

**City of Charlottesville
Board of Architectural Review
May 20, 2008
Minutes**

Present:

Fred Wolf, Chair
Syd Knight, Vice Chair
Amy Gardner (joined meeting at 5:10 p.m.)
Brian Hogg
William Adams
Michael Osteen
James Wall
Eryn Brennan
Rebecca Schoenthal (joined meeting at 5:10 p.m.)

Not Present:

Michael Osteen

Also Present:

Mary Joy Scala

Mr. Wolf convened the meeting at 5:06 p.m.

A. Matters from the public not on the agenda

Mr. Mike Stoneking, the architect working on the Hardware Store restoration, came before the Board asking to put a linear diffuser in the bottom of the canopy to bring more fresh air into the space which would be a restaurant. Ms. Scala noted this was a minor enough change that the Board could decide. Mr. Stoneking asked if the Board could let him know if they would respond favorably and have him come back with details.

Ms. Gardner and Ms. Schoenthal arrived at 5:10 p.m.

Mr. Wolf thought if the details needed to come back it would be fine. He suggested another option of having an air intake grill on the underside of the soffit of the entrance vestibule.

Mr. Knight thought the Board could safely say they would respond to the general concept favorably and would like to see details or have details submitted for administrative approval.

B. Consent Agenda

Mr. Wolf moved to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Hogg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Certificate of Appropriateness Application

BAR 08-04-01
608 Preston Avenue
TM 32 P 14
McKee Carson, Applicant
King Lumber

Ms. Scala gave the staff report. This matter had been deferred at the April meeting. The Board had decided not to review the rear parking lot site plan, but wanted a section and pavement and plaza materials and patterns. The new plan proposes a stair on axis with the King Lumber building. The applicant has removed the barrier to the parking lot which creates a friendlier feeling. Staff recommends approval.

Mr. Hunter McCardle, of McKee Carson, stated that rather than using concrete pavers, they would have a poured in place concrete patio with saw cut joints, Allied Sandscape in the color bark.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

There were no questions from the public.

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD:

Mr. Knight wanted to know the reason behind the change in the patio material. Mr. McCardle stated they had felt the pavers were too busy.

Mr. Wolf wanted additional details on the bench found in section B-B1 with the proposed vegetative swale behind it. Mr. McCardle stated that was two small segments which were intended to be a sculptural wooden bench. He stated it was not yet fully detailed.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

Mr. Knight appreciated how the design for the site has evolved. The overall simplicity of the site has been much improved. Mr. Knight had no major concerns or objections and thought it met the Guidelines. There were some minor things like the detailing of the edge of the terrace and how that pattern resolved.

Mr. Adams thought it was a nice scheme. He did express concern about having a public stair without a handrail. He felt there should be a handrail in keeping with others on the site.

Mr. Wolf supported Mr. Knight's comments. He wanted more detail to come back on the benches as well as details for any potential handrail. Mr. Wolf also wanted to see details on terminating the saw cut.

Mr. Wolf, having considered the standards set forth within the City Code including the City Design Guidelines for Site Design, moved to find that the proposed Site Plan for the King Lumber building satisfies the BAR's criteria and Guidelines and is compatible with

this property and other properties in this district, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted with the following conditions: that construction details for the two benches as well as a detail for the termination of the saw cut of the poured in place concrete terraces, and any additional guardrails or handrail details that become necessary later would all come back to Staff for administrative approval at that time. Ms. Brennan seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Downtown Mall Renovation

Ms. Scala gave the staff report. This had been before the Board for preliminary comments in December, 2007. The applicant, MMM, has held several meetings with various stakeholders. MMM is seeking final approval on certain items and have preliminary discussions on other items. Considerations include: being faithful to the Halperin design; improving the Mall's deficiencies, including better vehicular crossing design and better incorporation of side streets; and accommodating all the Mall's stakeholders. Existing planters, benches, trash recycling receptacles and bike racks are appropriately designed; proposed numbers and locations are at issue. The brick size is different than requested by the Board. Staff feels the existing brick soldier courses which are adjacent to the Mall buildings should be retained to represent part of the original design. The Board should discuss alternatives to the lights. Existing bollards are proposed to be removed to accommodate fire trucks. Two new fountains are proposed.

Mr. Chris McKnight of MMM Design Group gave a brief presentation. Additional planters would be fabricated to match existing planters. Existing benches would be reused. Trash and recycling centers would be removed during construction but restored to the current locations. Mr. McKnight had samples of the proposed brick. The smaller bricks preferred by the Board were not available locally. The diameter of the light pole would be increased from three and-a-half inch to four inch to help with wind stability. Lights would be raised two feet to allow fire truck access through the Mall. The proposed fountains would be kept in material and design of the existing fountains.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Mr. Craig Fabio, Zoning Inspector, expressed concern about the length of the brick and the trip hazard proposed by bricks coming loose.

