

**BAR MINUTES
CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
Regular Meeting
February 15, 2022 – 5:00 PM
Zoom Webinar**



Welcome to this Regular Monthly Meeting of the Charlottesville Board of Architectural Review (BAR). Due to the current public health emergency, this meeting is being held online via Zoom. The meeting process will be as follows: For each item, staff will make a brief presentation followed by the applicant’s presentation, after which members of the public will be allowed to speak. Speakers shall identify themselves, and give their current address. Members of the public will have, for each case, up to three minutes to speak. Public comments should be limited to the BAR’s jurisdiction; that is, regarding the exterior design of the building and site. Following the BAR’s discussion, and before the vote, the applicant shall be allowed up to three minutes to respond, for the purpose of clarification. Thank you for participating.

Members Present: Cheri Lewis, Breck Gastinger, James Zehmer, Jody Lahendro, Ron Bailey, Clayton Strange, David Timmerman, Robert Edwards, Hunter Smith

Staff Present: Patrick Cory, Jeff Werner, Robert Watkins, Remy Trail

Pre-Meeting:

There was a discussion regarding the Albemarle County Courts building project. Staff went over the details of the Albemarle County Courts and City Courts complex. The BAR got a preliminary introduction to the project this past summer. Staff went over the project for the new members of the BAR. The Chairman did recommend that the new members of the BAR provide their feedback for the courts complex project.

Mr. Zehmer had a question regarding the timelines of COAs. The timelines for COAs with the City of Charlottesville is 18 months. Staff did clarify the language and timeline for COAs approved by the BAR.

Staff did provide the distinction of contributing and non-contributing buildings and structures. Non-contributing buildings can be demolished.

A. Matters from the public not on the agenda

No Comments from the Public

B. Consent Agenda (Note: Any consent agenda item may be pulled and moved to the regular agenda if a BAR member wishes to discuss it, or if any member of the public is present to comment on it. Pulled applications will be discussed at the beginning of the meeting.)

1. Certificate of Appropriateness

BAR 22-02-01

617 Park Street, TMP 520186000

North Downtown ADC District

Owner: Lucy Taurel and Alex Bassett

Applicant: Adelle Chenier

Project: Play structure

2. Certificate of Appropriateness

BAR 22-02-02
413 Ridge Street, Tax Parcel 290136000
Ridge Street ADC District
Owner/Applicant: Michaela Lieberman and Benjamin Martin
Project: Fencing and landscape

3. Certificate of Appropriateness

BAR 22-02-03
511 N 1st Street, TMP 330001000
North Downtown ADC District
Owner: Charlottesville Towers Condo Assoc.
Applicant: Robert McGinnis
Project: Alterations to main entry.

4. SUP Recommendation

BAR 22-02-05
207 14th Street, NW; TMP 090070100
Rugby Rd-University Cir-Venable ADC District (non-contributing)
Owner: University Limited Partnership
Applicant: Bill Chapman
Project: SUP to allow use as a hotel. (currently apartments.)

Ms. Lewis moved to approve the Consent Agenda. (Second by Mr. Bailey) – Motion passes 9-0.

C. Deferred Items

5. Certificate of Appropriateness

BAR 21-10-04
310 East Main Street, TMP 28004100
Downtown ADC District
Owner: Armory 310 East Main, LLC
Applicant: Robert Nichols/Formworks
Project: Facade renovations/alterations

Jeff Werner, Staff Report – Year Built: 1916. In 1956 the north façade was reconstructed. The existing north façade was constructed in 1982. (South façade may have been built at this same time.) District: Downtown ADC District Status: Contributing (Note: When the district was established, all existing structures were designated contributing.) CoA request for alterations to the Main Street (north) and Water Street (south) facades. The proposed work will alter the 20th century facades. *See Appendix for comparison of October 2021 submittal and present submittal*

Discussion and Recommendations

The original, 1916 facades no longer exist. The proposed alterations will replace the contemporary facades constructed in the 1980s. The November 1980 National Register nomination of the Charlottesville and Albemarle County Courthouse Historic District does not include this address, nor do any of the building descriptions for this block match the current design. Unless the building [the facades] are of *exceptional importance*, it does not meet the 50-year threshold necessary for consideration for the National Register.

<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-register/>

A Property that can be Nominated for Listing in the Registers should:

- Have achieved historical significance at least 50 years prior to today and/or is of exceptional importance; and
- Is associated with at least one of the following:
 - o An important event or historic trend;
 - o A significant person whose specific contributions to history can be identified and documented;
 - o An important architectural or engineering design; or it represents the work of a master; or it is a distinguishable entity although its components may lack individual distinction;
 - o Has the potential to answer important research questions about human history (most commonly these properties are archaeological sites); and
- Retain physical integrity through retention of historic materials, appearance, design, and other physical features.

There are two questions for the BAR to discuss:

1. Do the existing facades—together or singularly; as part of the mall or as a single structure; and due to age, design, architect. and/or other factors—contribute to historic character of the Downtown ADC and should they be protected? (Emphasizing that an ADC District is a City designation, and not dependent on state or national designation.)
2. If the facades are to be altered--together or singularly—are the proposed changes consistent with the ADC District Design Guidelines?

Additionally, due to the unique nature of the existing facades, the BAR might consider applying components of the design standards for both *New Construction* and for *Rehabilitation*.

The applicant has not specified the glass to be used. The BAR may request that information or address it as a condition of approval. In the Appendix is a summary of BAR's July 17, 2018 discussion re: glass.

Robert Nichols, Applicant – Our current project is 310 East Main Street. It's the building that currently has Vita Nova Pizza on the ground floor. It has a 1970s era curtain wall façade with very thin aluminum framed-in glass on The Mall side. In addition to a style that has been exhausted, they are in dire need of maintenance. That same description holds up for the Water Street façade. The building is about 22-23 feet wide. It goes all the way through the block from The Mall to Water Street.

