI wants to maintain the consistency and legality of these properties as their decisions are based on the same professional guidelines the ARB uses. Even though the HFFI easement rights may trump the ARB decisions, HFFI understands the ARB review is essential to maintaining the preservation standards.

Mr. Gerlach, Ms. Finn, and Ms. Schwartz discussed the process of notifying HFFI and what procedures to follow and some possible changes.

OTHER BUSINESS

Riverfront Park Archeological: Dr. Barile updated the ARB regarding the City's request for additional archeology prior to the development of Riverfront Park which is beginning tomorrow and continuing for 4 weeks.

STAFF UPDATE

Area 7 Update: Mike Craig updated the ARB on the first stop of the "World Tour" where they are taking this presentation to the Boards and Commissions and the next steps of the Area 7 plan, the status, and updates. Historic Downtown is a critical element of this plan and so they want to be sure the ARB is totally aware of all of it.

COMMITTEE UPDATE

None.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.



Jonathan Gerlach, ARB Chair