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD:

Mr. Knight wanted to know if there were any drawings of the two proposed fountains. There were. One would be round and the other square.

Mr. Knight sought additional details on the proposed brick, especially availability for replacement in the future. Mr. McKnight did not see any problems with future replacement as these were being manufactured in Madison Heights by Old Virginia. Mr. McKnight thought the larger brick would bring more of a sense of scale to the pavement. He also stated the soldier course would be maintained.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

Mr. Knight stated he appreciated what the applicant had been trying to do. In general, he thought this was going to be a good, clean restoration of the original design although there were a number of details needing to be worked out. He wanted more information on the public art spaces. He also wanted to know how the speed bump would be differentiated. Mr. Knight wanted to see a building face to building face line drawing showing pavement patterns. He stated he was having a hard time grasping the scale of the pavers and wanted to see a larger panel which would allow better visualization. Mr. Knight also wanted more information on the granite.

Mr. Hogg agreed with Mr. Knight about the need for more information on the public art areas. He felt there was a better choice than granite. Mr. Hogg expressed concern about putting a bench around the planters.

Mr. Wolf agreed putting a bench around the planters was not a good idea as it seemed like something to be found in a shopping mall. He expressed concern that a larger brick seemed more like a paver than brick.

Mr. Adams agreed a larger scale mock up would be helpful. He expressed concern about the photometric light levels.

Ms. Gardner, having considered the standards set forth within the City Code including the City Design Guidelines for Public Improvements, moved to find that the proposed planters, benches, trash and recycling receptacles, bike racks, lights and light poles -- with photometrics to come back to the Board -- internal Mall bollards, bollards for side streets, fountains, and reconfigured planter island at Water Street are acceptable and meet the Board's Guidelines and that the Board look in the future at a larger brick sample, that the Board see additional details of runnels, an overall paving design for the width of the Mall, and that the Board see other samples for granite banding. Mr. Wolf asked that they also see details for vehicle crossings, both the speed bumps and the strips. Ms. Gardner accepted this as a friendly amendment. Mr. Knight seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The applicant gave a brief presentation on the proposed Sister City plaza. Mr. McKnight also explained the newspaper boxes would either be uniform in appearance or screened from the Mall.

Mr. Wolf called for discussion on the elements individually.

Playground -- Mr. Adams thought the concept was fine but a design should be seen. Mr. Wolf expressed concern about the size, feeling it would be too small for the area.

Sister City plaza -- Mr. Wolf felt the location was reasonable.

Multi-tiered fountain -- Ms. Gardner and Ms. Brennan expressed a liking for the fountain. Mr. Wolf thought it would make a big difference to the area. Mr. Knight expressed concern about the location and thought it needed development.

Public art -- Mr. Knight felt any proposed art should come before the Board.

E. Certificate of Appropriateness Application

BAR 08-01-03

600 East Water Street

Tax Map 53 Parcel 162.1

Daggett & Grigg, Architects, Applicant/Sansovich Development, LLC, Owner

New Construction

Ms. Scala gave the staff report. This had been before the Board previously in January, 2008. The proposal now has dark red brick similar to the nearby buildings. The proposed building has 19 parking spaces on the basement level, commercial space on the first two floors, and residential for the remaining floors. Mechanical equipment will be located on the ground in the rear. Not all of the Board's suggestions have been incorporated.

Mr. James Grigg, of Daggett & Grigg Architects, stated the basic massing had been revisited after the January preliminary discussion. The color palette had been changed to a more traditional Charlottesville palette.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

There were no questions from the public.

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD:

Mr. Wolf wanted to know if the cornice on the tower was stucco with the lower pieces being precast. Mr. Grigg stated he was not sure as they wanted them to look the same.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

Mr. Hogg thought it was a nice response to the comments from the January meeting. He said the pattern of the window sashes still seemed strange. He expressed a preference for a more traditional brick size.

Mr. Knight stated he would have a hard time reconciling the oversized brick in an historic building. He was also concerned about the articulation of the building within a pedestrian area. He did not like the concrete sidewalk leading to a concrete block facade and wanted to see something done to address the problem.

Ms. Brennan agreed with Mr. Knight that it was imperative to do something with the wall.

Mr. Adams thought the massing was okay but was concerned about the cornice.

Mr. Wolf felt very comfortable with the direction the project was going. He stated he would support approval conditioned on details coming back on the guardrails, the cornices, the wall section going through a window, information about the roofscape, information about the depth of the niche that helps define the two separate elements.