In October, 2021, we brought this project before the Board and reviewed our strategies for redesigning/redeveloping/rebuilding both front and back facades. We had a good discussion and a positive response. We're back this month for two reasons. One is the front (East Main Street façade). It has currently has an elevator shaft that is visible on the street. It is a convex circular shaft. We know that it is going to revert back to a flat panel that is coplanar with the face of the building. It is just a blank panel. We're not interested in seeing the elevator shaft the way it is now. It is a blank slate. We've considered it a blank slate for the decorative treatment. It already comes with a great proportion being three stories high and 8.5 feet wide. In our schedule, we asked for a deferral to give us more time to develop that. It wasn't necessarily coordinated with the rest of the other construction on the building.

What we showed last time was a 'composition in two dimensions' where we were experimenting with a little bit of relief. We had some bars in contrasting material that populated that vertical façade in varying rhythms. We got there by composing within this narrow vertical rectangle a collection of elements that produced some pleasing proportions. We have been working on a more systematic approach to creating a decoration on that façade. What it relies on are many small pieces of metallic

finished material that will come in many varieties of shape. The view on the right is a computer generated view. It's a perspective used to explain this thing. It is an array of tiles or little angle clips where the tiles go up in a regular array. They have certain parameters, which vary across the system. Each tile is flat against the elevator shaft. There's an angle where that tile is bent and it projects from the elevator shaft. The length bent tab varies and the angle the tab is bent varies. Working with that is a palate. It gives you an opportunity to develop, by the combination of these many small pieces, very interesting visual effects from a static piece of architecture that will appear very dynamic and very interesting depending on the position from which you're viewing it, your rate of speed as you walk by it, and a function of what daylight is doing at the time. If you look closely at this piece on the right, it may be not easy to identify any given tile that has an angle that is different from its neighbor. If you look at the whole piece, you can see a graphic move at the scale of the whole building where you get this river of that contrasting color coming down through the middle of that. In this case, the contrasting color will be the flat backing surface of the elevator shaft. That's going to be a very thin bronzish color. These studies on the left are different demonstrations of ways in which repeated small moves (the similar material adjusted in a similar way) in combination in the aggregate create an effect that is commiserate with the scale of the whole assembly. The ability to do this is made possible with (CNC) manufacturing abilities which is a computer numerical control. This would be less interesting and prohibitively expensive if each of these pieces was made by hand. This whole system allows for the work that we do here in our design studio to defining how these tiles relate to one another, their angles, and tab lengths. We can send that information directly into the CNC machine shops that will produce the multiple tiles in an automated way. Given this ability to make these subtle changes over many different tiles laid out in an array such as this, we are using mathematical formulas to account for the effect of one course of these being stacked on another. How do you change the variation as you go to each one? How do you adjust that variation to change course? The parameters can adjust according to what course they are on. The means of producing this and how it is derived is mute once it is an object. It gives us access to an affect and result that would be hard to achieve. The effect will be quite interesting. One of the comments about this particular panel from the last meeting was that we might consider integrating lighting into this panel. We have considered that. We had considered it before. We have decided not to do that for a couple of reasons. Since this is up against the elevator shaft, we have very little depth available to us. We don't have the kind of depth we often like to exploit to conceal lighting. We didn't want to make lighting that needed to steal depth from inside the elevator shaft. It would introduce a need to maintain that from inside the shaft, which was unappealing to us. We have had some results on the Mall, particularly going back to when we designed the Blue Light Grill many years ago where we invested a lot of time in trying to develop a subtle lighting effect that looked pretty great in our mockups. When we got it installed, it was overshadowed/overpowered by the street lighting. We realized that a lot of what is happening particularly from two stories down is that street lighting illuminates that zone through people walk. Lighting, other than interior lighting, can have a tendency to be washed out. In this case, we're relying on the backing material to reflect light. When somebody passes by and the varying degrees to which the bronze material is revealed, that would have an effect of showing the brightness and reflecting some color.

When we came back from the last meeting, there were a couple of comments that we wanted to focus on. We were hoping to come back with the response to those comments. There is a fair amount of depth in this façade (in the depth of the framing members and the depth that is provided by the kind of primary frame around the tall glazing compared to the actual sash). We also have increased depth in that vertical panel on the left over the street number. We were talking about what some sun control might do on that façade both to control the sun for the benefit of the occupants but also for the appearance of the façade. Sun control is a real issue down there from an interior perspective. What opportunities do we have on the exterior of the building? We evaluated some common ways to address southern sun; horizontal planes that project out from the building and become visors over the glazed

openings on the south. We also realized that, in this particular location, late afternoon sun should beam down Water Street from a low angle. That is also problematic. Low sun typically comes from the west. It takes a different strategy to combat that. We had horizontal blinds and vertical blinds. We're calculating sun penetration into the building. It quickly became apparent that, given the width of this building (22 feet), we have about 21 feet of occupyable space back here. The length of the floorplate is about 250 feet. There is quite a lot of action we're evaluating and proposing of the exterior of the building to improve and fine-tune the experience at this patch of floor on the interior. We found that the investment in exterior blinds on the building wasn't going to be the right way to combat sun. We have integrated on the interior positions for automated roll down shades. In the vertical tower overlooking the doorway, we're suspending that single steel mesh screen, which act as a sun shade. This is strong enough that it also acts as a safety guardrail. Operating windows and doors at that location can be opened and provide ventilation and a little connection to the street without having to add guardrails.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Nu Questions from the Public

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Ms. Lewis – My question is about the windows fenestration on The Mall side. You're showing glazed. What would that look like?

Mr. Nichols – There will be a film on it as part of the energy development of it. I don't know in what way we have standardized the criteria for windows on The Mall; whether it is visible transmission. I am aware that there have been issues in the past about vision and tinting. If there are technical standards, we would conform to those standards. We're happy to provide samples.

