

**City of Charlottesville
Board of Architectural Review
March 20, 2001**

Minutes

Present:

Joan Fenton (Chair)
Linda Winner
W.G. Clark
Jesse Hook
Joe Atkins
Preston Coiner
Lynne Heetderks
Wade Tremblay
Ken Schwartz

Also Present:

Tarpley Vest

Ms. Fenton called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Ms. Fenton asked if anyone from the public had an item not on the agenda that they wished to bring before the Board. Hearing none, she closed that portion of the meeting.

The Chair called for any corrections to the Minutes of the last meeting. Ms. Heetderks noted that she had been listed as present when, in fact, she had not attended that meeting. There being no other corrections, Ms. Fenton called for a motion to accept. Ms. Hook so moved, seconded by Mr. Clark. The motion carried with two abstentions.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION BAR 00-12-46
1200 West Main Street

Ms. Fenton recognized Ms. Vest, who reported that the location at 1200 West Main had been Kane Furniture since the mid-1950s. The application had come before the Board in December of 2000 as a preliminary proposal rather than a request for final approval, although the applicant did have pretty thorough materials at that meeting. Thus the Board had gone ahead and granted them approval, subject to final approval of all materials and details which essentially hadn't changed. Also there had been concern about the stucco application of the base of the storefront, essentially a renovation. They were currently requesting final approval of all details so they could proceed with their work. She said that Staff had recommended approval of all the materials and details they had submitted. She then introduced the architect, Mr. Skinner.

Mr. Skinner reported that the building had not changed since the last time they met, when there had been some question about the detail of the stucco and how it resolved itself against the

building. He had brought drawings for the Board's review. He explained that the stucco would be simply applied to the existing brick; where it horizontally met the brick there was a little forty-five degree edge, and where it vertically met the brick it just squared off against it. He had provided some details of the truss that was going there: There would be a lead-coated copper roof, a sealed truss, a simple cove cornice above, and they proposed to remove the brick fill presently at the base of the aluminum storefront windows and replace it with stucco, so that the window sill would be stucco. He remarked that the light fixtures in the submission did not quite match the ones in the drawings, but he thought they were nevertheless appropriate. He next showed the Board the colors they were thinking of using, remarking that colors, once put on a building, sometimes had to be changed. He pointed out a light color (the stucco), a darker color (the existing brick) and an even darker color for the sign, which would be metal letters applied to the building.

Ms. Fenton opened the meeting up to questions from the general public or members of the Board. Hearing none, she closed that portion of the meeting, inviting members of the general public to comment. Hearing no comments from the public, she closed that portion of the meeting as well and invited comments from Board members, suggesting they take a moment to look at the light fixtures first.

Mr. Clark said he was not at the December meeting or at least had not discussed this before, and wanted to express his displeasure at the styrofoam cornice going on this building, which was a clean, straightforward structure and thus he disagreed with the attempt to inject it with superficial, classical pretensions, calling that attempt "going in the wrong direction." He said he realized they were hearing this very late indeed as he hadn't been at the earlier meeting, but he really wondered if the cornice were necessary.

Mr. Skinner asked if he meant no cornice at all.

Mr. Clark replied in the affirmative, saying it was an older, mercantile building of simple style and it seemed the cornice was totally out of character and not necessary.

Mr. Skinner said he could certainly run it by the owner and see what he had to say about deleting that detail.

Mr. Clark added that he thought the stucco would be wonderful on the building, and suggested the very simplest possible coping. He asked to hear what other Board members thought.

Ms. Fenton invited further comments.

Mr. Atkins said he shared the preference but didn't think the cornice was that inappropriate.

Mr. Tremblay asked how big a detail this was.

Mr. Skinner responded that from its very bottom to its very top it was about two feet four inches, and the curved portion was slightly over a foot. He stated that now, after their comments and having taken a fresh look at it, he almost agreed that if that were deleted and replaced with a

regular, simple aluminum coping, it might well be a good thing. He agreed that this classical reference really was out of context with the rest of the structure.

Mr. Clark remarked that this would save the owner some money.

Ms. Fenton asked if this were not something that they could always add later if they really wanted to.