Mr. Wolf, having considered the standards set forth within the City Code including the City Design Guidelines for New Construction, moved to find that the proposed building satisfies the BAR's criteria and Guidelines and is compatible with this property and other properties in this district, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted in concept for its massing, its height, its openings, its proportion and scale, with details as they relate to the building envelope and the materials in its construction to come back to the Board for further review. Mr. Hogg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

F. Certificate of Appropriateness Application

212 Wine Street

Exterior Restoration and Renovation

Ms. Scala gave the staff report. The applicant plans exterior rehabilitation and some changes to the existing porches. Wood siding will be removed, primed and reinstalled. Wood trim will be repaired and replaced if necessary. Windows will be repaired and painted. The front porch will be rebuilt to match the original including standing seam metal roof. The rear porch and block stairs, which are not original, will be removed. The proposed replacement porch will be the same width but slightly deeper than the existing. This is an Individually Protected Property.

Mr. Jeff Warner gave a brief history of the property.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

There were no questions from the public.

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD:

Mr. Hogg wanted to know if the applicant planned on looking at the colors as the paint was removed. Mr. Warner stated he had already been looking at the house and was unsure what he would go back with.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

Mr. Knight, having considered the standards set forth within the City Code including the City Design Guidelines for Rehabilitation, moved to find that the proposed Rehabilitation and changes to existing porches satisfy the BAR's criteria and Guidelines and are compatible with

this property and other properties in this district, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted. Mr. Hogg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

G. Certificate of Appropriateness Application

201 East Water Street

Penthouse screen

Ms. Scala gave the staff report. Some details had been approved at the February meeting. The applicant is requesting approval of new mechanical equipment screening to be located on the north side of the ninth floor roof.

The architect was present but had nothing to add to the staff presentation.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

There were no questions from the public.

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD:

There were no questions from the Board.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

Mr. Wolf stated he had no issues with the proposal and felt it would have little impact.

Mr. Wolf, having considered the standards set forth within the City Code including the City Design Guidelines for New Construction, moved to find that the proposed Mechanical screen details and materials for the proposed new Landmark Hotel satisfy the BAR's criteria and are compatible with this property and other properties in this district, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted. Mr. Adams seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wolf called for a brief recess. The meeting stood in recess at 7:40 p.m.

Mr. Wolf reconvened the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

H. Certificate of Appropriateness Application

222 East Main Street

Refurbish ATM Fascia

Ms. Scala gave the staff report. The applicant is requesting approval of a bright blue ATM machine to replace the existing beige one. Staff denied the application due to the bright primary

color choice. Staff is concerned about keeping the ATM compatible with the building and with being consistent in decisions regarding signage and color within the historic district. Staff recommends denial.

Ms. April Harris, of Virginia National Bank, stated this was the original 1998 design and was in desperate need of renovation. The current design is backlit. The proposal is completely blue and no light would shine through except for the lettering of the bank. She wanted to know if there was a shade of blue within the color palette which would be acceptable to the Board.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

There were no questions from the public.

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD:

There were no questions from the Board.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

Ms. Schoenthal stated the color did seem bright and was very similar to the color denied at the last meeting for another sign. She wondered if the grey and blue could be switched.

Mr. Hogg had no objection to that shade of blue in a smaller quantity.

Mr. Wolf was comfortable with the back lighting of the Virginia National Bank text in the sign much as it is now. He expressed a preference for a neutral frame with a blue placard.

Ms. Gardner felt the limited use of the blue was too much.

Mr. Wolf expressed concern about the amount of super graphics in that area. He also stated the applicant would have to come up with a shade of blue for approval.

Mr. Hogg, having considered the standards set forth within the City Code including the City Design Guidelines for Rehabilitations and signs, moved to find that a portion of the proposed ATM machine satisfies the BAR's criteria and is compatible with this property and other properties in this district, in particular the sign as shown replacing the existing illuminated sign with a blue panel with white letters which would allow light to pass through them but the enclosure to be made a more neutral color to blend better with the wall. Mr. Knight seconded the motion. The motion passed, 5-2; Ms. Brennan and Ms. Gardner voted against.

H. Preliminary Discussion

301 West Main Street

Ms. Scala gave the staff report. A preliminary discussion had been held in February, 2007, to discuss rezoning the property. The property has been rezoned to Downtown Corridor. This property has a vested by right nine story use.

Mr. Tom Ilerson, of Edge Development Company, was present with Greg Blean and Lionel Morrison. The applicants gave a PowerPoint presentation.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

There were no questions from the public.

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD:

Mr. Wall sought clarification of the material on the front of the building. The applicant explained it was aluminum.

Mr. Wolf wanted to know how the materials were chosen. The applicant stated the materials were ones seen in the City and had been part of his palette for 20 years.

Ms. Brennan wanted to know why the applicant had chosen the London Plane tree. The landscape architect explained it did well in limited space and could be easily maintained.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

Ms. Brennan appreciated the mass being broken down. However, in coming back to the Guidelines, she felt the tower was too tall. She felt the little window balcony did not seem to fit. The applicant explained it was a whimsy. Ms. Brennan, while appreciating whimsy, did not feel it worked there.

