From: Scala, Mary Joy

Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2016 3:01 PM

To: Ehman, Doug

Subject: BAR Action - Replace Benches on the Mall - April 19, 2016

April 20, 2016

Doug Ehman
Department of Parks and Recreation, City of Charlottesville
1300 Pen Park Road
Charlottesville, VA 22902

#### **RE: Certificate of Appropriateness Application**

BAR 16-04-04
Downtown Mall
Portions of Tax maps 28, 33, and 53
City of Charlottesville, Owner/ Department of Parks and Recreation, Applicant Replace existing mall benches

Dear Applicant,

The above referenced project was discussed before a meeting of the City of Charlottesville Board of Architectural Review (BAR) on April 19, 2016. The following action was taken:

Schwarz moved to accept the applicant's request for a deferral, and Miller seconded. The deferral request was approved (8-0).

The BAR asked the applicant to provide a map showing the current location on the Downtown Mall of all the existing benches and chairs, and to research a possible replacement chair with a back, made of wood and metal.

Please let me know when you are ready to be rescheduled.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 434-970-3130 or scala@charlottesville.org.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Joy Scala, AICP Preservation and Design Planner

#### Mary Joy Scala, AICP

Preservation and Design Planner
City of Charlottesville
Department of Neighborhood Development Services
City Hall – 610 East Market Street
P.O. Box 911
Charlottesville, VA 22902
Ph 434.970.3130 FAX 434.970.3359
scala@charlottesville.org

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW STAFF REPORT April 19, 2016



#### **Certificate of Appropriateness Application**

BAR 16-04-04
Downtown Mall
Portions of Tax maps 28, 33, and 53
City of Charlottesville, Owner/ Department of Parks and Recreation, Applicant Replace existing mall benches

#### **Background**

The Downtown Pedestrian Mall was designed by Lawrence Halprin Associates from 1973-76. The first five blocks of East Main Street were pedestrianized in 1976. In 1980 the mall was extended by two blocks on West Main Street. The west end in front of the Omni was completed in 1985. The east end of the mall was completed in 2006, when the Transit Station, Freedom of Expression wall, and the Amphitheater were built.

In 2004, revised 2005, Wallace, Roberts and Todd, LLC (WRT) prepared a Downtown Mall Schematic Design Report, as part of a coordinated series of projects downtown. The report recognized the success of the 1970's Lawrence Halprin mall design, and recommended minimal intervention to repair age-related decline. (See attached recommendations regarding benches.)

In 2009 the Mall was completely renovated with 4" x 12" paving bricks (similar in size to the originals) laid in sand instead of mortar. The original mortared runnels were retained, and also the soldier courses abutting the buildings. The spider lights were refurbished, and the fountains repaired. The concrete paving designs were replaced with the originally proposed granite. As part of the 2009 renovations, approximately 30 single chairs with backs, constructed of wood slats and metal similar to the original Halprin design, were installed in various locations on the Mall. The chairs were fixed in place due to concerns regarding theft, and placement in the fire lane.

In 2013 the Parks Division (at the City Manager's request) removed some of the chairs from Central Place, and also removed/replaced the chairs in front of City Hall with backless, black metal benches. The BAR did not review this change. At that time, sufficient backless benches were purchased to replace all of the 2009 chairs.

December 18, 2007 - Preliminary discussion and comments made. The BAR urged the City not to skimp or rely on "off the shelf" designs for this important space; be as faithful as possible to the original Halprin design; don't even consider concrete pavers; the east mall addition is like an addition to a historic building- don't use that as a precedent for the older mall; why replace rather than retrofit lighting and chairs; concern that mall will be over lit; use wire-cut bricks (not wood form) that are more consistent with 1970's time period; like proposed runnel design but using wire bricks; opportunity to correct things such as marking the travelway; crossing design is crucial: signage, all details – could see variation here; look at ways to incorporate side streets; cultivate trees offsite now; consistent tree grate design; retain original pieces on mall so you can see what it was, then create hierarchy – subordinate areas added on; preference for brick matching original – find out price for larger, wire cut brick. (Minutes excerpt attached)

May 20, 2008 - Approved (8-0) the proposed planters, benches [additional benches of the same design, but not circular benches around planters], trash and recycling receptacles, bike racks, lights and light poles with phototmetrics to come back to BAR for approval, removal of internal mall bollards, the addition of side street bollards, two new small fountains, and reconfiguration of the planted island near Water Street. They want to look further at larger brick size samples [either 12 ft x 12 ft or 20 ft x 20 ft actual samples of 5x10 vs. 4x12; also 4x8 laid in an oversized (doubled) pattern with two regular size bricks replacing one of the oversize bricks], additional details of runnels, an overall paving design [drawing] for the width of the mall, other samples of granite banding [closer to the dark with finer grain than the light sample – look to the central place fountain for tonal quality], and details of the vehicle crossings including speed bumps and tactile strips.