Ms. Lewis – Our guidelines for new construction in two different places say that glass should be clear. Opaque, spandrel, or translucent glass could be approved. Darkly tinted or near glass is not appropriate. The unique thing about this building is that it was pretty much demolished. There's no historic fabric on this building. It is so unusual on the Downtown Mall. I think that gives the applicant a little bit more leeway. We're not looking at existing transoms, openings, or a structure. It was made into this huge wall with this round elevator tower and not much more. We do need to adhere to the guidelines. Where the guidelines might be silent or might equivocate, we have more leeway with this application than we do with a lot of other buildings. If this was any other building on The Mall, it would be a very different consideration.

Mr. Werner – On the last page of the staff report, I inserted a paragraph. Back in the summer of 2018, there was a request from the Planning Commission for how the BAR defined clear glass. We have been using this as the VLT percentage of not lower than 70 percent. There are so many different numbers that can be used to measure glass. This is the one the BAR had come down as the point. If you go below 70, the glass starts to become a mirror with the primary concern being the street level. You want to have those be permeable spaces into the shops and restaurants. You don't want people looking in a mirror. Back in 2018, the BAR had a discussion about this. It gave itself some latitude and some instruction on understanding that there is other criteria that can be evaluated. It doesn't always have to be at the 70 percent VLT. At Dairy Central, there are some windows where they went to 62 VLT. We had a difficult time discerning the difference between the 62 and the 70. There is some latitude there. The primary conclusion of the BAR was open for flexibility, provided there's a design intent behind it and provided there is an explanation of why.

Mr. Nichols – I always think of the tradeoff between visibilities with energy performance. Typically beefing up the energy performance can fight that. The climate condition that is best combatted with the beefed up film is solar penetration. Being on the north side of the building, we really don't have that problem. We're certainly not specifying a specific tint or mirror effect. I would be happy to provide samples. I think you will definitely perceive it as clear and clean glass.

Mr. Timmerman – I am having a hard time with the 3-D image. I understand that you're looking at a bronze background. With the break metal that's on top of that, is the idea that would be thin slivers of metal that are broken up with sharp angles?

Mr. Nichols – At the base and going up to around seven feet, those pieces probably wouldn't qualify as break metal in terms of thickness. It probably would qualify as bent plate. The angle at which they're broken would be relatively shallow. They don't project so much. Their coursing would be taller (six inches a piece). Those bits are relatively stout and there are fewer of them. Those would have their corners touched by an abrasive to soften them up. They reveal the angle at which they are broken. It would be a quite subtle five degrees. There would be a reveal of around three quarters of an inch or something like that. Once we get above that human occupancy zone, those parameters would adjust consistently with not needing to worry about vandalism or safety. That would allow for a shorter coursing, more of a reveal, and probably thinner materials.

Mr. Timmerman – On the right hand side, it is hard to tell from the renderings what to make of the storefront and if that is a typical storefront assembly or if there is something specific custom about it. I would be interested to hear more about that, as well as the brick selection that's surrounding. Is there something particular that led to that colored brick? I would be interested in hearing about the intent on that.

Mr. Nichols – That diagrammatic wall section describes the glazing system. The main idea there is that we have one masonry opening which is at the taller story. The two upper stories populate a single, taller masonry opening with the division between floors two and three. It's going to be detailed in color and geometry in a way that suggests a steel or metallic system. It has a structural appearance. It looks like the shallow side of an open steel channel. The glazing system itself is relatively conventional. We're using that intermediate spandrel condition there that will be in the same finish to try to extend the reading of the storefront so that it spans across floors two and three in a system that looks more integral to the building than just a storefront insert.

With the brick, we are just happy to use a modular size, which is what we're showing here. We and our client were interested in contrasting with the red brick down there. We want to drop a sample off. We're definitely proposing a neutral grey. That one image shown on our print submission/digital PDF isn't very compelling. We will go for a more uniform, cleaner selection.

Mr. Gastinger – Your elevations shows it as a lighter grey/green color. The perspective is a darker grey. The sample is somewhere in between. Your drawings also seem to suggest a darker, mortar color. What is the most representative of your intention?

Mr. Nichols – All of these ways of representation end up having varied effects. I would say that it is a darkened version of the elevation. The rendering is a little muddier and more shadowy than what we expect to bring to you as a sample. That printed picture is the kind of ranging in color and effect that they're allowing on the brick, to my eye is darkening that up. To the extent that there is green coming through in the elevation, that's incorrect. We would be much more neutral.

Ms. Lewis – What is going on right at the bottom of the façade? I don't see materials specified there. It looks like something vertical is happening below the storefront window at the entrance.

Mr. Nichols – That's still the brick masonry in an alternate bond pattern. I see that there's a conflict between the elevation and the rendering. The rendering has that more correct. It's the same material laid up in a sojourn.

Ms. Lewis – It looks like it is doing two different things side by side.

Mr. Nichols – The three dimensional rendering on the right is correct. The left implies something at a different scale going horizontal. It's the brick of the same size/same specification.

Mr. Lahendro – Despite your detailed description of the CNC metal screen, I'm still having a hard time understanding what I am reviewing. What is it going to look like? You're creating a pattern with the CNC program as it is cutting out this screen? If that's the case, what is the pattern? Is it a tight matrix-type of pattern? Is it something else?

Mr. Nichols – The best I can do at the moment is to revert back to the view on pg. 5. At the moment, we haven't yet locked it in. It's very hard to show in print. Coming from the east/from the amphitheater at the Mall, the effect of the pattern would largely be invisible until you get within five feet. The direction that the blinding effect happens. It obscures the contrasting color in the back. Coming from the right, you would see the effect of this pattern more. It's an abstract pattern. It's intended to utilize the full three stories to have a building scale pattern where there is some continuity of the visible bronze color all the way down. If you look at that mockup, you start to get rivers of the bronze color coming through. There is an infinite amount of possibilities. We haven't sent it to the fabricators and to our client that we have locked it in. With this view, if you something interesting or legible and if I was to rotate it, your understanding of that pattern would change. It would look different.

