

Board of Architectural Review
Minutes
April 19, 2016

Location: City Council Chambers-City Hall

Members Present: Chair-Melanie Miller, Members -Tim Mohr; Vice- Chair; Justin Sarafin, Laura Knott, Carl Schwarz, Kurt Keesecker, Emma Earnst, Stephen Balut.

Members Absent: Whit Graves

Staff Present: Mary Joy Scala, Preservation & Design Planner; Camie Mess, Preservation Assistant; Margaret Stella, Preservation Intern; Carolyn McCray, Clerk

Call to Order: Chair – Melanie Miller calls meeting to order

A. Matters from the public not on the agenda (please limit to 3 minutes)

1. David Thompson, 500 Court Square, talked about massing 550 E Water Street and questioned the BAR's proper consideration of the Guidelines. Why do we have ADC guidelines that are not considered by the Board? The Board needs to know what the prevailing height is. The BAR has a problem; certainly the calculations have to be completed before the massing can be approved. The BAR should revisit this along with the other good you do for the city.

B. Consent Agenda

1. Minutes March 15, 2016
Mr. Keesecker moved to approved the consent agenda, seconded Mr. Schwarz (Ms. Knott and Ms. Miller abstained) motion passes 6-0-2.

C. New Items

2. 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, (Doug Ehman) Replace existing mall benches
The Parks Division is requesting approval to replace the remaining 19 wood and metal chairs on the Mall with black metal backless benches

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.

Ms. Knott asked are these the benches with backs are those original benches that were moveable chairs in 2008-2009. Are those the ones recommended by WRT, Ms. Knott said they are European and she didn't look to see if anything else is available.

The BAR had many major questions regarding public safety and people sleeping on the chairs. They also asked why the other chairs were replaced without consulting with the BAR first?

There were also many questions regarding the stability of the chairs and the specific locations of the seats.

Mr. Ehman said there are about 19 - 21 single seats on the mall.

Mr. Schwarz said the chairs are occupied with a person reading a book, and patrons are using the benches with backs on them. As to the problem of people sleeping on them, he stated if a person has to sleep on a cold bench because they have no other option, to let them sleep on them.

Tim said the black metal benches might be hot in the summer.

Mr. Ehman said they get warm but not hot.

One thing that would be helpful to know is the layout and setting of the chairs, he doesn't object to adding and reinstalling some chairs, and agrees the pedestrian mall could use more seating in general.

Mr. Balut said it's a shame to take away seating on the mall, and the black seats are the less comfortable option for seating.

Mr. Keesecker said the unit is fine, but come back with a design plan; and the BAR may be willing to accept the backless benches. Before the BAR was willing to accept the backless benches, they 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. The BAR may want to keep some chairs with backs in addition to the backless benches.

Mr. Ehman asked for a deferral to take another look at the seating on the mall.

Mr. Schwarz motion to accept the applicant's request for deferral, seconded by Mr. Keesecker, motion passes 8-0.

3. Certificate of Appropriateness Application
BAR 16-04-02
212 Ridge McIntire Road
Tax Parcel 330155L00
Omni Hotels, Owner/Thurman Shifflett, Applicant
Tree Removal

The applicant is requesting to remove three trees from the lower parking lot, and to remove or prune 4 Burford Hollies on the Mall side.

The applicant is requesting to replace the three trees with trees that are easier to maintain. The condition of the trees is unknown, but they are large and seem to have adequate planting area. They provide important shade in the parking lot.

The four hollies near the entrance have been pruned up, and probably could be replaced. There may be good reasons to replace landscaping over the years, but it would be helpful to have a master plan for this large and prominent site.

Staff invited the hotel General Manager to attend the BAR meeting along with the applicant. He had previously expressed interest in working with the City to upgrade the plant materials near the hotel (mall) entrance, most of which are in the public right of way.

The original Halprin design for the Mall showed a “Vinegar Hill Park” at the west end of the mall. The City’s Historic Resources Committee has suggested recently that the mall extension in front of the Omni could become that park. More conversations are needed, but everyone seems to agree that this area could be upgraded.

Ms. Knott asked if the hollies on the front side were put there for security purposes. She said the trees are red oaks and they are not currently happy.

Mr. Shifflett said they have not been pruned. The arborist said he could try to prune them.

The BAR asked to see a planting plan for the parking lot, perhaps with a proposal for specific species of trees to replace two trees where they are currently located in the islands, but to replace the third tree near the parking structure with up to three smaller trees in the planting strip near the street. After they submit the plan, the application will be re-scheduled.

Mr. Sarafin moved to accept the applicant’s request for deferral, and Mr. Keesecker seconded. The deferral request was approved (8-0).