June 17, 2008 – The BAR discussed the mall bricks and said the City should be held to the same standard as other applicants. They cautioned not to change it for pragmatic or financial reasons; that architecture and landscape architecture are equally important as engineering considerations. The BAR wants the 4 x 12 size and herringbone pattern maintained. They understand and agree with the benefits of laying the bricks in sand; therefore they understand that the existing bricks cannot be reused and laid in sand in a herringbone pattern due to proportions being incorrect without mortar. They want the runnels kept similar to the existing design, and like the addition of granite banding that Halprin proposed.

<u>July 21, 2008</u> - The City Council passed resolutions regarding the rehabilitation of the mall and funding. They were undecided on the size of the bricks for the mall crossings. Three of them preferred the  $4 \times 8s$ , but they agreed to abide by the BAR's decision if the BAR decides to go with the  $4 \times 12s$ .

August 19, 2008 - Approved (7-0) the 4 x 12 bricks in the main field and 4 x 8 bricks in the crosswalks; the mortar-set reconstructed runnels and soldier courses on either side; the light fixtures; granite inserts and newspaper corral boxes; the flip-flopped light levels (70 w lamps in spider configuration and 100 w in singles to even out lighting levels); with the following to come back to the BAR for approval: color samples of the brick and granite; tree preservation plan and grate design; solution for the light poles [preference for 3 ½ " thicker steel or 1-2' taper at top with seamless transition to spider fixture, or pack base with concrete] and additional design work on vehicular crossings taking into account the suggestions made about truncated domes and reorientation of 4x8 bricks.

October 21, 2008 - Approved (6-0) the following proposed changes: fire lane demarcation (but deferred discussion of the café demarcation); the alternate drinking fountain # 4420; the brick color and granite colors; and the design intention of the vehicular crossing, but not the level of detail, which must come back for BAR approval.

November 18, 2008 - The BAR approved (8-1) the drawing received at the meeting described as "4th St. Mall Crossing Layout #1," but keeping the 4"x 8" crossing bricks in the same orientation as the mall bricks.

<u>January 20, 2009</u> – The BAR approved (5-0-1) the Concept 3 banding in the West End Plaza with the strong recommendation that the angle of the brick runnel that is just east of the plaza be realigned to make it parallel with the east edge of the outer granite band.

#### **Application**

The Parks Division is requesting approval to replace the remaining 19 wood and metal chairs on the Mall with black metal backless benches.

#### **Criteria and Guidelines**

#### **Review Criteria Generally**

Sec. 34-284(b) of the City Code states that,

In considering a particular application the BAR shall approve the application unless it finds:

- (1) That the proposal does not meet specific standards set forth within this division or applicable provisions of the Design Guidelines established by the board pursuant to Sec.34-288(6); and
- (2) The proposal is incompatible with the historic, cultural or architectural character of the district in which the property is located or the protected property that is the subject of the application.

#### Standards for Review of Construction and Alterations include:

- (1) Whether the material, texture, color, height, scale, mass and placement of the proposed addition, modification or construction are visually and architecturally compatible with the site and the applicable design control district;
- (2) The harmony of the proposed change in terms of overall proportion and the size and placement of entrances, windows, awnings, exterior stairs and signs;
- (3) The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation set forth within the Code of Federal Regulations (36 C.F.R. §67.7(b)), as may be relevant;
  - 1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
  - 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
  - 3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
  - 4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
  - 5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
  - 6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
  - 7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
  - 8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
  - 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated form the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
  - 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
- (4) The effect of the proposed change on the historic district neighborhood;
- (5) The impact of the proposed change on other protected features on the property, such as gardens, landscaping, fences, walls and walks;
- (6) Whether the proposed method of construction, renovation or restoration could have an

adverse impact on the structure or site, or adjacent buildings or structures;

(7) When reviewing any proposed sign as part of an application under consideration, the standards set forth within Article IX, sections 34-1020 et seq. (SIGNS) shall be applied; and

(8) Any applicable provisions of the City's Design Guidelines.

