

BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

The Board of Architectural Review held its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, December 5, 2013, at 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, Rouss City Hall, 15 N. Cameron Street, Winchester, Virginia.

POINTS OF ORDER:

PRESENT: Chairman Rockwood, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Walker, Mr. Serafin
ABSENT: Mr. Bandyke
STAFF: Aaron Grisdale, Nasser Rahimzadeh, Catherine Clayton, Tim Youmans, Will Moore, Katherine Herrmann
VISITORS: Bill Wiley, John Willingham

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Rockwood called for additions or corrections to the minutes of November 21, 2013. Hearing none, he called for a motion. Ms. Jackson moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Walker seconded the motion. Voice vote was taken and the motion passed 4-0.

CONSENT AGENDA:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

BAR-13-595 Request of Bill Wiley of Harman Construction, Inc., for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction at the properties located at 10 E. Leicester Street (Map Number 193-01-J-15-01), zoned Residential Business (RB-1) District with Historic Winchester (HW) District overlay and 412 S. Loudoun Street (Map Number 193-01-J-2-01), zoned Residential Business (RB-1) District with Historic Winchester (HW) District overlay.

Mr. Wiley presented the scope of the project and stated that he would like to address some of the items of concern from the last meeting. He advised the Board that they were given pictures of the neighboring buildings and revised plans as requested from the previous meeting. He further advised that they tried to address some of the concerns from the last meeting. He reviewed the change from siding to all brick feature with Hardy Plank on the North side of units 1 through 3 and 4 through 6. He stated that they did try to make the garages a little less of a disturbance to the neighborhood. He added that he distributed information for the shutters and stated that they will be double-hinged and fully operable to cover the window. Chairman Rockwood said that in other words, there are two (2) panels on each half to which Mr. Wiley said that is correct.

Mr. Wiley then added that he would like to accomplish the siding today. Based upon the conversation from the last meeting, the Board wants consistency all the way around the building. With that being said, in the new plans, it does show a tumbled brick feature while still being

price conscientious. We are trying not to do over kill on the site in terms of what is being put on it. We do not want to put something on the site that stands out from the other houses and becomes a more suburban-type setting. We thought that a possible solution there is to use Hardy Plank on all sides adding that they have found in some old case studies that some existing structures had been changed in other RB-1 neighborhoods particularly on East Monmouth Street. We are asking for approval on that action and if not, what you have on the plans with the brick on the front and sides with the Hardy Plank on the rear because the North side is not seen from the street would be another option.

Mr. Wiley then addressed the windows stating that on the plans they have muntins on the windows but that they would like to remove them and have a one-over-one window and in the handout you will see the specs on those. Chairman Rockwood asked if Mr. Wiley was saying that he wants to get rid of the muntins and have one pane over one pane to which Mr. Wiley said yes.

Mr. Wiley said that the front door will be wood with glass and it will be facing the street. He added that he has some colors and that they are trying to keep with the Williamsburg colors. He also said that we can discuss colors now or wait for a later meeting. Chairman Rockwood said that the Board should just stay with the structural issues now and then deal with colors when the time comes. Mr. Wiley responded okay.

Chairman Rockwood then called for questions or comments from the Board.

Mr. Serafin said that in looking at the elevations, in his opinion, he sees that the garage doors make the buildings have a certain fabric that does not fit with the historic district. The size of the doors presents a scale that you do not see in the historic district. It changes the rhythm of the openings on the façade and he sees it as a dangerous precedent for allowing all new houses in the historic district to have a garage door facing the street if the Board allows this. He stated that this is his concern and that it seems to be a fairly consistent preservation conflict.

Chairman Rockwood added that one thing that has occurred to him is that you have three (3) full stories and a steeply pitched roof and these are at an elevation that is already higher than surrounding properties. Essentially it is a second floor living space because the first floor is the garage. He said that is a difficulty because that is how it is drawn and you want parking in some fashion for these units.