4. BAR 16-04-01
1022 Grove Street
Tax Parcel 230039000
Kathryn L. Mintz, Owner/Applicant
Replace deteriorating windows, install storm window and screens

The current owner is requesting to replace five – 6/6 windows: two on the front, two on the side, and one in the rear. The windows do not operate and are mold-infested. The applicant has two quotes for either vinyl or aluminum-clad replacement sashes.

The house is representative of the typical historic housing of this neighborhood, and has a charming scale. Regarding any window replacement, the BAR should determine:

- (1) If it is appropriate to replace the windows, based on the location, age, and significance of the building and windows, and the condition of the windows; and
- (2) If appropriate, then what type of replacement window is permitted in each specific case?

In this case, the existing windows may be original. In staff opinion, the proposed aluminum-clad window replacement is appropriate.

Mr. Schwarz said to measure the muntins to match the dimensions as closely as possible, look at the options, and to do whatever is appropriate; depending on the manufacturer.

Mr. Schwarz moved to find that the proposed window replacement satisfies the BAR’s criteria and guidelines and is compatible with this Individually Protected Property, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted using the aluminum-clad wood windows, with the recommendation of looking into the size of the muntins [to match the dimensions of the existing window muntins as closely as possible using SDL’s with exterior and interior affixed muntins with spacer bars]. Also, the storm windows should not be put back. Mr. Keesecker seconded. The motion passed (7-1, with Ms. Miller opposed).

5. Comprehensive Signage Plan
BAR 16-04-03
1000 West Main
Tax Parcel 100068000 & 1000700
Campus Investors C’ville 1000 W Main, LLC, Owner/Applicant

Amendment to approved comprehensive signage plan
Application

The applicant is seeking approval of a Comprehensive Signage Plan, including the following;

H1-1 and H1-2 and W1: Private parking garage signage on Roosevelt Brown Boulevard (p. 8 and 12). Not lighted.

V1: Parking Vane sign on 11th Street. Internally lit. 3.14 sq. ft. (p. 6, 7 and 13)

L3: Retail parking sign on 11th Street, push-through lit letters. 4 sq. ft.(p. 6, 7, and 13)

M1: Monument (directory) sign, push-through lit letters. 16 sq. ft.; 6 ft. high. (p. 4 and 13)

1000: Monument (address) sign. Not lit. (p. 4 and 13)

Res1-5: Window signage – residential and address, not lit (p. 9, 10, 12, 13)

Ret1-6: Window signage – retail – not shown (p. 12, 13)

D1: Directory – 46 sq. ft., 8 feet tall (p. 11, 13)

L1: Monument (Uncommon) Halo-lit letters, wall is approx. 80 sq. ft.; sign area is 11.5 sq. ft. (p. 1, 3, 13)

L2: Wall sign (Uncommon) Halo-lit letters, sign area is 11.5 sq. ft. (p. 2, 3, 13)

Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including City Design Guidelines for Signs, Mr. Schwarz moved to find that the proposed comprehensive signage plan satisfies the BAR's criteria and is compatible with this property and other properties in the West Main Street ADC District, and that the BAR recommends this application with the following modifications: the applicant will re-submit the sign concept for the glass on retail spaces, to be administratively approved. Seconded Ms. Knott, motion passes 8-0.

D. New Construction

6. Certificate of Appropriateness Application

BAR 15-09-05

425,501,503 West Main Street

Tax Parcel 320175000, 320176000, 320177000

William H. Atwood, Applicant/the Sutton Group, Owner

New mixed use development

The applicant is requesting a certificate of appropriateness for the design of a new, by-right mixed-use building to be built on three parcels instead of the previously approved four- parcel scheme. The Atlantic Futon property is no longer included in the plan. Each of the three parcels contains a contributing structure: 501 and 503 West Main Street are proposed to be incorporated into the scheme as before; 425 West Main Street is a small barber shop that fronts on Commerce Street, previously approved for demolition.

The current design consists of four levels (52 ft.) above Main Street, and five levels (60 ft.) above Commerce Street, with a 14 ft. appurtenance level. The building is set back 10 feet from rear of the two historic buildings. It is built to the property line on the east and west sides. On the west side there is a covered arcade that connects West Main Street and Commerce Street.

On the West Main façade there is a 10 foot setback, and a 2-story streetwall, with the first floor having a 16 ft. height. Levels 3 and 4 are stepped back 45 feet. The front appendage is designed to relate to the scale and design of the two historic buildings.

On Commerce Street there is a 10 foot setback, and a 2-story streetwall, with the three levels above stepped back 18 feet to 21 feet, including plantings, to create an urban park.

Two levels of structured parking are accessed from West Main Street and Commerce Street, and exit onto Commerce Street near Fifth Street NW and Jefferson School. The garage driveway entrance from West Main Street gradually drops under the building.