Mr. Werner – This can maybe help the BAR. It almost seems to be a sculptural piece. You can think of it as a three dimensional mural. In that case, there's a way of thinking this through, as not necessarily the design of it, but the location. The design doesn't matter. As far as the installation at this location and what the result of the artwork might be, you step away from that. The other piece is just that (lessons learned from the Code Building), some of the metal panels that are at the street level. I am not suggesting you treat it as a sculpture. It is one way to think about it.

Mr. Lahendro – How will you, as the architects, be sure that you're getting what you want. Are you going to be doing a mockup of this and reviewing it on site? If so, can the BAR have the ability to also review it? I would like to know what it is we're reviewing and being asked to approve. Clearly, you also don't know at this point.

Mr. Nichols – That's correct. There will be mockups at a relatively small scale to demonstrate other aspects of this that are essential to its construction and performance but don't describe the scale. You can learn a lot from the live, three dimensional modeling of it. That's how we're working on it. I would be happy (in the same way you review a mockup) to share with you our final review of this thing in that same way. We can emulate being at street level and having a cone of vision that starts to incorporate the full building façade and adjust for position. I appreciate your question and would like to offer that. I am describing something live, which might be difficult to coordinate. Our technology would let us deliver that as a series of frames/a video so we wouldn't have to join together for something like that.

Mr. Lahendro – I just bring up my own difficulty/my own hesitance in approving something that I don't know what it's going to look like. Maybe the rest of the BAR members are willing to accept it on faith. We go through an awful lot of trouble requiring mockups of traditional/conventional construction. This is something new that I have seen before the BAR.

Mr. Nichols – I could prepare a video or even a series of still images. It would do a much better job than a physical sample portion of it describing/making pretty clear the effect. I know pretty closely what we want. I may have been able to present to you with twelve images that would have given you an idea.

Ms. Lewis – I would just like to request a little bit more information about the materials. Are they going to be fragile? Will they damage? Will they be at the pedestrian level? You have mentioned bronze. We know there's metal. I would just like to see the thickness. I think that I might have to see some sort of sample of this. The video would be great to capture the image of what you're trying to do.

Mr. Nichols – Along with the brick, we can submit a sample of three tiles of representative size; the fattest ones we expect to see at the base, something in the middle, and one of the finer ones from the top. We expect them to be painted aluminum. The bronze would be very thin; for the most part completely protected material.

Mr. Bailey – How are the tiles attached to the bronze?

Mr. Nichols – The tiles will have blind fasteners. As an assembly, the thing goes up in panels of six courses each. It would be assembled offsite. Those panels will go up in a more conventional way as if they were an opaque piece of glass in a glazing system. All of the fasteners would be concealed on the backside of that.

Mr. Strange – Those will be the same material on the fenestration?

Mr. Nichols – The glazing system on the building proper side of that will be fairly conventional.

Mr. Gastinger – What is the max projection of one of those small tiles?

Mr. Nichols – At the moment, I am showing them at three inches.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Comments from the Public

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Gastinger – It's a given that there's some concern about what exactly we would be approving. We're definitely going to want to see a brick sample and some samples of this screen material and an animation of some sort to understand the fact.

Mr. Strange – This screen is a real interesting dynamic on a re-interpretation of the leading program you get with brick. In that respect and given the size of the module, it's a nice contemporary take on the kind of materials that are used on The Mall.

Mr. Timmerman – I agree with that. It's a really good idea. The number of questions that you have already received about what it is doing points to the fact that we're interested in it. I question it because I think it's a great idea. I want it to be really great. I'm looking at the image of your rendering and precedent images beside it. That's very telling. The precedent images that you presented here really do show that moire effect very well. For me, the moire effect is all about this sleight of hand. At some point, you might look at something and it looks bland. The sun or moon comes out and you're faced with this really striking contrast and this really beautiful pattern. Whether it is one bolt strike or a wave or on the other end of the spectrum and it is a very subtle screen-like effect. My feeling about the rendering that you have provided is that I am squinting and not quite feeling something there. These precedent images are maybe physical models that you can do with a CNC machine if this is a CNC project. I don't know if there's a way to miniaturize it and make it something that we can look at. I'm very interested to see more study on it. I am assuming that's where you're heading anyway when you talk about nailing the thing down. The other thing that I would like to mention, as far as the front façade goes, I am also interested in a little bit more detailing on the windows. With some of those elevations, it would be helpful to see the context that the building sits in; not necessarily that I would have to see direct relationships. I am interested in your comment about it being a proportional project. I am interested in see how the proportions of the façade relate to what is on either side, especially given the fact that's how we experience of walking down The Mall. In thinking about the screen, I would like to see more variety or something with the window patterns. This goes back to the guidelines. There's a decorative pattern to a lot of the precedents along The Mall. As we walk down The Mall, there's the copper, metallic canopies that we look at and admire, the detailing from the 20s and 30s. There's some more contemporary detailing that catches our eye. This is pretty neat that this is a detailing and decorative project. I would like to see how that pushes a little bit more in the window wall. In questioning the intent behind the solids versus the glass, you mentioned that the idea there was for a singular opening, singular aperture. When you mentioned that, I saw it. The big band going across it breaks it up or works against that singularity a little bit. I am interested in where the numbers are; the 310 and the joint of the glass. There is an interest there that I would like to see spread out to the other typical storefront patterns that happen everywhere else around. There's a huge opportunity with the screen. This goes back to Ms. Lewis' original comment about how this is a tabular rasa. The historic context was brutally ripped out of this thing. There's a great opportunity here to bring back some 'ghosts' of the old detailing of years past on The Mall.

