

## **BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW**

The Board of Architectural Review held its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, January 16, 2014, at 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, Rouss City Hall, 15 North Cameron Street, Winchester, Virginia.

### **POINTS OF ORDER:**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Rockwood, Mr. Bandyke, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Walker, Mr. Serafin

**ABSENT:** None

**STAFF:** Aaron Grisdale, Nasser Rahimzadeh, Catherine Clayton, Tim Youmans,  
Katherine Herrmann

**VISITORS:** Benjamin Ritenour, Chuck Swartz

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chairman Rockwood called for additions or corrections to the minutes of January 2, 2014. Hearing none, he called for a motion. Mr. Serafin 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.

### **PUBLIC HEARING:**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**BAR-14-023** Request of Benjamin Ritenour, for a conceptual approval for façade and rear layout changes at the property located at 21 N. Loudoun Street (*Map Number 193-01-B-7-01*), zoned Central Business (B1) District with Historic Winchester (HW) District overlay.

Benjamin Ritenour, applicant, presented the case to the Board beginning with the façade changes that are being requested. He advised the Board that there is a site plan review for the rear changes being proposed for the walk-in cooler and dumpster.

Chairman Rockwood stated that on the façade it appears to remove the false timber framing to which Mr. Ritenour stated that yes he wants to remove that and have a more traditional façade adding that there would be a solid wood door, new wood shutters, and a decorative arch above the door and windows. He also said that he would change out the trim to make everything more period-correct.

Chairman Rockwood asked if the signage is an awning and if the façade and windows are going to remain as-is to which Mr. Ritenour stated yes to all. Chairman Rockwood stated that there are no proposed changes to the second story windows to which Mr. Ritenour stated that they are leaving the original windows but that they do want to change the shutters.

Mr. Jackson asked what materials are being planned for the “dress up.” Mr. Ritenour said that they will a custom craftsman to do the work to the windows and the door all in wood. Mr. Serafin asked if the new façade would be the same plane as the old façade to which Mr. Ritenour stated that it will stay the same with the exception of the awning. Ms. Jackson asked if Mr. Ritenour has looked to see what is under the stucco to which Mr. Ritenour stated no.

Mr. Serafin stated that the only thing that really strikes him is the use of the circle top over the new doors and it is recessed down below the windows on either side. He added that it looks a little out of balance. Mr. Bandyke asked what is above the door now. Mr. Ritenour stated that there is just a square piece of glass. He then said that he is just trying to dress it up a little without making a lot of structural changes. Chairman Rockwood said that he has a certain amount of reservation about the arch over the door and the windows. Mr. Ritenour said that he is trying to get a little Italian- or Mediterranean-feel but not too much because he said that he wants to bring in the “feel of downtown” without changing the architectural style of the building. Mr. Bandyke said that he understands that the space above the door has to be filled but he questioned if there could be a different configuration used instead of an arch above the door and windows. He suggested reducing the size of the window above the door to compliment the side windows.

Mr. Bandyke said that the big white band in the middle is something that the Board will need to address with a little more detail. Since it is an architectural detail it may need to have a little depth to it. He then added that he does not see anything “radical” here that can’t be done.

Ms. Jackson asked what the back of the building looks like to which Mr. Ritenour stated that there is a parking space and a dumpster there now. Chairman Rockwood asked what is going to be added to the back. Mr. Ritenour stated that it will be the walk-in cooler with a privacy fence around it and then the privacy fence will continue around the dumpster and there will be a gate for access. He added that there will be curb stops added to the parking space for safety. Mr. Walker asked what type of fence is to be used to which Mr. Ritenour responded that he is considering 1 x 6 cedar.

Chairman Rockwood then asked about the vacant space in the rear. Mr. Ritenour stated that this is where he wants to put the walk-in cooler. Mr. Bandyke asked how he would get in to the cooler. Mr. Ritenour stated that the access would be on the side by the stairs.

Mr. Serafin asked how high the fence would be and Mr. Ritenour said that it would be 8-feet or maybe a little taller. Mr. Grisdale advised that 8-feet is the maximum height that zoning will allow. Chairman Rockwood then asked if the fence is going to be solid or bars. Mr. Ritenour stated that it will be made with one-bys and spaced slightly but if the Board wants them put together, they can be put together. Mr. Bandyke questioned if the fence will be painted or cedar to which Mr. Ritenour stated that it will be cedar in a natural tone.

Chairman Rockwood then asked Mr. Grisdale if he had any staff comments to make on either the façade or the rear layout. Mr. Grisdale said that he does not believe so but that if the Board looks back on the historical resource surveys, the current façade was deemed inappropriate to the Historic District so any effort to make it more compatible to the district would be very welcome. Chairman Rockwood added that Mr. Ritenour has a blank slate to work with.

Mr. Bandyke then asked about the site plan to which Mr. Grisdale stated that the applicant is looking for clarification for the site improvements that need to be completed prior to occupancy so that when Planning approves the site plan, he can do the necessary site improvements. Chairman Rockwood said that the Board could come back on the site plan aspect and defer the façade until the applicant is ready to present a specific proposal.

Chairman Rockwood then asked if there was any other discussion or questions. Hearing none, he called for a motion.

Mr. Bandyke moved to approve the site plan aspect for the improvements to the rear elevation of the property as proposed with a cedar fence, 8-feet high, 1 x 6, spaced ½-inch, cedar finished fencing as proposed; parking curbs to be added; a fence around the dumpster and a fence-gate in front of the dumpster; and a new walk-in cooler installed which will also be in the fenced area.