Proposed landscaping includes:

3 Zelcovas on West Main Street to remain

8 Ginkgo trees along Commerce Street

6 Red Maple (Armstrong) trees in plaza area by historic buildings

Additional shrubs on interior of site

Additional landscaping on urban plaza

The massing has changed since it was approved in December. The applicant is now requesting approval of the final design, including the new massing.

The BAR should focus on how the new construction interacts with the surrounding buildings as well as the streetscape and pedestrian experience of both West Main Street and Commerce Street.

In staff opinion, the new design of the West Main Street frontage minimizes the impact of the garage entrance, and mimics the existing rhythm and scale of the historic buildings. The new commercial spaces are important on both streets, and the pedestrian walkway is a very important connection.

The clear glass specifications are needed.

A regular site plan has not yet been submitted for approval. The BAR may wish to see a more detailed version of the site plan, including lighting and signage, when that has been prepared.

Pat Edwards in Starr Hill, expressing concerns and desires, we feel good about the conversation, we are feeling better and hopeful, considered and respected, and we are closer together with Mr. Atwood. It may be his crowning achievement.

Mr. Keesecker stated he was surprised Mr. Atwood didn't run that orange band all the way around to the arcade.

Ms. Miller compliments the neighborhood and Mr. Atwood on coming together instead of arguing.

Mr. Keesecker stated he appreciates the more significant setback, it really helps with trying to visualize the questions about how the urban part functions.

Mr. Schwarz asked what the program adjacent to the garage is - does it have windows in it, is it a livable space? It may slope down, occupiable space.

Mr. Schwarz asked about the doors.

It is a wide open space to have access to upstairs.

Mr. Atwood said it is a long upstairs space.

Ms. Miller said 18 and 20 feet wide, depending on where you are.

Mr. Mohr it is possible for the ground floor to open on the ground floor.

Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including City Design Guidelines for New Construction and Additions, Mr. Sarafin moved to find that the

proposed new mixed-use complex satisfies the BAR's criteria and guidelines and is compatible with this property and other properties in the Downtown ADC district, and that the BAR approves the application, with the following to come back: full lighting plan; landscape plan/site plan with particular emphasis on the arcade and urban park entrances; greater detail on the windows and glass specifications; canopy details; materials palette; additional study of the detail and articulation (massing is fine) of the Commerce Street façade on the street and second level; comprehensive storefront and garage door details. Seconded by Mr. Mohr, motion passes 6-2 (Ms. Miller and Mr. Keesecker voted no)

7. Certificate of Appropriateness
BAR 15-10-08
550 East Water Street
Tax Parcel 530162300
Neal Sansovich, Owner/ Andrew Baldwin, Applicant
New Mixed-Use Complex – Details
Application

The applicant has received approval with conditions, and is now requesting final approval for those details.

The proposal is a by-right, mixed use building on a 0.28 acre site currently used for parking. The proposed building has below-grade parking, commercial office space and residential condominiums.

Also as requested, staff verified that the BAR, in approving the massing scheme last October, certainly considered guideline E.2. In New Construction and Additions, "Attempt to keep the height and width of new buildings within a maximum of 200 percent of the prevailing height and width in the surrounding sub-area."

Guideline E.3. "In commercial areas at street front, the height should be within 130 percent of the prevailing average of both sides of the block. Along West Main Street, heights should relate to any adjacent contributing buildings. Additional stories should be stepped back so that the additional height is not readily visible from the street." actually refers to the street-wall height, not the building height. The guideline does not apply to this proposal since there is no street-wall requirement in the Water Street zoning district. Regardless, the BAR did consider the adjacent building height, and the proposed building references that line in the design.

A guideline is just that; it is not a zoning regulation. Any math calculations for building height are addressed during site plan review, and with the Zoning Administrator and site plan reviewer.

The site design and landscape plan are thoughtful and the lighting appears to be minimal.

Staff requested the specifics to the lighting plan, such as cut sheets for the lighting fixtures that include the color temperature. There is a lot of up lighting shown, (L1) that the applicant should confirm is dark sky-compliant (not to exceed 3000 lumens).

The applicant should confirm that the proposed screening of the electrical transformer area and the mechanical unit area will be provided on all four sides. There is a retaining (site) wall on the west side, which should be described in terms of relative height on both sides, and material.

Staff asked that the shrub areas in the rear should be made more specific.

The BAR should decide if the revised fenestration is appropriate.

Keesecker asked what is the height of the building?

Robert Nichols said 70 feet.

Mohr asked are you back lighting the trellis?

Mr. David Myatt, a resident from across the street, asked about the lightning plan.

Robert said the parapet would block the light.

How will the lighting be handled turnoff at night?

Robert Nichols said a centralized system, he has not thought about it.

He noted the HVAC is 4 feet down.