Mr. Serafin said that when the garage and storage takes the entire first floor of a unit, it cuts off any person-to-person contact you have with people on the first floor of the building and the people on the street and that is a very consistent thing in the historic district, the person-to-person contact. The scale of the garage door openings also makes the buildings look somewhat top heavy.

Chairman Rockwood questioned whether the applicant has looked at the site from the standpoint of providing off-street parking but not covered parking. Mr. Wiley stated that there is some off-street parking, maybe five (5) or six (6) but the garages do not face Leicester, the side does and the garages would certainly help to offset the parking issue.

Chairman Rockwood said that the applicant has six (6) units to which Mr. Wiley responded that they actually have eight (8) units. Chairman Rockwood then said that two of them face Leicester to which Mr. Wiley said that the side faces Leicester. Mr. Wiley said that the garages are necessary and that the challenge here is trying to accommodate people who live downtown and it is a good opportunity for the City. It helps to solve parking issues even though you may be in a parking-exempt area. Mr. Wiley then questioned if there is a way to make the garage doors look more aesthetically pleasing with brick or Hardy Plank to which he said he does not know but it is an option to look at. He added that certainly there is a garage door feature out there that would mask the Board's concern but it reiterated that the garage is a necessary item for the applicant.

Chairman Rockwood said that Mr. Serafin's point is the scale, that if it is a big enough opening to put a car in, it is going to significantly alter the façade of each of the units. Ms. Jackson said that obviously a garage door has to be a certain size and what is represented in the drawings is rather commercial so maybe the applicant could find another door that would achieve the Williamsburg-look.

Chairman Rockwood asked if all of the units will be accessed off of the alley to which Mr. Wiley stated units 1 through 3 and 4 through 6 will be but not the duplex. Chairman Rockwood then stated that the duplex would not have a garage and that the garages that are being discussed are strictly for units 1 through 3 and 4 through 6 to which Mr. Wiley stated yes.

Mr. Walker said that he agrees with Mr. Serafin about the scale of the garage doors. On units 1 through 3 there is an effort to break up the horizontality but on units 4 through 6 there is no vertical separation so it feels a little more massive and that he would appreciate some type of move in that regard to change the scale of that façade. It is less distinctive vertically and it does not have the same rhythm.

Mr. Serafin said that some of the traditional things that people use to break up a row house façade are porches, stoops, bays, different roof lines, and different materials. That brings the mass down closer to what you see in a historic district. It does not have to have Williamsburg elements but there are some tricks that can be used to get the mass to fit in.

Chairman Rockwood then asked if the brick will be a veneer and if the brick will be laid in a bond fashion where you have some end-on and some straight or will it be uniform to which Mr. Wiley responded that it will all be uniform.

Ms. Jackson asked about the corners. Then Mr. Serafin asked if the brick is 3 ½-inches deep or if it is a 1-inch deep to which Mr. Wiley stated that they will be solid brick not veneer. Mr. Serafin then added that in regard to the brickwork, he could see some details around the openings; that is a very traditional thing too. Whether it is just a soldier course above the openings, it helps to give the opening some punch.

Chairman Rockwood said that one thing he is having a difficult time seeing is if the applicant takes the mutttons out and they have a one-over-one window, what the building will look like with that. Mr. Serafin said that it would be good to see that because it does change it a lot.

Chairman Rockwood said that he really believes that the issue here is the question of the garages. He further stated that he is having a difficult time envisioning a way in which they would be consistent with what is around the buildings in the historic district. He added that is a troubling feature to him and that he understands why Mr. Wiley wants parking but there is not a lot of garage parking in the historic district in the existing buildings.

Mr. Serafin said that one of the things that might help sell the units, and this is just a suggestion, is if there was a ground-floor bedroom. Ms. Jackson then asked how that feature deters from having the garage. Mr. Serafin said that you would have the ground-floor bedroom instead of the garage.