#### Pertinent Design Review Guidelines - Public Design and Improvements

#### A. INTRODUCTION

Public spaces define the spatial organization of the City, forming the basis for social, cultural, and economic interaction. The Downtown Pedestrian Mall is the centerpiece of the community. Charlottesville's historic parks, trails, boulevards, cemeteries, playgrounds, and other open spaces help balance the desired urban density and promote healthy living and quality of life. Public spaces accommodate multiple functions and provide social venues. The historic uses and organization of public spaces represent a timeline of cultural practices and values of the community. Significant features should be identified and respected when changes are proposed. New public spaces and improvements should reflect contemporary design principles and values.

Charlottesville has a rich history of public improvements, which include public buildings, bridges, streetscape landscaping and lighting, street furniture, monuments, public art, fountains, and signage. Many of these improvements have been made within the historic districts, and there will be the opportunity to create additional such amenities in future years. All changes or improvements require BAR review and approval, and should be compatible with the general architectural features and character of an area or district. Repairs and maintenance should match original materials and design, and should be accomplished in a historically appropriate manner.

All public improvements should reflect the quality and attention to detail and craftsmanship of the overall historic districts' character.

#### B. PLAZAS, PARKS & OPEN SPACES

- 1) Maintain existing spaces and important site features for continued public use consistent with the original design intent.
- 2) Maintain significant elements in a historic landscape: grave markers, structures, landforms, landscaping, circulation patterns, boundaries, and site walls.
- 3) Design new spaces to reinforce streetscape and pedestrian goals for the district. These areas offer the opportunity to provide visual focal points and public gathering spaces for the districts.
- 4) New landscaping should be historically and regionally appropriate, indigenous when possible, and scaled for the proposed location and intended use.
- 5) Exterior furniture and site accessories should be compatible with the overall character of the park or open space.
- 6) Repairs and maintenance work should match original materials and design, and should be accomplished in a historically appropriate manner.
- 7) Avoid demolishing historic buildings to create open spaces and parks.

#### G. STREET FURNITURE, KIOSKS, & NEWSPAPER BOXES

- 1) Trash containers should be metal and should match other street furniture.
- 2) Place benches at key pedestrian locations. Use designs constructed of wood and/or metal.
- 3) Attempt to make street furniture, such as newspaper boxes, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, planters, and bollards, compatible in design, color, and materials with exiting elements.

- 4) The design and materials of bus stop shelters should be compatible with street furniture in the districts.
- 5) Kiosks
  - a. Kiosks should be in scale with other mall elements.
  - b. Kiosks should not obscure significant features of the space.
  - c. Kiosks should be constructed of wrought iron, painted metal, painted wood, or some combination of the above.
  - d. The use of natural wood is discouraged.
  - e. The roof should be painted metal or copper.
  - f. Signs should be incorporated into the design of the kiosk.
  - g. No signs should be located on the roof of the structure.
- 5) Newspaper boxes should be grouped in designated locations and placed within uniform enclosures of black metal.

#### **Recommendations and Discussion**

The proposed benches are black metal, which is an option in the guidelines. They are backless to discourage loitering. It is probably unrealistic to expect moveable chairs again on the Mall. The question is whether the original Halprin chair design is significant enough to the overall Mall design that it should be maintained.

#### **Suggested Motion**

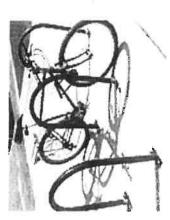
Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including City Design Guidelines for Public Improvements, I move to find that the proposed benches satisfy (do not satisfy) the BAR's criteria and are (are not) compatible with this property and other properties in the Downtown ADC district, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted (or requests review of an alternate design).

## Existing:

There are currently fear bienche racks on the Mall: rue at the Fast End, one one 4th Secret SE, and me a the lee Purk

## Proposed:

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  - South Side 5 locations to alling 30 bilkes North Side of Decembers to alling 24 lales.
- East End | Location confliment wikes
- Total of 66 sp. crs



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## BENCHES

## Summary:

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## Existing:



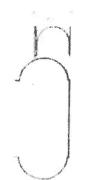
original Halprin benedies are very heavy and difficult to move on simile an institute, and omnends replacing the Haprin designed der cont friish and durable wond sear, and The original design provided movable sears that people could arrange in their own win-This concept is still valid, because of its tlexing of the way people prefer to sir in the able chairs are the possibility for them to be moved into the fire lane, or to be stoken. The are therefore hes prome to the it. WRT recchairs with a similar state bearth, with a powplicing them in its form thanksments conlittle and sociable nature and its understand public ratus. Pourtral problem with mor-Meive to conversitions