Ms. Lewis – We haven't talked about the Water Street side. I don't have any objections to it. It meets our guidelines. My concerns and focus are on the transparency of the glass on The Mall. I am happy that the brick color is more nuanced and you provided a sample that gives a little bit more color than the elevation was shown. I am interested to see the color of the mortar and more details as other people have said including surrounds. I think the screen is pretty cool. It's a great innovation. It's a much better solution than what you had before us in October. It can be fantastic. We need more information about the materials and how it would work and what you were going to spell out in the moire. I am concerned about how these openings relate to existing buildings on the Downtown Mall. The first two guidelines under New Construction definitely ask us to looking at buildings' openings, rhythm of voids and masses, and proportions and make sure those are similar to adjacent or nearby structures; maybe some elevations, maybe showing us anything in that block. It doesn't have to be fancy. These three stories don't strike me as being out of character. They do seem to have more of a commercial than other buildings traditionally do on The Mall. I am really supportive. It looks like a neat project.

Mr. Gastinger – I am really supportive of the project. The way that you have approached these facades has been really successful. I really like the elongated proportions. They're an appropriate, contemporary response to the condition that you found. There are a couple of concerns about the panel. My concern is the great, elegant, and long proportion. I hope that it is not detracted from the treatment

you have to give the pattern in the lower 7 to 8 feet. I just worry that could get really flat and less interesting. I hope it wouldn't feel like a different material in that portion. I'm not convinced by the effect in the rendering. I am concerned that the really beautiful/white ones are using the white material and it is all indirect light that creates shadow and creates a lot of contrast. What you're proposing is using dark colors on a north façade. It's not going to have direct sunlight. The potential is there for it to be exquisite. I'm not yet convinced by what you have shown us. The proportion of the depth of relief that you are working with is much less than the small little paper models of the other examples that you're showing. I'm hoping it doesn't feel two dimensional or underwhelming for the effort it is taking to create it. In the earlier elevations, the bronze color was really helpful in setting itself off against that primarily dark grey façade. I'm worried that we're losing that color. If it was more like the rendering, it would be very dark. Maybe that lighter brick is helpful. There have been a few questions about the windows and the storefront system. In many cases, we don't require as much information regarding that. In this case, the storefront is essentially almost the entire façade. It is well within our purview to understand more about that system and the glazing that would be included.

Mr. Nichols – You're talking about the Main Street side and how it ties in with the spandrel?

Mr. Gastinger – How much detail is included in that section where it is the two inch piece and the glass and the character of that glass.

I know that you put this up for final COA approval this evening. There are no questions about samples and details. Do you have any comment about where you are in the process?

Mr. Nichols – We're pretty far along. We have in our office the information about the storefront, scale, and what is going on with the storefront as it goes to the spandrel in the back. We understand here that it would be fairly easy to get to. The development of the screen is ongoing. The remaining questions would be addressed and approved in 'one swoop' without setting aside bits and pieces to come back or to be reviewed as samples in the conference room. With the general construction and design schedule, we need to keep going. It seems pretty clear from your comments today that what is happening, in terms of our choice of systems and basic structural conditions and material choices, it is very easy to isolate out the panel as off the construction schedule. I really don't see that holding up our general work on the project. I would expect to be able to come back roughly eight weeks from now. We will be working on our construction documentation in the meantime.

Mr. Gastinger – What I am hearing is general support for the direction and approach with some questions about some of the details, samples, understanding that there is a longer timeframe, and finalizing the construction of the panel. Do we have enough information to approve the panel tonight? I know that we also have challenges in how we could come back approve that at a later date.

Mr. Werner – There are a couple of things that we need to clarify. One is the glass. Do you have something in mind? Is 70 VLT something that you want? That would be information provided by the company that does the storefronts. The second piece that we need to clarify is the difficulty with having renderings versus elevations. We get details that are slightly different. I noticed at the rear elevation that I can't tell if things are supposed to align or if it is the way the rendering has it presented. An actual elevation in lieu of a rendering is probably preferable to make sure that we see all of the details. It does seem like there are some material samples that you all want to see; the front screen and the material in the back. I clearly hear support. I don't know how you would phrase this unless you have strong opinions or you want to make some clarifications about the renderings so that we're clear about what is understood.

Mr. Gastinger – We’re getting more guidance from the city attorney and city staff about limiting or not allowing COAs with extensive conditions. We’re limited in our ability to come back approve COAs in a piecemeal fashion. It would certainly be my preference to approve this at a later date. We need a little bit more information to exactly understand what we’re approving.

Mr. Nichols asked the BAR to defer the application to a later date – Mr. Zehmer moved to accept the deferral. (Second by Mr. Gastinger). Motion passes 9-0.

6. Certificate of Appropriateness

BAR 21-07-05

350 Park Street, TMP 530109000 and 530108000

North Downtown ADC District (non-contributing property)

Owner: City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle

Applicant: Eric Amtmann, Dalgliesh-Gilpin-Paxton Architects [on behalf of Albemarle County]

Project: New courthouse building (at Levy Building)

Jeff Werner, Staff Report – 350 Park Street Year Built: Levy Building 1852, Annex c1980

District: North Downtown ADC District Status: Contributing 0 Park Street Year Built: N/A, parking lot District: North Downtown ADC District

Status: N/A

The Levy Building is Greek Revival, constructed with brick laid in American bond with Flemish bond variant. Three stories, hipped roof, three-bay front, heavy entablature supported by monumental stuccoed pilasters on brick pedestals, crossette architraves, and brick water table.

CoA request for construction of an addition to the Levy Building and new construction related to the expansion of the City-County Courts Complex.

