

## **BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW MINUTES**

The Board of Architectural Review held its regularly scheduled meeting on, August 21, 2008 at 15 N. Cameron Street, at 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, Rouss City Hall.

**PRESENT:** L Belkin, P Farris, M Lore and C Shore.  
**ABSENT:** T Bandyke, T Rockwood and L Saunders.  
**STAFF:** Diem and Walsh  
**VISITORS:** Andrew & Shirley Pedersen, Julie Connell, Don Butler, Sandra & Don Anderson, and Chris Jennings.

### **MINUTES**

Mr. Lore asked for a correction on page 4.

*It was moved by P Farris, seconded by C Shore, to approve the minutes as amended.*

*Motion passed unanimously 3-0-1. (Belkin abstained)*

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**BAR-08-78** Request of Hoxton Financial, Inc. for a projecting sign at 35 North Braddock Street.

**BAR-08-80** Request of Andrew and Shirley Pedersen for approval of paint colors at 432 North Loudoun Street.

*It was moved by P Farris, seconded by C Shore, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to all items on the Consent Agenda.*

*Motion passed unanimously 4-0.*

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**BAR-08-77** Request of Oakcrest Properties for recommendation of landscaping requirements per Section-19-5-6.3 at 163 -165 North Loudoun Street.

*It was moved by M Lore, seconded by C Shore to forward site plan **SP-08-26** as submitted, to the Planning Commission with a favorable recommendation for proposed landscaping.*

*Motion passed unanimously 4-0.*

**BAR-08-79** Request of Winchester Capital Group, Inc. for building mounted signage at 525 Amherst Street.

Mr. Butler explained that the idea is to get the signage up to remove the banners.

Mr. Farris questioned whether or not the plastic letters were eligible based on the guidelines.

Belkin read from guidelines on signage.

He suggested that the sign company chose a serif font that would be more keeping with the time period as opposed to the font that was chosen.

Mr. Farris suggested a non-glossy surface that doesn't rise up so tall from the surface. He felt that would be more within the guidelines. He asked Mr. Butler if he would consider Mr. Belkin's suggestion.

Mr. Butler stated that it wouldn't be a problem. His biggest concern was that the letters are black so they stand out and are easily read from the road.

*It was moved by P Farris, seconded by M Lore, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to BAR-08-79 with the understanding that the applicant would use serif font such as times new roman.*

*Motion passed unanimously 4-0.*

**BAR-08-81** City of Winchester is requesting approval to erect a new the bus transfer station from on E. Boscawen St.

Mr. Diem explained that the current bus shelter had to be moved for pedestrian safety. The traffic signal was removed causing a safety hazard. City staff has determined that it would be better placed on Boscawen St.

Mr. Lore asked if there were any other style options.

Perry Eisenach stated that this style is standard in the industry. They are limited in choices due to the size of the sidewalk. He added that the station would be powder-coated black to match the street lights and the roof.

*It was moved by M Lore, seconded by P Farris, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to BAR-08-81 as submitted with the understanding that it will be painted black to match the street signals.*

*Motion passed unanimously 4-0.*

**OLD BUSINESS**

**BAR-08-76** Request of Chris Jennings to install new siding and windows at 120 E Clifford St.

Mr. Diem presented pictures showing the deterioration of this property. He pointed out the differences in the types of siding currently on the home. He presented pictures of renovations that were done in the neighborhood some using wood siding and others using hardy plank. The paint on the newly renovated properties is already peeling.

Mr. Diem explained that he did some research in the Preservation Briefs regarding the appropriateness of the use of synthetic materials. The guidelines advise to try and preserve as much as the original material as possible. The applicant explained in the initial meeting that there are no less than four (4) different types of siding on the house. He felt that there is no way to know what was original to the dwelling. He asked the Board where the applicant should begin in determining which siding material would be appropriate. He asked that the Board take another look at Preservation Brief # 8 and see how it ties into the current design guidelines. Mr. Diem couldn't find anything within the brief that specifically prohibited hardy plank.

Mr. Belkin felt that the preparer of the guidelines didn't specify specific synthetic materials but encouraged the non-use of ALL synthetic material. He stated that he wasn't here for the initial meeting and asked for clarification on what was being applied for.

Mr. Lore explained the initial request, expressing the concern of the members at that time. He stated that they were all against taking down any wood siding that may be original, that meets current guidelines, and putting up synthetic siding.

Mr. Belkin expressed his concern with what new materials might look like 20 years from now. He used asbestos siding as an example, stating that in its time everyone thought it was a good idea. His opinion was that wood, should rule. He felt allowing this material would lead to the deterioration of the historic fabric.

Mr. Jennings stated that they aren't asking for anything that can't be found within one block of the home. He asked why new homes were allowed to be built with synthetic materials.