Mr. Skinner said he would certainly think so, and accepted the Board's suggestion to delete the cornice detail, saying if the owner had trouble with that, he would be back. He added that construction had been pushed back, and so if this "cycled back" he would see them again.

Ms. Fenton invited other comments, or a motion.

Mr. Tremblay moved adoption, minus the cornice detail, seconded by Mr. Schwartz. There was no further discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION BAR 01-2-3 New Building at 5th & Water Streets

Ms. Fenton indicated that this item had come before them previously, once for preliminary discussion and once at the February meeting, when the matter had been deferred to this month. She introduced Ms. Vest, who gave her report.

Ms. Vest affirmed that this was the second time this proposal had come before the Board, and reminded them that the preliminary discussion with the Applicant at the January meeting had produced a number of comments, which were summarized in her staff report. She summarized the discussion of the item in the January and February meetings, indicating that the Board had deferred the application at the February meeting, and had requested the applicant return to the March meeting with a further study, particularly relating to the Water Street side of the building. The Applicant, she stated, was currently seeking approval for the proposed elevations, material types, including windows, and intended to come back before the Board for specific material samples and colors as they progressed. She indicated it was very important to the Applicant, in terms of their discussions with their client, to get some sort of approval at this current meeting. Staff had analyzed the current submission as it related to the design guidelines and the BAR's previous comments. The present proposed scheme had been developed to address the Board's concerns raised at previous meetings, including the inappropriateness of the fourth story windows, the top floor cornice element, the top floor roof gable element and the scale of the garage opening along Water Street. Staff recommended the design and asked approval of the application subject to submission of

all final scales and materials. She said they had also made a note in their recommendation that any motion for approval of separate elements, such as windows and doors, could be made subject to final submission of materials as well. She then introduced Mr. John Gorman, one of the applicants.

Mr. Gorman explained why he was there, saying they really wanted this approved, that he would address as many concerns as he could and hoped for approval of at least general design direction. He mentioned how helpful his meeting with Board members, suggested by Ms. Vest, had been, and went through materials he had brought, first comparing the original concept drawing with the current proposal reflecting what they would like the project to be. He noted the concept had "gone back to its roots" of the industrial warehouse look. He mentioned the materials: Brick, cast stone and aluminum clad double-hung wood windows, and said he wanted to address the windows more fully. He showed the Board members examples of two types of glazing systems, and asked them to pick which window was a true divided-light and which was simulated. The Applicants, he said, proposed the simulated type. He invited questions.

The Chair opened the floor for questions from the public and Board members.

Mr. Schwartz enquired if the entire two story cavity was to be essentially a single unit or if there were to be eight "ganged" individual windows butted up against one another.

Mr. Gorman replied that because they were operating units, they were essentially a gang. However he thought the proposed detailing would mitigate the look of stock units ganged together.

Mr. Schwartz suggested they separate the issues of divided lights and the window as a whole, forgetting about the divided lights momentarily and concentrating on the larger issue of how the entire thing was going to look because it was such an important detail. He indicated that they needed to focus on how the "industrial language" was developed with regard to the window manufacturer, the system and how it in-filled within the large two-story areas. He mentioned again the Temple Beth Israel's windows and commented on their appearance in relation to the windows on this project.

Mr. Gorman responded that the Temple's windows were not what they had in mind for their structure. He noted that as the tenants were concerned about operable lights and ventilation, they had chosen double-hung units. He mentioned the structural aspects, pointing out how huge these windows were (nine feet eight inches high, each), requiring proper support. He also noted that at the time of his meeting with Board members, when they chose true divided light windows, the company did not have simulated ones to offer and now they did.

Ms. Fenton asked for more questions.

Ms. Winner asked why use simulated divided lights; Mr. Gorman said it was definitely a cost issue.

Ms. Fenton remarked upon the extreme height (about seventy or eighty feet) of the building and noted that though there would be only five stories, it was tall enough for about seven or eight stories. She asked if there were a way to make it less of a "monument," remarking that she understood they wanted high ceilings.

Mr. Gorman said that drawing had been a problem since he made it, but pointed out that they were substantially below the B-4 zoning limit. He added that Downtown's general pattern was of smaller buildings interrupted by larger ones.