Discussion

While this is a formal CoA request, the applicant has acknowledged that this meeting will be treated as an intermediate review, that the applicant will request a deferral, and no formal BAR action will be taken, except to accept that request. However, by consensus the BAR may express an opinion about the project as presented. (For example, the BAR may take a non-binding vote to express support, opposition, or even questions and concerns regarding the project’s likelihood for an approved CoA. These will not represent approval or even endorsement of the CoA, but will represent the BAR’s opinion on the project, relative to preparing the project for final submittal. While such votes carry no legal bearing and are not binding, BAR members are expected to express their opinions—both individually and collectively--in good faith as a project advances towards an approved CoA.)

This is an iterative process and these discussions should be thorough and productive. The goal is to establish what is necessary for a final submittal that provides the information necessary for the BAR to evaluate the project and to then approve or deny the requested CoA.

In response to any questions from the applicant and/or for any recommendations to the applicant, the BAR should rely on the germane sections of the ADC District Design Guidelines and related review criteria. While elements of other chapters may be relevant, staff recommends that the BAR refer to the criteria in Chapter II--*Site Design and Elements*, Chapter III--*New Construction and Additions*, and Chapter VI – *Public Design and Improvements*.

Of particular assistance for this discussion are the criteria in Chapter III:

- Setback, including landscaping and site improvements
- Spacing
- Massing and Footprint

- Height and Width
- Scale
- Roof
- Orientation
- Windows and Doors
- Street-Level Design
- Foundation and Cornice
- Materials and Textures
- Paint [Color palette]
- Details and Decoration, including lighting and signage

Also, the criteria under *Public Buildings and Structures*, in Chapter VI

- Public buildings should follow design guidelines for new construction.
- New structures, including bridges, should reflect contemporary design principles.

Additionally, the BAR should consider Sec. 34-282(d). While the provision identifies what is *required for a submittal*, the BAR has historically applied this list with discretion, given that not all are necessary for every CoA request.

- 1) Detailed and clear descriptions of any proposed changes in the exterior features of the subject property, including but not limited to the following: the general design, arrangement, texture, materials, plantings and colors to be used, the type of windows, exterior doors, lights, landscaping, parking, signs, and other exterior fixtures and appurtenances. The relationship of the proposed change to surrounding properties will also be shown.
- 2) Photographs of the subject property and photographs of the buildings on contiguous properties.
- 3) Samples to show the nature, texture and color of materials proposed.
- 4) The history of an existing building or structure, if requested by the BAR or staff.
- 5) For new construction and projects proposing expansion of the footprint of an existing building: a three-dimensional model (in physical or digital form) depicting the site, and all buildings and structures to be located thereon, as it will appear upon completion of the work that is the subject of the application.

Steve White, Applicant – We have been diligently advancing the design inside and outside for the last six months. Our intent tonight is to show you what we have progressed with and with our plan to come back a third time for design with regards to more granular detail. Tonight’s presentation is divided into four sections. The sections are the history, site context analysis, the building design, and materials/materiality.

First Slide

To orient everyone to the site, north is up. We’re looking at the parameters of the building site. We have Park Street on the west/left, High Street to the north, the Jessup House (county owned property) to the east/right, and we have East Jefferson Street to the south. We have the Redlands Club in that southwest corner. There is a 1980s addition that will be demolished as part of the project. What will remain is the original Levy structure from 1851 (top left corner).

Next Slide

The history of courts complex starts in 1803 with the building that’s on the right hand side (that cluster of two building facades). It was added onto a few times at least one hundred years. The façade you see there was 100 years after the original one was built. It is a wonderful, cultural resources that you have

in Charlottesville. It will be the circuit court and remain as the circuit court when this project is finished. The project we're discussing tonight is a lower court (General District Court). The building to the left is the 1938 addition. It was originally an administrative office building. It was converted to courts. It will have the remainder of the circuit court/higher court functions going on in that structure.

Next Slide

These pictures are giving you some historical research that we have been diving into over the last year. The Redlands Club (top right corner) is noteworthy.

Next Slide

Understanding the context of the region and of the Shenandoah.

Next Slides

We did fly a drone over the site. We used that to do investigative work related to façade restoration. We had them here to get a good birds-eye. This is looking west. The next slide is looking east. You can see on the top portion the Levy Building on the left and the 1980s addition (that will come down). The Redlands Club is hidden by a tree.

Next Slide

These three slides certainly are very important to us in the makeup of the character, proportion, scale, and the identity of this campus as a courts campus, a judicial facility made up of four structures. The fourth structure is the new structure. That's important for us in keeping in mind how we figure out the identity of this new structure.

Next Slides

These next two or three slides are just the street views.

Next Slide – Site Analysis

This is just a sampling of the things that we were looking at. We looked at traffic patterns, those sheds to the site, and new sheds from the site, the site topography, solar orientation, etc.

I included in the package three to four pages of written narrative. The intent there was to provide you with a narrated response. I encourage the Board to read through that. It does go through carefully the comments we received and our response to those comments.

Next Slide

This is our current site plan. There are a couple of things I want to point out about the site plan. As we get further into the discussion, the building is made up of a series of building forms. The forms are really driven a lot by the function that is within because we have large courtrooms. There are two large courtrooms. They make up the primary building mass. We have a series of "saddlebags" that support that primary mass with building, judge's chambers to the north. We have the building entrance and portico. We have the hyphen/connection to the Levy Building. They are a contextual response to the building masses that are adjacent to our property; the lengths of walls, heights of walls, and where the

steps occur. You will see that as we go through this. The other piece to this site plan that I want to point out is that we, since the first presentation, the entry plaza is really our most important space. It's a public space, outdoor space that is essentially an outdoor room as framed by two buildings that are 150 to 200 years old. The third side is the new building/entry portico. That really becomes the place where you meet your associates, your attorney before going in, there are serious discussions before going in, and there are serious discussions after coming back out. This is intended to be a place of calming and respite and to be a civic space that is indicative of the gravitas of the court system. That's what is going on.