Tim Mohr: the west elevation looks considerably better; the sconces are around 7 feet, an up light against the wall. I don't think it is directional, it is a ball of light on the top and the bottom, he said he believes it is equal in the absence of reflectors.

Mr. Keesecker asked if it does have someone will be able to look down on that fixture the one on the bottom, the effect you get if you look up, see the bulb.

Mr. Mohr said the mortar looks good.

Ms. Knott asked are we being ask to approved the landscape because she does not have a problem with that. Everything from the building wall to the track is a shrub mix.

Mr. Sarafin said this looks like a great improvement and he is in support.

Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including City Design Guidelines for New Construction and Additions, Mr. Sarafin moved to find that the proposed new mixed-use building details satisfy the BAR's criteria and guidelines and are compatible with this property and other properties in the Downtown ADC district, and that the BAR approves the application, as submitted with the clarification that upon installation of the lighting, it is adjusted appropriately. Seconded by Ms. Knott, motion passes 8-0.

8. Discussion- remaining condition

BAR 15-08-04

NW Corner of Ridge St. and Cherry Ave.

Tax Parcel 290145000-147000, 290149000-151000, 290157000

Charlie Armstrong, Owner/ Cherry Avenue Investments LLC, Applicant

Proposed new construction of a Marriot Hotel on the NW corner intersection of Cherry Avenue and Ridge Street – plaza facade design

The building design has been approved by the BAR except for the unresolved condition: "raise the canopy on the plaza side, and continue to refine." The BAR has not been able to come to consensus via email, so staff suggested to the applicant that they submit a wrapped balcony version per Mohr's suggestion, then the BAR could discuss both options at the April 19 BAR meeting and decide on one or the other.

Mr. Mohr suggested extending the balconies around the corner to the first row of windows. Some members preferred to have balconies only on the Ridge Street façade.

The BAR should focus their review on this site as a major gateway to the City, in addition to the neighborhood context, and whether the design meets the pertinent design guidelines and is compatible with the Ridge Street ADC historic district.

Regarding the signage, permitted signage on Ridge Street is limited to 12 sq. feet, since it is in the Ridge Street ADC district. The two signs proposed on Cherry Avenue would meet the maximum 100 square foot aggregate area on that street. The applicant had originally proposed a projecting sign, but the sign ordinance allows only 3'-6' for projecting sign, so that was not acceptable to them. Staff then suggested a monument sign of maximum 24 sq. feet, which was selected. The Porte cohere sign at the rear is not counted because it cannot be seen from the public road.

Therefore, the only remaining condition is the resolution of the Ridge Street façade building design.

The BAR was not in agreement on the idea of wrapping balconies around to Ridge Street. Everyone did seem to agree that the balcony brackets were oversized. The BAR needs to resolve this issue, understanding that the remainder of the building and site design has already received approval from the BAR.

Ms. Knott said no balconies throughout this conversation, she votes no.
Mr. Mohr said it should be consistent.

Mr. Sarafin and Mr. Schwarz support Option B and stated make sure to get rid of all of the extras and the SDL are done correctly.

Mr. Sarafin said he has no problem, with it all being store front

Schwarz moved, and Mohr seconded, to find that the proposed new construction satisfies the BAR's criteria and is compatible with this property and other properties in the Ridge Street ADC district, and that the BAR approves (7-1 with Knott opposed) Option B for the plaza façade design as submitted, except with the modification that all windows [and doors] on the far east block either have muntins [SDL's with exterior- and interior -applied muntins with spacer bars], or none have muntins, exclusive of the storefront doors going into the retail space under the main canopy [which should not have muntins].

E. Other Business

9. Discussion- Administrative Approvals

General consensus was to make sure that the board members reply to the e-mails sent by Mary Joy in a timely manner. Reply all can be used, and it is up to the specific members of the board if individually they want to use this response or reply only to Mary Joy. Applications without clear resolution at the BAR meeting should be deferred rather than approved subject to administrative approval with emails.

10. Discussion-Conservation district ordinance

Amendment for Conservation District Ordinances recommended for rear demolitions on corner lots (8-0.) Amendment for Conservation District Ordinances recommended for having to obtain approval to paint [previously unpainted] brick on case by case basis (7-1, with Schwarz opposed.)

11. Discussion- Confederate memorials

City Council did not yet take action to appoint a Blue Ribbon Committee. The BAR confirmed they must review any proposed changes to statues in ADC districts.

12. Preservation Virginia BAR Training sessions

Sarafin encouraged BAR members to attend an upcoming training session.

13. PLACE Report

PLACE discussed 3D modeling of the City and lighting study. The BAR wants to schedule a work session with PLACE and Planning Commission.

The BAR discussed their role in reviewing the Design Guidelines as noted in the West Main Street rezoning action.

F. Adjournment 10:30 p.m.