Mr. Willingham stated that from a marketing prospective, garages are absolutely necessary so we will need to find a way to make them fit in. They are not in-fill projects that we have in Winchester and when you talk with some of the neighbors, they are very interested and excited to see something happening. What we are trying to do is be very sensitive to the neighborhood but we do have parking issues in the area. We are competing with other projects and we are trying to figure a way to deal with the lack of parking there because there is no parking garage and they are not 100% exempt from parking requirements. He added that they have to provide some parking in the RB-1 district. He added that they are trying to provide housing that is unique within the historic district but still provide some modern amenities to make this a marketable project.

Mr. Grisdale responded that the RB-1 district is a 50% parking exempt district so the parking requirement is cut in half but it is not eliminated like it is closer to downtown. The requirement is one (1) space per dwelling unit. Chairman Rockwood then asked if the garages would count toward the requirement to which Mr. Grisdale responded yes they would. Mr. Serafin then commented that there are four (4) spaces indicated on the site plan so then parking is taken care of as a requirement.

Mr. Wiley then questioned whether other historic districts have housing units with garages. He said that there certainly has to be another municipality that has a historic district that has had a similar situation that has housing units with garages as part of their development.

Chairman Rockwood said that perhaps there is a way that it can be furnished, maybe with a rear-entry garage or something like that. He then added that he is not aware of any projects as such in the City's historic district. Mr. Grisdale stated that he cannot think of any residential projects recently that have had attached garages. Chairman Rockwood then said that it could be because we have not had any undeveloped properties to that scale.

Mr. Walker stated that for him it is a problem with the parking and the scale and you have to look at these buildings in relationship to the scale of the buildings around them in the historic district and the garage door does not lend itself to that kind of scale. Whether it is on the back of the property, maybe that helps, but he said that he has a problem relating the historic district to the garage door. Maybe a different location on the building could solve that, whether you access it differently, or whether it is not on the front of the building.

Mr. Wiley asked that the Board keep in mind that these are not on the front of the buildings, rather they are on the side. Chairman Rockwood said that they are the entrance-way to the house. Mr. Wiley said that in terms of the visibility in the historic district, these units are accessed off of the alley. Chairman Rockwood said that he understands that the six (6) units are all accessed off of the alley.

Mr. Serafin asked Mr. Wiley if there is any way that he can do detached, covered parking. Mr. Wiley said that with the site plan, based upon the unit density, I am not sure it is feasible. Mr. Serafin stated that a detached garage is something that you see more of in the historic district. Chairman Rockwood said that the detached, covered garage could then be obscured from view.

Chairman Rockwood asked if they reduced by two (2) units if that would give enough space to provide parking. Mr. Wiley stated that he is not the developer rather he is the builder and he cannot answer the question. Mr. Willingham responded no, six (6) units plus the two (2) units in the duplex are needed and it is not economically advantageous or feasible to reduce the number of units. He added that they can look at putting a garage on the rear but that he thought it was already discussed. Ms. Jackson asked Mr. Willingham if that was something that he had presented to the Board to which Mr. Willingham commented that he believes they discussed it with staff; however, if he needs to discuss it with the Board, he will certainly do so.

Chairman Rockwood said that his other concern is that he believes that garage doors and presentation of façade are part of the guidelines and that these are somewhat disfavored in the historic district for the reasons that Mr. Serafin has set out. He then said that this is a pretty basic problem with this development proposal. It might make sense to look at other districts as Mr. Wiley stated earlier and to give some serious thought on how this might be better integrated in the project to be less conspicuous on the façade of these buildings.

Mr. Wiley said that certainly they can find a garage door opening feature that looks aesthetically in line with scale as well as the appearance being favorable to the historic guidelines. Chairman Rockwood said that if that area needs to be explored, maybe the Board and the applicant needs to come back to discuss it some more after having looked to determine if there are other such situations elsewhere or other solutions. He then added that he does not know how to solve the problem of the garage door on the front façade. If there was some way to obscure it or if there could be a rear entrance to the garage or somehow to minimize the look and make these units look less top heavy as Mr. Walker says. He said that this is something that we should explore.