Ms. Fenton continued that, even though zoning allowed such height, proportionately it should not be so much bigger than others around it.

Mr. Atkins remarked he thought normally the range was within a hundred and fifty percent, and that when something was five times taller than anything else, it got complicated.

Mr. Gorman asked if there were any physical reason why the building could not be shorter, even though their proposal was what was showing there.

Mr. Schwartz asked about the window on the ground level. Mr. Gorman answered that it was submitted as aluminum storefront, much like the one for 1200 West Main, and acknowledged the Board's feeling that the

change in windows throughout the structure was not consistent. Mr. Schwartz enquired if the side elevation windows were also three-by-three double-hung, and Mr. Gorman said they were.

Mr. Atkins guessed that the two would go over the one, and Mr. Gorman agreed they weren't of equal size.

Mr. Schwartz asked if they had considered not using the residential-style muntins, to which Mr. Gorman replied they were amenable to that, assuming it were desirable and would work.

Ms. Fenton called for other questions.

Mr. Atkins noted that in the building's different versions as they progressed there was less and less cast stone for sills, copings, etc., though there seemed to be more in the base, and asked if the base were of cast stone masonry units, to which Mr. Gorman replied no, it was real cast stone. Mr. Atkins wanted to know why there was less of it now. Mr. Gorman explained that the window treatment now did a portion of the banding that the stone had previously accomplished; that it seemed they had been just drawing horizontal lines across the building with the stone, which made no sense; and that their return to the warehouse concept of a strong brick mass with nice openings did not need the stone bandings. He showed a sketch of a detail of the window sills and assured them the windows would have "reasonable reveals" at the sides.

Ms. Fenton expressed concern at the amount of light entering the retail windows, and suggested the possibility of awnings. Mr. Gorman said they had considered extending the Fifth Street canopy around onto Water Street for that reason, but thought the scale of it was inappropriate for Water Street. He mentioned possible heating/cooling problems. Ms. Fenton reminded him of the potential fading problem also and its effect on retail display windows.

A member of the public mentioned another alternative would be to use black glass, as in the Enterprise Building, although he would not recommend it. Ms. Fenton commented that she had a

store facing that direction and had an awning, but still the light would destroy merchandise in a week, and she had tried many different glass things, finding nothing that really worked.

Mr. Atkins asked if tree plantings were to be part of the project. Mr. Gorman said yes they were, to improve the space under their contract for the land, and to coordinate with the City's Court Square project at that end of the mall. He indicated on the model the pull off area they planned to create for cars, with street trees planted along there, though the Fire Department was worried about them. He stated that they would come back to the Board with those site improvements.

Mr. Atkins enquired if the aluminum storefront was in the same plane as the glazing above, or set back. Mr. Gorman replied that it was the same plane.

Mr. Schwartz asked if they were being made to do the pull-in or if it was something they wanted. Mr. Gorman responded that it was a result of some community design meetings they had had with adjacent property owners.

Ms. Fenton invited other questions. Hearing none, she closed that portion of the meeting and asked for comments from the public. Hearing none, she closed that portion as well and invited comments from Board members, first recognizing Ms. Heetderks.

Ms. Heetderks declared she did not feel comfortable with the scale of the building, as it trivialized the buildings next to it, though she didn't know what could be done about it. She complimented the architects on what had been done with the parking garage entrance.

Mr. Clark queried why they had abandoned the original idea of the industrial warehouse look, saying the Board had liked the idea and the scale. He asked why they wanted to use clunky, fake windows which, stylistically, had no connection to the industrial warehouse look with which the Board had initially been pleased. He said he wouldn't vote for it. He added that the Board was increasingly concerned with the use of cheap-looking white aluminum windows all over town.

Ms. Fenton asked if the Board wished to allow response at that time or to continue with comments.

It was decided to continue with comments.

Mr. Atkins said he was detaching himself from the warehouse concept; as far as the windows were concerned, he felt that given the monumental size of them, though he appreciated the Board's concerns, he felt it might be best to go with more of a curtain wall. He said he was comfortable with the windows, but they'd want to follow up on how they fit into the openings and if that was handled properly. He shared the others' concern about the massing of the building, but it was what it was and as such wouldn't be inappropriate. He had reservations about the openings more than the windows themselves, and had a preference for relief in the brick, which was why he had asked earlier about the use of less cast stone as the designs evolved. He felt the brick wall surface was too austere as it presently appeared and liked the original use of the cast stone better.

