



Minutes
Architectural Review Board
June 28, 2021
Electronic Meeting

Members Present

Jonathan Gerlach, Chair
Karen Irvin, Vice Chair
Laura Galke
Adriana Moss
Helen P. Ross
Sabina Weitzman

Members Absent

James Whitman

Staff

Kate Schwartz
Chuck Johnston

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

OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Gerlach 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 Jonathan Gerlach, Karen Irvin, Laura Galke, Adriana Moss, Helen P. Ross, 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 Gerlach determined that a quorum of 6 members was present, and asked if public notice requirements had been met. Ms. Schwartz confirmed that they had.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Moss made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Ms. Weitzman seconded. The motion carried 6-0.

DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Gerlach asked if any Board member had engaged in any *ex parte* communication on any item before the Board. No Board member had any *ex parte* communication to report.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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

PUBLIC HEARING

Continued Applications

- A. COA 2021-34 – 813 Sophia Street – The Fredericksburg Center for the Creative Arts requests to install a “Little Art Gallery” accessory structure in the garden area on the north side of the building.

Matt Williams, President of the Fredericksburg Center for the Creative Arts, was present. There was no public comment.

Ms. Galke, Ms. Ross, Ms. Weitzman, and Ms. Moss said they were in support of the application as presented. Ms. Irvin said she was in support of allowing the Historic Resources Planner to evaluate the final material selections for conformance with the guidelines. Chairman Gerlach agreed that the application met the standards and guidelines for the district and said he supported approval with the conditions recommended by staff.

Ms. Moss made a motion to approve the application on condition that the overall height of the structure is limited to five feet from grade; the gallery will be constructed of wood with a painted or stained finish and any composites used will have a smooth, painted finish; and the final materials will be approved by the Historic Resources Planner to ensure they are consistent with traditional materials used throughout the Historic District. The applicant is additionally advised to monitor for archaeological resources during excavation for the post and notify the Historic Resources Planner of any findings. Ms. Galke seconded. The motion carried 6-0.

- B. COA 2021-35 – 202 Frederick Street – Steve and Carole duBois request to construct a one-story addition at the rear of this single-family residence, construct a trash enclosure, and construct retaining walls.

Melissa Colombo, the project architect, was present to represent the application.

Gretchen Pendleton, representing the Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc., provided written comment stating that some of the details of the rear addition were out of character for the district.

Ms. Galke said she understood the concerns from HFFI, but the addition is clearly subordinate to the original structure and minimally visible. She said she was in support of the proposed revisions to the foundation paneling. Ms. Ross agreed.

Ms. Weitzman said she appreciate the response to the Board's concerns about the foundation. She said she was concerned about the use of fiber cement at the foundation for ground contact. Ms. Colombo said the lowest edge of the panel would be constructed of a material that is suitable for ground contact. Ms. Weitzman recommended that this portion of the panel be a material that looks like it is appropriate for this use rather than being a wood-like material. She also said she appreciated HFFI's concerns, but believes the design is appropriate due to its limited visibility and clear response to a unique site.

Ms. Moss said she appreciated the updated information and that the design was clearly subordinate and a unique solution for the site. She clarified that the foundation panel closest to the façade would be an access door. Ms. Colombo said the entire section would open as a door.

Ms. Irvin said she shared Ms. Weitzman's concerns about the foundation material and recommended that the Board provide an option to include a masonry curb along the bottom edge of the paneling. Ms. Colombo said a masonry gutter was planned along the edge of the driveway and could be extended under the panels. Some discussion followed on other treatments for the panels.

Ms. Irvin made a motion to approve the application in accordance with the revised drawings dated June 18, 2020 with the option to install a masonry curb beneath the foundation level panels and

with the condition that the new windows on the addition will include spacer bars in the simulated divided lights. Ms. Ross amended the motion to correct the date of the revised drawings to June 18, 2021. Ms. Irvin accepted the amendment. Ms. Moss seconded. Ms. Weitzman noted that the addition of a masonry curb would be stabilizing both visually and structurally, given the height of the piers, and encouraged the applicant to utilize this option. The motion carried 6-0.

A. COA 2021-36 – 307 Lewis Street – Fence Installation

Betsy Sale, the designer, was present.

Gretchen Pendleton, on behalf of the Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc., submitted written comment stating that the design of the fence/wall was not appropriate for the site.

Ms. Galke said that she was in support of the design mimicking the details of the house and found the materials appropriate for use. Ms. Ross said she supported the use of wrought iron as the primary material. Ms. Ross clarified the design of the aluminum fencing along the side/rear property lines and recommended a powder-coated finish rather than paint. Ms. Ross noted that the design of the fences does fit the neighborhood as there were similar examples in walking distance.

Ms. Weitzman asked Ms. Sale to clarify the spacing of the piers and the proportion of the piers to the metal sections. Ms. Sale said that the spacing between piers would be eight to ten feet. Discussion followed of the original detail provided, but Ms. Weitzman said a scaled drawing would be helpful to clarify. Ms. Moss and Ms. Irvin agreed. Ms. Irvin noted that in general, the design of the fence was appropriate to the scale and masonry construction of the residence.

Chairman Gerlach noted that several Board members had voiced concerns about clearly understanding the scale and proportions and said he was in favor of continuing the application so that a scaled drawing could be provided.

Ms. Weitzman made a motion to approve the fence installation in accordance with the revised design on condition that the Historic Resources Planner reviews scaled drawings to evaluate the spacing and height of the piers and fencing for appropriate proportion and scale. Ms. Irvin seconded. Ms. Ross noted that details of the side gate would need to be evaluated as well. Ms. Sale said the side gate and driveway gate would continue the same pattern. Board members noted that they did not realize a driveway gate was included.

Ms. Weitzman amended the motion to include evaluation of the details of the secondary gates with the Historic Resources Planner. Ms. Moss seconded the amended motion. The motion failed on a 1-5 vote with Ms. Galke in support.

Ms. Moss made a motion to continue the application to the July 12 meeting in order to allow the applicant time to provide scaled drawings showing all details of the fence. Ms. Weitzman seconded. The motion carried 6-0.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Discussion of feedback from HFFI consultant Dan Becker

Board members discussed comments submitted by HFFI consultant Dan Becker on the new construction chapter of the proposed Historic District Design Guidelines update. Chairman Gerlach spoke in support of several of the edits and clarifications, but said he was in support of retaining the guideline for evaluating the number of stories of new buildings rather than using a 10% guideline. Ms. Irvin agreed. Ms. Weitzman noted that it could be helpful in stopping out-of-scale proposals from moving forward. The Board discussed incorporating a guideline of aligning horizontal elements with existing buildings instead.

Ms. Moss recommended clarifying the definitions of adjacent and adjoining. Chairman Gerlach recommended adding a link to the FEMA flood maps. Ms. Schwartz reviewed the next steps for making edits and said this would be on the City Council agenda on July 13.

STAFF UPDATE

Ms. Schwartz and Mr. Johnston said that meetings would return to a normal in-person format for July and the specific provisions put in place during the pandemic would no longer apply. Extended hearings would no longer be required.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

There were no announcements or reports.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Gerlach adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.



Jonathan Gerlach, Chair