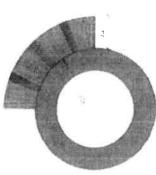
## Proposed:

- · Install moveable seats as a complement to the private senting at cales.
  - Seven locations, coordinated with cafe SASIESE S
- · Christis of 3-10 scats
- Total of 70 seats



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### A FIELD GUIDE to the CHARLOTTESVILLE DOWNTOWN PEDESTRIAN MALL

From Design Concept to Public Space

by Lauren F. Noe Summer, 2009



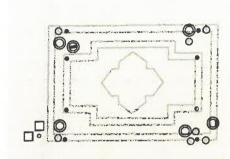
#### CONTRIBUTE THE OUGHER DECIME

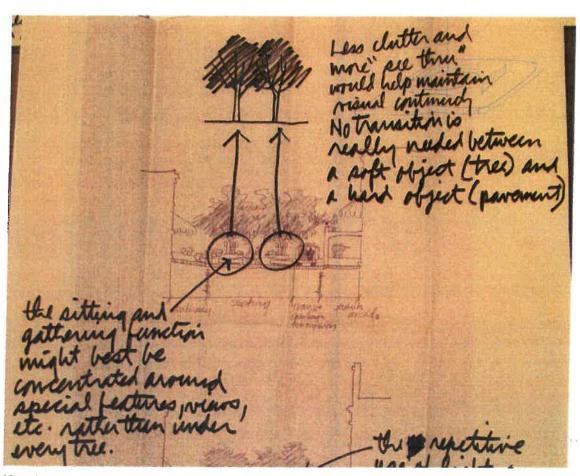
#### **FLEXIBLE STREET FURNISHING**

The street furnishings along the Downtown Mall were designed to serve several purposes. LH&A custom street furniture included trash receptacles, planters, kiosks, and chairs that imbued the Mall with its own unique character. The custom chairs were moveable - accommodating desires for social interaction or quiet sitting in shade or sun. The planters, while too heavy to be moved when filled, were not intended for static arrangement either. The LH&A design casually arranged street furnishings and concentrated fixtures like planters and chairs within the willow oak bosques.

Over the past 30 years, many of these street furnishings were relocated around the corners of each street intersection.

creating a different rhythm on the Mall. The chairs installed in the 2009 rehabilitation were bolted in fixed locations.





Key design principles included concentrating sitting and gathering around a specific feature such as a fountain or a view.



In 1976 several groupings of planters and moveable chairs like this one created a rhythm of public gathering places along the Mall. image courtesy of Ed Roseberry





#### CHAIR-BENCH

LH&A designed street furniture for the Downtown Mall intended for informal arrangement and mobility.