Mr. Clark added, concerning the windows, that industrial buildings seldom used white as a window color and the darker the frame the more it seemed to recess, so that on the east side it would be hard to see what was moulding and what was glass. Thus he thought the moulding should be darkened.

Ms. Fenton asked Mr. Coiner if he had any comments. He did not.

Mr. Schwartz stated he thought this current proposal was an improvement over last month's and appreciated their work to address the larger concerns of the Board. He found the model helpful. He understood Ms. Heetderks' concern with size. He liked the present, quieter expression of the penthouses, calling them simple and dignified, and raised the north and side elevations as working fairly well. He said he would vote for approval of what they had now. He questioned if they had thought of an additional entrance to the "ground level" from Water Street, suggesting it might humanize the area and also be attractive from a marketing standpoint, even though they might lose a couple of parking spaces. He repeated his problem with white, residential double-hung windows in this particular structure. He suggested there were two levels of consideration here, and thought the Board could consider a motion for approval of the overall strategy, schematic design, etc., and hold off approval of details till later, as they often saw projects presented in two stages.

Ms. Fenton echoed dislike of the white windows, saying she would far prefer to see black or some dark color. She also felt deep concern about the height and mass of this building, considering what surrounded it. She asked if there were other comments, because if not she would love to get a motion.

Ms. Hook asked what other color options there were for the windows.

Mr. Coiner suggested that the Applicant be allowed to respond at this point. Mr. Gorman said they didn't need specific color approval that night, but they were trying to get a palette, to know what they could use on the building so they could get on to the next stage: The stone, the brick, etc. He assured them that the window he brought was not what they planned to use but was all he could get to bring that night to show them vaguely what the two styles would look like. He asked the Board whether or not they could use aluminum-clad windows, and added that their chief concerns that night were massing, elevation, and the basic palette. Details were for later on.

A member of the public commented that the windows could be any color. Mr. Clark replied that it was beyond color. He stated he was very dissatisfied with the entire window design -- style, color, everything. If he were making a motion, it would be to approve the general concept of the building, its general formation -- everything but the windows.

Ms. Fenton asked if this were a formal motion; Mr. Clark said it was. Ms. Fenton then asked for a second. Mr. Schwartz seconded and gave a friendly amendment to make sure the language of the minutes was precise. He stated that the motion was for approval of the schematic design concept, massing, basically a vote in support of the scheme as presented in its large order of arrangement.

Ms. Winner asked if this were the last Staff recommendation. Mr. Schwartz thanked her, and restated: The approval was for the schematic design, massing and major arrangements of the scheme. After prompting from Mr. Clark, he added that the second part, that remained to be presented, included not only windows but materials and other details, and said that was a normal situation, where design development consideration came before them in a coordinated presentation, with actual representations of the materials.

Ms. Fenton asked if the friendly amendment were accepted. Mr. Schwartz enquired again about the additional entrance, to which Mr. Gorman responded that they had considered it, but that their contract stipulated forty-one parking spaces, and since the second entrance would take away some of those, they could not do it absent the contract's being amended. There might be movement on the issue, but he could not say at the present time.

Ms. Vest remarked that in the past they had made motions for design and massing approval subject to details of materials, finishes, openings, etc., and asked if that were the intent of this motion so that later on the actual fenestration pattern would be up for approval. Mr. Schwartz answered yes, it was.

Ms. Fenton asked if they were ready to vote. Mr. Atkins expressed concern about accepting the windows. He was assured that these were not part of the present motion, and they could come back to the windows. Ms. Fenton suggested he could make a second motion about the windows.

Ms. Fenton called for a vote of hands on the motion. The motion carried with three opposed. She then invited further motions, and recognized Mr. Schwartz.

Mr. Schwartz moved, on behalf of the Board, an expression of support for the possibility of a second, or even third, pedestrian entrance along Water Street, which would allow the architects and their client to approach City Council if they found this to be advantageous, to reconsider the contract relative to the forty-one parking spaces.

