

BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW MINUTES

The Board of Architectural Review held its regularly scheduled meeting on, November 4, 2010, 2010, at 15 N. Cameron Street, at 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, Rouss City Hall.

PRESENT: Patrick Farris, Tom Rockwood, Don Crigler and Bob Pinner.
ABSENT: Tim Bandyke and Catherine Shore.
STAFF: Vince Diem.
VISITORS: Scott Rosenfeld

MINUTES

Mr. Rockwood moved, seconded by Chairman Farris, to approve the minutes of October 21, 2010 as amended.

Motion passed unanimously 4-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS

BAR 10-602 Request of Scott Rosenfeld, on behalf of LaRose Development LLC, to eliminate the bottom row of windows on the east elevation at 812 Amherst St.

Mr. Diem presented the request by showing slides depicting the changes made since the initial submission. The awnings will remain, however the first and last window on the east side will be removed to allow for mechanical and electrical equipment as well as a wall partition.

Mr. Rosenfeld explained that a privacy fence will be installed on the east side that would prevent anyone from seeing the windows.

Mr. Rockwood stated that final approval on the façade was given in July. Having approved a final façade he had difficulty making piecemeal changes without further discussion.

Mr. Rosenfeld stated that the changes were not apparent at the time. He apologized, but stated that the changes will need to be done to make room for the mechanical and electrical equipment as well as the partition wall. The gas company had stated that the meter could not be near a window. He explained that he planned to use darker brick to still make it appear as windows.

Mr. Rockwood asked why the front windows on the east side were being eliminated.

Mr. Rosenfeld stated that there is a wall partition that will come right into the middle of them.

Mr. Rockwood asked if the floor plans were complete at the time the façade was submitted. He did not understand why this partition wall was not a problem initially.

Mr. Rosenfeld stated that he did not think so. The changes were made recently.

Mr. Diem stated that there were no actual floor plans when the façade was submitted in July, just the overall form.

Mr. Rosenfeld agreed, stating that at this time there are no floor plans for the second and third floors.

Mr. Rockwood explained that when final approval is given for a project of this size, it is expected to be the final decision. He stated that he was not comfortable making piecemeal changes especially when the second and third floors could be subject to change as well.

Mr. Rosenfeld stated that this is a modern building within the historic district. Compared to all the changes that had to be done to make it fit in, these are minor and functional.

Chairman Farris asked that the discussion be limited to the requested changes alone.

Mr. Rockwood pointed out that another interior change could alter the façade. He stated that the project should have been a fully formed idea before it was submitted.

Mr. Rosenfeld stated that most of the building has not leased yet. He stated that in this tough market, changes sometimes have to be made at the renter's request. Again he stated that these are minor changes.

Mr. Rockwood was concerned with what could be considered a minor change.

Mr. Crigler pointed out that interior changes to the second and third floor could produce additional exterior changes.

Mr. Rosenfeld stated that the second and third floors were done.

Mr. Crigler asked Mr. Rosenfeld if he was sure this would be the only change.
Mr. Rosenfeld stated that he was correct.

Chairman Farris stated that he did not have any issues with the window changes as long as it was done to be within the utility guidelines.

Mr. Pinner agreed.

Chairman Farris asked for a motion.

Mr. Crigler moved, seconded by Mr. Pinner, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to BAR 10-602 as submitted with the addition that the applicant minimizes the size and intrusiveness of the electric meters.

Mr. Rockwood stated that he would be voting against this item due to the addition of the interior wall requiring the removal of windows. He stated he had no issue with the gas meter change and agreed with minimizing the intrusiveness of the electrical meters.

Motion carried 3-1 (Mr. Rockwood Against).

OTHER DISCUSSION

Chairman Farris was concerned that electronic communication soliciting opinion between meetings could be mistaken as voting. He explained that with the newly adopted text amendment allowing staff to approve minor changes has brought up the question of what is a minor change to a previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness. He stated that in his opinion every single alteration needs to be brought to the board or the board needed to direct staff to make the judgment call. The amendment listed what staff was able to approve administratively and he was ok with letting staff make the call.

Mr. Crigler stated that in his opinion any case that was previously before the board should have to come back unless it is truly a minimal change such as color. If it is a new application coming in, he was satisfied with letting staff decide. He did not consider the changes in today's case to be minor.

Mr. Rockwood stated that in this case the board approved the façade. Within a month the applicant was back requesting to raise the building. Now its the elimination of windows. He felt that this project was being designed piecemeal based on the financial situation at the time. In his opinion, it should not have been brought before the board until the design was complete.

Chairman Farris agreed that he did not want to allow a project to be altered piecemeal. Planning is necessary but there has to be a standard to go by.

Mr. Rockwood agreed with Mr. Crigler's suggestion.

Mr. Pinner stated that it was possible to piecemeal a project to death. He suggested that before it is thrown to staff, the board needed to establish what would be considered minor or major.

Chairman Farris stated that he was also satisfied with Mr. Crigler's suggestion considering the guidance in the text amendment. He stated that staff has the ability to review new projects and determine where they land.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:37PM.