Mr. Serafin seconded the motion. Voice vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

Chairman Rockwood advised Mr. Ritenour that the proposed site improvements to the rear elevation have been approved and the Board will defer the façade changes until is ready to submit the proposal.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

#### **OTHER DISCUSSION:**

- Chairman Rockwood acknowledged receipt of the materials from staff as it relates to the use of substitute building materials in the Historic District. Mr. Grisdale stated that the Board had requested some background materials at the State or Federal level indicating the way they review tax credits. He advised that the first page comes from the State DHR website in terms of the their evaluation of tax credits, then there are two (2) preservation briefs from the National Park Service, and at the end there is a primer that comes from the Department of Historic Resources website. This is for the Board's review and discussion at the next meeting.

Mr. Bandyke asked if this could be part of their guidelines if they like what they see. Mr. Walker said that the Board's guidelines do state that synthetic materials are not appropriate. Mr. Grisdale stated that it would be beneficial to have some memorandum or written policy that clarifies specifically the Hardie Plank issue. He added that in terms of the use of HardiePlank, there is a difference between new construction and rehabilitation and so flatly

saying that approval for the use of HardiePlank in only new construction is okay is maybe not the way we want to go. He added that thinking through this process and coming up with something that is easy for a property owner to understand would be beneficial when they come in to make an application before the Board. This would help so that they do not have to do a lot of back and forth because there have been some inconsistencies, especially on the rehabilitation side of things. He said that he feels the Board has been pretty clear on the primary façade[of renovations] with not allowing HardiePlank but when it gets to side facades and things like that, it has been a little back and forth. He further added that he feels it would be beneficial for the Board to work its way through this and come up with a policy that could be an addendum to the historic district guidelines that would make it a lot easier for future property owners and developers. It would be a more streamlined process through the Certificate of Appropriateness application. He asked the Board to take the information and digest it for discussion at future meetings so that a policy can be set.

Chairman Rockwood said that he believes it would be useful if the Board read these documents and compare them to language in the existing guidelines. He added that this is a good start.

Mr. Bandyke stated that on January 14<sup>th</sup> there was to have been a BAR appeal before City Council on the use of HardiePlank and vinyl siding at 16 W. Monmouth Street and asked what the outcome was. Mr. Grisdale advised that there was a public hearing on Tuesday at the Council meeting but Council did not make a decision yet as they are digesting all of the various points that were discussed and they will come back at a future meeting and make their decision.

- Mr. Grisdale said that this did not come up in time for the agenda but that at the Discovery Museum there may be some slight changes to the handrail barrier on the top of the building and he said that he wanted to discuss with the Board to determine if they were comfortable with him making an administrative review of that. He added that basically they are keeping the same shape and overall materials but that there might be a change between the Trex® material to a different design in steel material. He added that it might move to solely steel.

Mr. Bandyke said that he does not see any problem with it. Ms. Jackson said that as long as the kids do not fall off the top, she is good with it. Mr. Swartz said that they are looking at eliminating the Trex® and doing all steel frames and panels to ensure safety and functionality.

Chairman Rockwood said that he does not see any problem with it especially since the profile is not going to change. He then added that it will be okay to make an administrative approval.

- Mr. Grisdale said that in terms of staffing of the Board of Architectural Review, there will be some transition. He said that the Department of Planning will be taking over the liaison duties to the Board of Architectural Review. Will Moore with the Planning Department will be the new staff liaison beginning with the February 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Mr. Bandyke asked if Mr. Moore will be in Mr. Grisdale's seat to which Mr. Grisdale responded yes he will. Mr. Grisdale added that, in terms of the discussions that have been taking place relating to HardiePlank and such, staff will make this staff transition as seamless as possible and keep Mr. Moore as informed as far as the direction that the Board is going.

Chairman Rockwood asked when the change is to occur to which Mr. Grisdale responded the first meeting in February. Mr. Youmans advised the Board that Cathy works full time and that the Board will still have Cathy as far as the processing of materials.

- Mr. Bandyke stated that he made a recommendation to Larry Belkin to reapply for BAR and he did but he said that he saw the communication between Mr. Grisdale and Mr. Belkin. He said that right now the way it is anyone who has served two (2) consecutive terms will not be eligible for any reappointment to the BAR or any other City board. Mr. Grisdale advised that it is strictly tied to the Board of Architectural Review and that other board or commission appointments do not have anything to do with BAR.

Mr. Bandyke commented that once a person is off BAR, they are off forever. Mr. Grisdale stated that this is the way the language that is currently written. He added that it is the language in the Zoning Ordinance and it can be evaluated in the future. He also said that it might not serve our best interest but that this is just the way it is currently written. Mr. Bandyke said that he knows the Board is down two (2) people and it was just a recommendation and so he asked Mr. Belkin who said that he was interested.

Chairman Rockwood asked if this was in the original BAR legislation or was it added at some later point. He then asked when it was and said that it seems odd that it only applies to BAR since the Board asks for architects and very specialized individuals to serve. Mr. Grisdale advised that this section of the Ordinance was amended back in 2010 but that he does not know if that particular section was involved at that time or not. Chairman Rockwood said that he would be interested in knowing the reasoning behind that particular amendment.

Mr. Grisdale stated that if it does prove straining, it is something that we can remedy through a zoning ordinance text amendment. He added that possibly it could state that after a member has served their two (2) terms, they would have to be off for one (1) term before reapplying. Mr. Bandyke said that this would make sense but that he does not understand an absolute lifetime ban. Mr. Grisdale said that this is something that he and Mr. Youmans can explore in the future and, if necessary, propose a text amendment to the Ordinance.

## **ADJOURN:**

With no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.