Ms. Fenton called for a second. The motion was seconded by Ms. Heetderks. Ms. Fenton added that it would be desirable from the standpoint of the streetscape to have the second entrance. Mr. Schwartz indicated that this was accepted in the motion.

Mr. Atkins proffered a third friendly amendment: That, if this were not possible for any reason, bringing the window system down to a lower base nearer the sidewalk would be a compromise. Mr. Schwartz commented that all the amendments spoke to the spirit, which was to strengthen the basic strategy of making a successful Water Street.

Ms. Hook asked what the motion actually was, and Mr. Schwartz repeated it: For an expression of support for a second or third pedestrian entrance to this building off Water Street, as this seemed to the Board to be desirable; and, if that were not possible or did not evolve, that the window sill line for the lower windows be brought as close to the sidewalk as possible.

Ms. Fenton then called for a vote on the motion, which passed with one abstention, and asked if there were further motions. There were none.

Mr. Tremblay posed a question to the applicants concerning the types of windows. He wanted to know if the Board would approve a clad window, and if so under what circumstances.

Mr. Clark suggested that some studies of other window design systems would be helpful for comparison purposes, stating that his problem with these was the very large shapes, and that his preference was for a more delicate design. However, he agreed with Mr. Schwartz that this design was an improvement.

Mr. Schwartz added that the old-fashioned type of slender, steel warehouse window system was not a realistic alternative for this building for reasons of cost and maintenance among others. The challenge for the architect was how to simulate that type with a modern version that looked right and functioned well. He said that, while he did not oppose aluminum, or muntins, per se, what he would like to see was something that was consistent with the initial intentions. However, he felt that trying to copy the windows in McGuffey would not work since the construction and expression of these would be so different from the ones in a 1920s-era building such as that. He, as well, mentioned a need for greater delicacy, citing some structures by this firm, on Ivy Road, whose thick windows he felt just did not work. He stated, however, that he thought they had seen examples where the right balance could be accomplished.

Mr. Clark mentioned the redoing of the Armory Building, saying he'd been embarrassed for objecting to the removal of the wonderful old windows when he was shown the profile with the new aluminum ones which looked almost identical.

Mr. Schwartz brought up the Peyton Pontiac Building, where the architect had come up with something that, after some considerable work, was very compatible and consistent.

Mr. Clark expressed the opinion that it was remarkable they had asked for schematic design approval and had gotten it. Study of fenestration in any one of these large bays, he stated, was a normal design development task, and it would not be out of the ordinary to see five or six studies before one was chosen; thus he felt it was a legitimate part of their next stage of work.

Mr. Tremblay asked for -- and got -- verification that they were not saying the windows had to be wooden.

Ms. Fenton reminded the Applicant what had been approved and what had to be brought again, saying that Ms. Vest would send them a letter on point, and reiterated the invitation to meet with members of the Board. She wished the applicant luck with the project.

Ms. Fenton called upon Ms. Vest concerning reappointments and when Council might make them.

Ms. Vest replied that, though the applicants might have heard something from Council, she herself had not and had no idea when the reappointments would occur. She stated that she had wanted this done before the BAR's March meeting, but it had not happened that way.

Ms. Fenton indicated that the interviews had been held on the previous night. She also mentioned an earlier deadline for applications, and briefly discussed with Ms. Vest the posting of signs.

Mr. Clark suggested simply publishing addresses that are on the agenda in the newspaper. Ms. Vest replied that they had resisted newspaper ads because of cost, but they were posting the agenda on the website.

Mr. Schwartz commented that several people had called to thank him for their having been put on the list.

Ms. Fenton asked if there were other business.

Mr. Coiner asked what Ms. Fenton's position was in the Downtown Business Association, to which she responded that she was the Chair. Mr. Coiner added that some downtown group had been going to develop some guidelines for developers, and that this had been reported in the Chamber of Commerce newsletter.

Ms. Fenton said that would have been the Downtown Property Owners' Council of which Colin Roth was Chair. She said she did know about that, but was not on that board. She gave him the phone number of the DPOC's Executive Director.

Mr. Clark moved the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously, whereupon the meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.