Images courtesy of Dean Abbott and Elizabeth Meyer

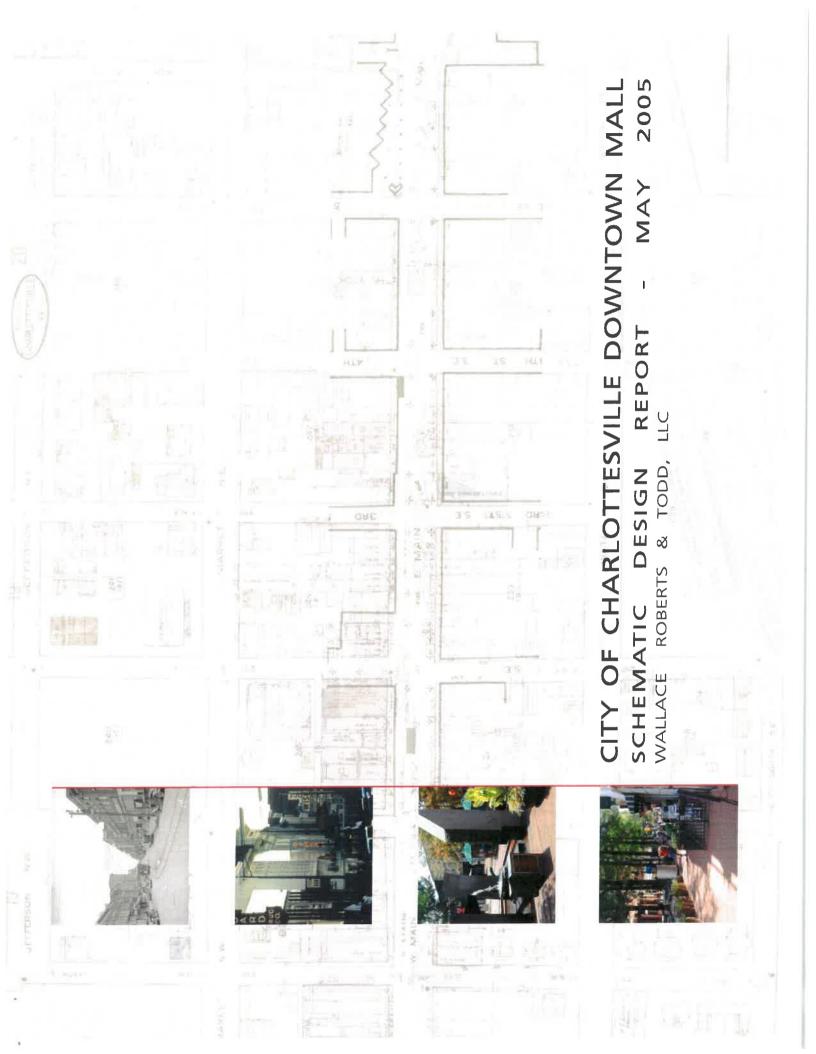
#### STATISTICS

STATISTICS	197 <u>4</u> 7	2008 <sup>8</sup>	<u>2009</u> 9
CHAIR-BENCH PLANTERS TRASH RECEPTACLES RECYCLING BINS	1974 150 50 40 0	20 60 28 NA	30 61 31 10
KIOSKS	2	2	U

As per LH&A construction documents dated July 29, 1974.

8 As per WRT Schematic Design Report, May 2005, pages 8-9.

<sup>9</sup> As counted by Lauren Noe, August 5, 2009.



## **BIKE RACKS**

## Summary:

The City encourages bicycle use, but few bicycle racks are located in the vicinity of the Mall. WRT proposes installation of a large number of bicycle racks at strategic locations on many of the side streets, at the points where the pedestrian zone begins. Numbers should be greater on the Water Street side of the Mall, in recognition of the local topography that encourages biking approach from the south side.

## Existing:

There are currently four bicycle racks on the Mall: two at the East End, one one 4th Street SE, and one at the Ice Park.

## Proposed:

- Install bicycle racks at the points where the pedestrian zone begins.
- South Side 5 locations totalling 30 bikes
- North Side 3 locations totalling 24 bikes

East End - 1 location totalling 12 bikes

Total of 66 spaces



Dero Bike Racks: Campus Rack

## BENCHES

## Summary:

The original plans by Halprin call for 150 chairs. Today there are significantly fewer, only 20 on the Mall. Consequently, public seating is quite limited. WRT recommends providing significantly more seats on the Mall, in support of the Halprin concept, and as a great public amenity.

## Existing:



der coat finish and durable wood seat, and ing of the way people prefer to sit in the able chairs are the possibility for them to be moved into the fire lane, or to be stolen. The difficult to move any significant distance, and ommends replacing the Halprin-designed chairs with a similar style bench, with a poworiginal Halprin benches are very heavy and are therefore less prone to theft. WRT recible and sociable nature and its understand-The original design provided movable seats that people could arrange in their own way. This concept is still valid, because of its flexpublic realm. Potential problems with movplacing them in free form arrangements conducive to conversations.

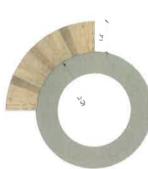
## Proposed:

- Install moveable seats as a complement to the private seating at cafes.
- Seven locations, coordinated with cafe leases
- Clusters of 5-10 seats
  - Total of 70 seats



MWH Object + Design: D200 Series Bench (c/o RPI) Available in Black Powdercost Finish on Metal.





Custom Fabrication: Radius Bench Black Powdercoat Steel, with Hardwood Seat

# Proposed Site Furniture



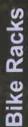
## Benches MWH Object

MWH Object+Design Series D200 Black Steel, Ipe Wood 70 in 7 locations



# **Planters**

Existing Planters 64 in 8 locations

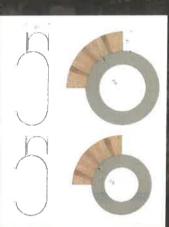


Planter Benches

Custom Fabrication

30" Radius

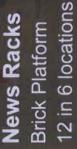
Dero Bike Racks Campus Rack Black Tubular Steel 11 in 9 locations

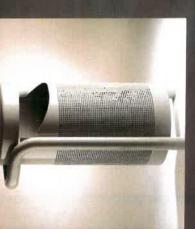


# Waste Cans

Black Steel, Ipe 15 in 3 locations Landscape Forms Petosky with Ash Tray 'Grotto' (Black) Steel 30 in 18 locations











#### Board of Architectural Review (BAR) Certificate of Appropriateness

Please Return To: City of Charlottesville

Department of Neighborhood Development Services

P.O. Box 911, City Hall Charlottesville, Virginia 22902

Telephone (434) 970-3130

Email scala@charlottesville.org

Please submit ten (10) hard copies and one (1) digital copy of application form and all attachments.