Mr. Serafin said that he is also thinking of this as precedent. Ms. Jackson then said that since this is the first time that the Board is trying to integrate something like this, it is a test and we need to be sure that we get this physically and architecturally correct and pleasing. We need to get it right.

Chairman Rockwood also suggested that the Board go back and take a look at the existing guidelines for garage uses in the district and there may be a way through this based upon those guidelines but that the precedential issue is an important one and we cannot go forward until we are comfortable with that.

Mr. Wiley asked, aside from the garage and scale issue, if the Board could go forward on other items of the building such as the siding, windows, doors, shutters, and brick so that they can put in what they need to finalize. Based upon the neighborhood, we have the brick feature on the front and side elevations and Hardy Plank on the rear. In the past meeting we discussed uniformity all the way around and staying consistent with one type of siding. Again, based upon the neighborhood, we feel that Hardy Plank all the way around is the best solution but we are offering the brick and Hardy Plank solution.

Chairman Rockwood reiterated that Mr. Wiley would be using Hardy Plank on rear elevations only. Mr. Wiley responded that is correct and it is noted in the current plan but they do prefer Hardy Plank for all four (4) sides. Mr. Wiley then added that they can go back and look at the scale issues for things like the roof line and they can add some features to get in the right direction there.

Chairman Rockwood stated that the Board did discuss Hardy Plank the last time. Mr. Serafin Said that generally on primary facades it is not allowed. Chairman Rockwood then said that the Board has allowed Hardy Plank on non-primary elevations in the historic district.

Mr. Grisdale stated that he believes it is the case that on some of the Habitat infill redevelopment parcels they were approved for Hardy Plank on all four (4) sides, some like on the South Kent Street area. Ms. Jackson also stated that there are some rehab parcels that have Hardy Plank on them. Mr. Grisdale further stated that there are situations where the Board has approved Hardy Plank as an improvement from the existing materials on the side whether they are purely cinder block or asphalt siding. Chairman Rockwood then added that the Board has approved replacement of asphalt or asbestos siding with Hardy Plank. Mr. Grisdale then added that there are situations where on the primary façade for both new construction and renovations of existing structures where Hardy Plank has been approved on those primary facades. Chairman Rockwood said that he is not aware of one being approved for a primary façade for a renovation project to which Mr. Grisdale stated that there are a few on Monmouth Street, at least two (2) cases there. Chairman Rockwood asked if they have come to the Board to which Mr. Grisdale responded yes, within the last six (6) years.

Chairman Rockwood said that he thinks that Hardy Plank could be considered as a material for all phases of this development since it is a new development. Mr. Serafin said that looking at the North elevation of units 1, 2, and 3 that is going to be a lot of Hardy Plank without any break in it; it sort of looks like an institutional building.

Mr. Wiley said that scale of the buildings is not a major issue for him as it is something simple to fix. He asked if the material alone is acceptable and if so, they will move forward to get the scale of the building and make it look nice.

Mr. Walker said that he could be convinced of Hardy and brick on the front façade or on all facades of these buildings if it is presented in a way that is better to scale. Maybe some relief or a change in material where all three (3) of the units are not quite the same. Mr. Serafin said that the applicant could do something with height or width to help bring the scale down to a more reasonable level. Mr. Walker then said as a material alone basis, there is a precedence for

approving it but it has to be presented in a way that is acceptable. Chairman Rockwood said that the applicant can build with Hardy Plank but that he still has to satisfy the questions of scale and relief.