Mr. Belkin explained that those houses are new and not historic. The Board is not trying to recreate history just preserve what's there.

Mr. Anderson stated that he felt discriminated against because there are houses just a couple doors down that have hardy plank siding. He explained that he didn't ask for vinyl siding because there isn't any on the house and it would ruin the appearance, but hardy plank looks just like wood. He added that he lives in Florida which makes the high maintenance of wood a problem. He stated that he has come to Winchester twice to meet

with the Board so he wanted a decision made today. If the decision was to deny the request, he wanted the minutes to reflect that he tried to fix the home because he will be leaving it as is.

Mrs. Anderson stated that they really want to repair it. They are native to Winchester, and would like the house to be all it can be. She stated that they need to lessen the heating bills that are over \$500 a month. She suggested that the members go to the house to see the shape it's in.

Mr. Jennings added that the new townhouses on the corner are already peeling. He felt that in three years they would look horrible.

Mr. Belkin asked that the applicants give the members time to discuss it.

Mr. Farris explained that the Board is not trying to shut them down but they have to follow the process. He explained that when the original design guidelines were written hardy plank was not included. He asked that they understand that each individual case where hardy plank was used was debated, it is very difficult to build a uniform rule. He stated that the question is, if this is appropriate at this address, and in this case it is not. He felt that approving hardy plank on a prominent elevation would make the home look new even if its not and you can't reverse it. It could alter the character of the entire street.

Mr. Farris explained that everyone in the historic district wants to make upgrades to their home to what they feel is common sense, but it is up to the Board to uphold the standards that were created for the Historic District.

Mrs. Shore agreed with Mr. Farris.

Mr. Lore also agreed with Mr. Farris. He stated that when a new home is built in the Historic District that the idea is not for it to masquerade as old. He felt that hardy plank would be turning an old house into a new one.

Mrs. Anderson asked if they could tear it down and then build a new home using hardy plank.

Mr. Lore stated that if the Board would allow demolition, then the standards for a new home would be different.

Mr. Anderson stated that he planned to research each house in the neighborhood with hardy plank to determine whether or not he has been discriminated against.

Mr. Farris asked the applicants if they would consider amending the application as the Board is suggesting.

Mr. Anderson stated he was not interesting in using two different types of material on the home. He stated that he might consider using hardy plank on three of the sides and leaving the front wood.

Mr. Lore explained that the east elevation is prominent as well and should also remain wood.

Mr. Anderson stated that there are inconsistencies in what is being said. He stated that on one hand the Board is saying that synthetic material isn't allowed and then on the other he was being told that it's allowed as long as it can't be seen.

Mr. Lore tried to explain that it's the streetscape that the Board is interested in.

Mr. Jennings argued that all down that street there are illegal materials used and they haven't been asked to take it down. He stated that they should go ahead and do the work anyway because it's easier to beg for forgiveness than ask for permission.

Mr. Belkin stated that the Board is not on trial here.

Mr. Farris added that the Board doesn't look favorably on that type of behavior. He stated that some of those materials could have been added before the Ordinance and therefore be grandfathered in.

Mr. Belkin stated that Mr. Farris had made a valiant effort by continuing the discussion and then by proposing ideas for a solution. He suggested that the Board act on the proposal as presented.

Mr. Lore added that at the last meeting there was a unanimous feeling that hardy plank should not be applied to the prominent elevations.

Mr. Anderson stated that from what he's hearing this is denied. He thanked the Board for saving him money because he was just going to leave it as is.

Mr. Belkin stated that the applicant's frustration is clear.

*It was moved by P Farris, seconded by C Shore, to deny BAR-08-76 as presented.*

Mr. Jennings asked if the denial included the windows.

Mr. Farris explained that it was the whole application, but the Board could look at the windows separately if they liked.

Mr. Jennings stated that the Board didn't have to worry about it because they were just going to do it anyway.

*Motion passed unanimously 4-0.*

Mr. Diem asked that the Board take another look at Preservation Brief #8. He read the exceptions in the brief that would allow alternate materials. He strongly advised they take this information into consideration because that's what the design guidelines are based on. He felt that the standards were not followed in this case.

Mr. Lore stated that the provisions that he read did not pertain to this situation, the siding could be repaired.

Mr. Belkin added that if the outward appearance of the historic district was systematically changed, it would alter its character. He felt the Board has to be conservative if the materials can be salvaged. He added that's it bad to encourage people not to maintain their homes as he felt was the case here.

Mrs. Shore felt the Board was being used to alter their financial situation.

Mr. Belkin suggested that the Board stop allowing individual discussions with the applicants. He felt that the applicant should be allowed to comment on their case and then set down and allow the Board to discuss it.

Both Mr. Lore and Mrs. Shore agreed.

### **OTHER DISCUSSION**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:16 pm.