Next Slide

The blue areas are the public spaces. Behind those blue spaces are the functional areas like the clerk's offices and their highly trafficked spaces. They're on the first floor. The Commonwealth Attorney is in the Levy Building. They take up the entirety of the Levy Building. You enter the main portico at that center portion where the elliptical form is. If you're meeting with the Commonwealth Attorney, you would actually turn left and make your way to the Levy Building. There are stairs that flank the north and south ends of the building. Those are also expressed on the exterior and help break down the scale of the mass of the building.

Next Slide

This is where the most important functions of the building are. You go up through a double rotunda space into this linear corridor that feeds the two courts. One is the county general district court and the other is the city general district court with the judge's chambers to the north.

Next Slide

This is the roof plan. We do have a mechanical screen. It has been deeply recessed from the primary elevation to be discrete and functionally moved off of the edge of the courtrooms to mitigate noise that occurs as a result of the units.

Next Slide

We're going to shift to the portico. These are traditional porticoes that reflect civic, government, or academic functions. The bottom three are all courthouses either at the state or federal level, which are modern interpretations of those traditional porticoes. These are some of the things that we looked at the design of the front entrance.

Next Slide

We also carefully studied the proportions of the facades of the buildings, particularly the buildings that are part of the courts complex. The Levy, Greek revival is on the top left, the 1803 original structures' additions from the 1870s and 1890s (an ionic order), and the bookended brick walls.

Next Slide

This is a rendering of that entry plaza. You can see that it is a formal symmetrical space, framed by the Redlands Club on the right and the Levy Building on the left. The portico is a modern expression in steel and glass. There are honey-locust trees, which frame the left and the right and create nice dapple light/shade for benches that are left and right. With the elliptical form, we have studied it quite

extensively and we're still studying different patterns for that elliptical form. On the end that is facing you, it creates the building signage but also separates the ADA access on the right from the stair access on the left as the site slopes right to left.

Next Slide

These are studies of the elliptical form; all predominantly in brick with highlights in bluestone. We have not settled on a particular pattern. We are investigating various patterns in design right now.

Next Slide

This is a colored rendition of the plan of that space. You can see the six trees. We previously had two on either side. We have now pushed the building back about 17 feet and added an additional honey locust to create a better proportioned outdoor room in a more ceremonial space.

Next Slides

This is a diagram illustrating the ADA accessible routes.

Next Slide

These two sections illustrate the benches and the trees and the site walls.

Next Slide

The building forms have been deliberately kept low. It is a two story structure that sits approximately 35 feet such that no portion of the new building is taller than the cornice line of the Levy Building.

Next Slide

In terms of the rhythm of that front façade, the last time you saw this it was a five bay order running across the entirety of that saddlebag. We have changed it to an ABA rhythm with a three bay order in the center with bookends left and right. It works well for us in terms of the function and the interior with queuing and screening. From a scale point of view, the relationship to the Levy Building was working better to create a 'sibling' of the Levy Building that is somewhat of a reflection.

Next Slide

This is a detail of how the portico/the way we're thinking of the detailing at this time. It is a galvanized, architectural finished steel. It means that the welds are done to a certain level of quality. There's no writing on the steel. It is very clean. If you galvanize and paint it, it can be a very nice finish. The anti-room is a roofed space. That's where your weather-lock is. It's nested internal to that larger element. The muttoned portion would be clad. It would be an aluminum clad storefront system that would not be the exposed steel.

Next Slides

This is the north side up on High Street with the Levy Building on the right and the addition that will be removed on the left. This next view is the design of the new structure. You can see that saddlebag that is the judge's chambers. It is very similar in scale to the Levy Building in its dimension (left to

right) and in that direction. You have the setback to the left with the recessed panel and the garage entrance. One thing to keep in mind with the courthouse is that there's very specific functional criteria. We have a sally port for detainee transfer going down the ramp into a secure space. It's also a secure zone for the judges and chief clerks to park. That was a very important functional requirement. That is tucked away. It also aligns with the face of the Jessup House on the left.

Next Slide

This gets into the detailing of the brick. Our intent here is to finesse the façade with very subtle details and to not overplay our hand and to be somewhat differential to the historic structures and to beget the detailed in proportions that are really nice. The steps in the façade are 2 to 4 inches depending on where you are. Those primary pilasters are all two inch changes in plane. The entablature is a series of corbels. There is cat stone that is intentionally a similar color to the brick as not to create a heavy striation that can be distracting. It's also indicative of the function of the courts so that the courts are on that upper level. You have very tall ceilings there. That's the reason for the really tall window.

Next Slide

This is the elevation from the east. That's the Jessup House in the foreground. It is by enlarge covered. That building is about 10 to 15 feet away. Since you last saw it, the façade has been broken into an ABABA rhythm rather than one long strip of windows and pilasters. We thought that it broke it up nicely. It also is indicative of the two courts. There is a court on the left, a court on the right, and a space between. You can also see the subtle saddlebags. The saddlebag on the right is the judge's chambers. You can see how that cornice line is picked up. There's no parapet wall. There are pretty subtle steps that are occurring on and around the façade.

Next Slide

This is the north elevation with the Levy Building on the right, the hyphen on the left. You can see how much lower that hyphen is from not only the main structure but also the saddlebag of the chambers. The long element between the hyphen and the element on the left is the stair. That stair egresses out to grade. That expression is slightly different. The window is at the landing. We're just trying to create some interest and some variation to help mitigate the fact that we have a pretty large institutional building across the street from a residential neighborhood.