Mr. Wiley thanked the Board and then discussed the windows. Chairman Rockwood said that he would like to see an elevation without the muntins because it will substantially change the look of the building. Mr. Serafin then asked if the sills and casings are wood because on the specs, it shows a speckled “stuff” and wondered what it is. Mr. Wiley said that he would have to get more information for clarification but that the windows, including the sashes and jambs, will be wood. He added that the shutters will be operable, wood and to scale.

Mr. Serafin stated that Mr. Wiley mentioned that the front door is a steel door and he questioned if the metal is on the outside. Mr. Wiley said that it is his understanding that the metal is on the inside but that he would get clarification on that. He then asked the preference of the Board to which the members unanimously stated wood doors. Mr. Serafin then said that there are new doors and windows coming out every day and if Mr. Wiley has something in mind, the Board would look at it but the idea is that when you see it from the front, it will look like wood and when you knock on it, it sounds like wood.

Chairman Rockwood then said that this is about as far as the Board can go at this time but that they need to address the parking provision and garages. He then called for a motion.

Mr. Serafin moved to continue the discussion of the garage and scale issues until the next scheduled meeting of the BAR. Mr. Walker seconded the motion. Voice vote was taken and the motion passed 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

OTHER DISCUSSION:

- BAR member contact list; Adopted amended By-Laws; 2014 BAR meeting schedule for review and adoption. (Mr. Grisdale)

Mr. Grisdale advised the Board that they have received a copy of the BAR member contact list as requested, a copy of the adopted amended By-Laws, and the 2014 BAR meeting schedule for their review and consideration of approval after Mr. Youmans' presentation.

- National Historic District survey and expansion project. (Mr. Youmans)

Mr. Youmans stated that the Winchester National Historic District 2014 Amendment is a work in progress and has not been approved yet; however, he stated that he wants to inform the Board where they are in the process. He added that the presentation today is about the amendment to

the nomination for the existing district only. Consultants were hired to do an updated inventory of properties inside the existing national district as well as some expansion areas including a large area out to the West toward the hospital, Stewart Street and the streets that are in the grid there. The major element of the amendment is to extend the period of significance which is used to determine if a property is contributing or non-contributing within the context of the national district.

He stated that all of this is being done with funding through the Certified Local Government program that DHR has. He advised that Winchester is a CLG community and that entitles us to apply competitively for funds to do things like surveys and educational outreach opportunities. This effort has focused on building off of the survey work that had been done previously and to look at extending the period of significance from where it currently terminates with a cutoff year of 1929. Effectively from 1752 to 1929 is the present period of significance for structures in the original district which goes back to the 1976 survey. The original district was put on to the National Register in 1979 and as a result of this date, 1929 was established as the period of significance because it was 50 years old.

Mr. Youmans outlined the boundaries of the National Historic District and stated that the amendment will not impact the boundaries of the local historic district. The current national district includes about 1,058 properties when it was originally listed in 1979 and since then, there have been two (2) notable additions to the district with one amendment in 2003 and one in 2008 with both of them being in the Northeast area along North Cameron Street. These two (2) additions included an additional 17 properties. He also advised that there a number of properties in Winchester, like Handley High School, that are individually listed.

He added that back in 2008, they hired EHT Traceries Company through a CLG grant-funded effort to survey a little over 400 properties and then three (3) years later, EHT Traceries, together with Maral Kalbian, looked at a little less than 600 additional properties which resulted in the reports that most have seen. It was a significant effort with 1,058 properties being surveyed and determinations made of contributing or non-contributing status for each.