Please include application fee as follows: New construction project \$375; Demolition of a contributing structure \$375; Appeal of BAR decision \$125; Additions and other projects requiring BAR approval \$125; Administrative approval \$100. Make checks payable to the City of Charlottesville.

The BAR meets the third Tuesday of the month.

Deadline for submittals is Tuesday 3 weeks prior to next BAR meeting by 3:30 p.m.

Owner Name CITY of Charlottesuille Appl	licant Name Doug Ehman,	PARKS DIV. MC		
Project Name/Description Replacement of Benches				
Project Property Address Down town MALL, N	No Fixed address, Pu	Glic ROW		
Applicant Information Signature of Applicant				
Address: 1300 Pen Park Rd., Charlo tesuille, best of my knowledge, correct.		ave provided is, to the		
Email: <u>Chm and @ Charlo Hevitle</u> , or 9 Phone: (W) <u>970-3021</u> (C) <u>981-5595</u>	Signature	3 ·24 · 16 Date		
	DOUGLAS R. Ehman II	3.24 16		
Property Owner Information (if not applicant)	Print Name	Date		
Address:  Email:(C)(C)	Property Owner Permission (if no laboration and herebotis submission.			
=	Signature	Date		
Do you intend to apply for Federal or State Tax Credits for this project?	Print Name	Date		
Description of Proposed Work (attach separate narrative if necessary): Replacement of existing backed sept single unit benches with backless sight units.  List All Attachments (see reverse side for submittal requirements):				
For Office Use Only App	roved/Disapproved by:			
Received by: Date	e:			
	ditions of approval:			
Date Received:				

#### Scala, Mary Joy

From:

Ehman, Doug

Sent:

Thursday, March 24, 2016 12:29 PM

To:

Scala, Mary Joy

Subject:

Mall Benches

Mary Joy;

Here is our text for the April BAR item:

Narrative for new benches

In the summer of 2013, in response to growing concerns over public health and safety, Parks Division staff replaced a portion of the single backed benches on the downtown mall with backless benches. The existing single benches were installed as part of the renovations to the Downtown Mall in 2009. The areas impacted were primarily twofold, in front of City Hall and in Central Place (no new benches of this type were installed at Central Place — only on the east end by City Hall — we did remove benches from Central Place though). At that time sufficient replacement units were purchased to replace all of the backed units installed in 2009 if the need should have presented itself. These additional replacement units have been in storage since that time.

The backed units which remain have become increasing difficult to maintain. The wood which comprises the slats is exceptionally soft and neither accepts or holds a finish well with the finish beginning to break down in a relatively short period of time (90-120 days). The construction of the benches is such that wooden slats do not have inserted anchors for fasteners to go into and hold; fasteners go directly into wood and quickly work loose with no good repair solution. Because of this slats work loose and fall off at pressure points such as the first slat in the seat or the top slat on the back because they cannot withstand the repeated pressure of individuals getting up and down from the chair. Slats must be totally removed from the chair and reinstalled or new slats finished and installed. It is a very labor intensive process and probably should be done twice a year under optimum conditions; these are tasks that within current resources and responsibilities we are not equipped to undertake.

The backless units which were installed provide a seat which is approachable from any direction. The units are semi-sprung and somewhat flexible providing a safe and comfortable seating surface for weary mall patrons. They are constructed of powder coated black, galvanized steel and are welded and bolted in construction and factory assembled. We have had absolutely no problems with the units which have been installed. The Parks Division is seeking to replace the 19 remaining wooden slatted chairs on the mall with the black steel units which have been previously installed on the east end of the mall near City Hall and are currently in stock.

Will send pictures under separate cover and hope to have a unit with me.

#### Thanks!

Doug Ehman, CPRP, CPSI, CPO Manager Parks Division Department of Parks and Recreation 1300 Pen Park Road City of Charlottesville, Virginia 22901 434-970-3021-Office 434-970-3889-Fax 434-981-5595-Cell