Mr. Hogg thought this was a nice proposal. He took issue with the tall slender windows on the south elevation. He thought details about the screen would be important.

Ms. Schoenthal thought there were a lot of colors and that it seemed very busy. She also thought the access to the garage on McIntire seemed problematic.

Mr. Wall thought the freshness of the design was very refreshing. He took exception to the stair in front as it prevented handicapped access.

Mr. Adams thought the massing scheme worked well. He stated he would like to see a real model of the proposal. He also expressed a preference for a reduction in the material palette.

Mr. Knight felt this project had a very generic quality which could be found anywhere and was at odds with the spirit of the Guidelines. He suggested the applicant take the Guidelines and see how they could reconcile the project. He expressed a desire for additional plantings.

Mr. Wolf appreciated the presentation.

J. Preliminary Discussion

1704 Gordon Avenue/419 17th Street NW

Mr. Wolf recused himself from the matter. Ms. Scala gave the staff report. The property has two structures which were approved for demolition in June, 2007. The applicant is requesting preliminary discussion of a proposed multi-family structure with eight two-story units and lower level parking for 24 vehicles. Materials are not yet specified. The applicant needs to request a Special Use Permit to increase the density by one unit.

Mr. Kurt Wassenaar stated the site was very tight. Comments had been received about traffic, therefore all egress and ingress had been brought off the Gordon Avenue side eliminating the conflicts.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

There were no questions from the public.

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD:

Ms. Gardner wanted to know why the buildings were connected with a bridge. Mr. Wassenaar stated it was because of fire codes and to facilitate pedestrian traffic.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD:

Mr. Wall thought this was an attractive project and that the architecture related well with the neighborhood.

Mr. Hogg stated he had some fundamental problems with the project. He thought breaking it up into two separate structures was a good idea to address a difficult lot. However, the garage entrance and steps on Gordon Avenue were a giant, gaping hole. The left corner of the facade seemed unsupported. There was a visual imbalance to the project.

Mr. Adams thought parking was the main problem with the structure.

Ms. Brennan thought the proposal was a great start. She thought it broke up the mass nicely.

Mr. Adams expressed concern about the gaping hole on Gordon Avenue.

Mr. Knight wanted to know if the all the openings into the garage level were necessary. Mr. Wassenaar stated they probably weren't.

Mr. Knight felt parking was the number one problem. He felt the long row of junipers did not do much for the project. He suggested there be a little more creativity with the planting and other site elements.

Special Use Permit -- Comments

Mr. Knight found the parking to be what bothered him most about the proposal. He noted the Board could recommend or deny the Special Use Permit and could say there were deeper issues involved.

Ms. Brennan stated she was not opposed to increasing the density. She did not feel parking was tied to the Special Use Permit.

Ms. Gardner moved to find that the proposed Special Use Permit to allow increased density at 1704 Gordon Avenue and 419 17th Street NW from 21 to 22 dwelling units per acre will not have an adverse impact on the Rugby Road/University Circle/Venable Neighborhood ADC District. Ms. Brennan seconded the motion. The motion passed, 4-3-1; Mr. Hogg, Mr. Adams and Mr. Wall voted against the motion while Mr. Wolf abstained from the matter.

K. Conservation District Ordinance -- Discussion and Recommendation

Ms. Scala stated the language for the Conservation District Ordinance had been prepared. Ms. Scala suggested it be deferred so it could come back in a version more in keeping with what the residents suggested.

Mr. Wolf thought deferring the issue made a lot of sense.

Mr. Wolf moved to defer Item K, the zoning text amendment for historic conservation districts until the June meeting. Mr. Adams seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

L. Matters from the public not on the agenda

There were no matters from the public.

M. Other business

Ms. Scala stated there was an issue with plastic pots on the Mall. Ms. Scala had informed Mall cafe owners she would approve administratively ceramic or terra cotta pots while plastic pots would have to come to the BAR for approval.

Mr. Wolf wanted to know if plastic seating was allowed if it was the right color. Ms. Scala stated there had been some in the past which they were trying to phase out. Silver or black was currently allowed.

Ms. Gardner wanted to know if there was a high grade plastic which could be accepted. Ms. Scala stated she could look into it.

Mr. Wall suggested fiberglass as an alternative.

Mr. Knight thought there were too many materials to say one material or another was approved was too broad brushed. He thought Ms. Scala's proposal was best.

Mr. Wolf felt Ms. Scala's proposal would be best.

N. Adjournment

Mr. Wolf moved to adjourn. Mr. Hogg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously whereupon the meeting stood adjourned at 10:18 p.m.