Mr. Youmans added that in early 2013, a CLG grant was awarded to the City to allow for the opportunity to prepare a nomination for amendment to the existing National Register District. Dovetail Cultural Resource Group was hired to prepare nomination and continuation sheets. The main component of this is that we wanted to establish the contributing versus non-contributing status as well as to extend the period of significance from 1929 to 1964 knowing that most likely this amendment would go in to effect in 2014. Dovetail did a reconnaissance survey of a little under 200 resources and those were spread across about 155 properties. They specifically looked at the resources that were constructed between 1930 and the end of 1964. What they found were 198 contributing buildings and 1 contributing structure, which is someone's garage. Out of those 198, there were 158 buildings, 1 contributing structure, 32 non-contributing buildings (including 9 demolitions), 1 non-contributing structure, and 6 non-contributing objects. He added that once a nomination is accepted and approved by DHR, even if a structure is demolished, it stays on the register and they do not delete the record, they just say that it is no longer contributing to the historic district.

He stated that in the period of 1930 to 1964, there are five (5) major architectural styles added as follows: 1) Craftsman/American Four Square; 2) Minimal Traditional; 3) Ranch; 4) Tudor Revival, and 5) Modern. They also found one (1) example of Mission/Spanish Revival in the 400 block of North Braddock Street. A major part of what City staff has been working on is the mapping to coincide with the effort that the consultant is doing and we are working on the continuation sheets because we are not going to completely replace the 1979 nomination but instead we are going to submit continuation sheets that build off of that and perhaps update some of the information if more history is known about the building or if there are minor corrections to dates of construction or architectural styles. This effort is specifically looking at those properties that were constructed between 1930 and 1964 which may or may not now be designated as contributing. Presently, anything built after 1929 is automatically deemed non-contributing because the period of significance ends in 1929. This allows any structure built through the end of 1964 to be considered.

The timeframe from here is that the City has received the report from the consultant, we have completed the initial mapping, the report is being reviewed by the City and the regional office of DHR and they have forwarded it to the central office in Richmond. The map is going through some edits and we hope to have everything wrapped up and submitted in final form by mid-December. Additionally, since this is an amendment to the existing district, it does not require State Board approval so DHR staff can administratively approve this. We are hoping that this will occur either late December 2013 or early 2014. Once approval occurs, the last step is to have the Federal government list it on the Virginia Landmark Registry.

To wrap up, Mr. Youmans said that the benefits of this effort are to update the inventory and photographic archives; have designation of contributing and non-contributing status; will assist BAR in evaluating requests for major alterations and demolitions; it will expand the inventory of structures for which State and Federal tax credits may be utilized, which is about a 45% income tax credit; and finally, it will increase awareness and appreciation of Winchester's extensive and diverse inventory of historic, architectural, and cultural resources.

Chairman Rockwood called for questions of Mr. Youmans. Chairman Rockwood asked if there is an area designation or is it a specific 17 properties which were evaluated to which Mr. Youmans said that there are more than 17 resources as some sites have multiple buildings. Chairman Rockwood said that his understanding is that the line has the latest structure or object at 1951. Mr. Youmans said that he thinks that means that is the farthest they brought it forward and still stayed 50 years back. Chairman Rockwood asked if there is a loophole here between 1951 and 1964 for those 17 properties to which Mr. Youmans advised that for those 17 properties, assuming DHR continues to recommend that we not update the period of significance for the 2003 and 2008 edition, that is correct they will have a different terminal date.

Chairman Rockwood thanked Mr. Youmans for the update and progress report to the Board.
- 2014 BAR meeting schedule (Mr. Grisdale)

Mr. Grisdale asked that the Board review the dates of the 2014 meeting schedule for adoption and stated that it is in the same format.

Chairman Rockwood called for corrections to the 2014 meeting schedule. Hearing none, he called for a motion.

Mr. Serafin moved to approve and adopt the 2014 BAR meeting schedule as submitted. Mr. Walker seconded the motion. Voice vote was taken and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Serafin asked if a representative from PHW could come in to discuss this garage door issue. Mr. Grisdale stated that generally there is a representative in attendance but possibly she was not able to attend today but when they are here, they are more than welcome to opine at the Board's discretion. Chairman Rockwood said that he believes it would be extremely helpful if they have experience in other historic districts or special knowledge to contribute.

ADJOURN:

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.