Next Slide

This is the south façade. You can see the Redlands Club in the 'ghosted' thing on the left with the Levy Building behind it. You can see the relationship of the portico in the weather lock to the saddlebag of the entry element. That element has windows according to the interior arrangement. That proportion is very in keeping with the townhouses that are nearby. There are a couple of slight recessed panels between the stair and the entry element on the left.

Next Slide

This is an aerial view of the site from the south and east.

Next Slide

These are the materials. We have three brick blends we're studying right now, all with darker mortars. An example is the national building museum where it uses the sandstone, a red brick, and a red mortar as a way to differentiate it from its neighbors. We're also using a Norman brick. The trim colors are in that last slide. It is a blueish-slate color that we think works nicely with the brick. It is also a departure from the white trim, mutton windows that are predominant.

Next Slides

These are slides showing materials for the exterior plaza spaces.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Questions from the Public

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Strange – Can you talk more about why you're using mimicry and a single material to mimic the classical forms of the adjacent building and is the correct approach here?

Mr. White – We were intentionally not trying to use mimicry. There was the intentional use of other materials to avoid mimicry.

Mr. Strange – There is so much use of a single material. I find it odd/strange that you wouldn't make better use of contemporary ideas about brick in order to address the kind of classical language in a new way. It seems to me like a one-to-one relationship between what is existing and what you're proposing and using brick as 'paintbrush' to do that.

Mr. Zehmer – I thought that I had read the penthouse on the roof was 'if needed.' Is that needed?

Mr. White – It is absolutely needed. If it was written as 'if needed,' that was an error on our part.

Mr. Gastinger – Can you remind us what the nature of that screen will be?

Mr. White – It would be a metal panel that would likely be in a vertical orientation. It would be abut seam. There would be no shadow line. It would likely be the same tone as the blue-grey of the window trim.

Mr. Lahendro – No natural light in courtrooms. The only natural light in the building is going into the hallways that ring the building. Is that just the way it is with courtrooms and court buildings? Just the lack of windows? It looks like a fortress. It's just a lack of transparency, penetration. It's hard to believe that courtrooms can't have natural light. Were you in the program not allowed to put natural light in the courtrooms?

Mr. White – This is a very astute question. I appreciate you asking it. There will be light in the courtrooms. There will be a clear story light that will be high somewhat similar to the city district court. There is a clear story there. It is essentially a security and egress driven issue. I don't know if you're aware of how a modern new courthouse works. There are three essential elements. There's the public, the judiciary, and the detainee. They're all three separate circulation routes that can never cross, except for in the courtroom itself. They are very much a driver. I recently designed a courthouse for the federal courts that did have windows on the edge. The way you achieve that is by having extra stairs in the back in order to not have to the circulation wrap around. We could do that here if we had more

site. That was something we tried to achieve at one point. We're really hemmed in by the size of the site to be able to get that. I am sensitive to this issue and realize that the judges and clerks spend most of their days in these rooms. To have natural light in them is really important.

Mr. Zehmer – Is a skylight a viable option?

Mr. White – Yes. It could be a viable option.

Mr. Gastinger – I don't see any clear story windows in the building facades. Where is the light coming in?

Mr. White – Do you see the 16 foot dimension? Those windows are about 12 feet tall. That's a clear story in that upper portion.

Ms. Lewis – What is the remaining material on these windows? What would be called fenestration but they're not clear story that would bring in natural light?

Mr. White – Just regular vision glass. That tall window is all clear vision glass.

Ms. Lewis – It is clear vision glass? There's no natural light coming in it? I am not familiar with clear vision glass. Can you describe what that is?

Mr. White – Did I say that there was no light coming in?

Ms. Lewis – I thought that you had said that only the top, rectangular, horizontal windows would be the windows letting in the light. That was a clear story.

Mr. White – The question was I don't see any clear story windows. Show me the clear story. I was pointing out where the clear story is. When we say vision lights that means that they're lights that you can see through. They're clear. From the floor to 12 feet above the floor is a large window, which includes that horizontal band, which is called a clear story. All of them contribute to the light that goes into the courtroom.

Ms. Lewis – There is a lot of natural light that goes into these courtrooms.

Mr. White – The confusion was that there was a corridor. The corridor is on the exterior. It is part of that security requirement. It bounces light into the courtroom itself. The courtroom itself has bands of light that are high.

Mr. Timmerman – Can you explain the front portico as it is designed? It looks like the vertical columns are disengaged from the portico below. It is like two separate structures there. The columns are outside the glass and the one story box below.

Mr. White – That's correct.

Mr. Timmerman – Nothing really happens up there. That's a solid roof above the first story. The second story canopy is just a decorative element. It is not to be occupied at any time?

Mr. White – The roof/brise soleil would filter light for the second story of that atrium/lobby space with the views out to the western site, the circuit court.

Mr. Timmerman – Is my interpretation of those windows is that it would be like a thin mutton steel fenestration?

Mr. White – I would call it a steel aesthetic.

Ms. Lewis – I have a question about this new space that you called a ‘weather lock.’ What was the origin of that that is new on this iteration? I am wondering how that came about.

Mr. White – One thing we did was reduce the size of the mass of the entire structure, most of it being in that lobby sequence. Previously, that whole weather lock piece was essentially the first 17 feet of the entire building, which contained the queuing. What we have done is push the atrium inward. We still wanted a weather lock because it is very functional and it can get quite cold. It’s not good for energy use to not have a weather lock. This was essentially get us back to the weather lock in doing it in a different expression.

Ms. Lewis – What was the reason that the building was reduced by that 17 feet?

Mr. White – Inflation has gone up by 20 to 30 percent for construction. That was a mitigating factor to still meet the program and to still have a good building.

Mr. Strange – Can you talk about the way the new construction connects with the Levy Building?

Mr. White – There’s currently a hyphen that’s there now. That hyphen currently engages with the cornice. There’s a railing up there for maintenance workers. The cornice is really jammed into the other cornice. What we did was align the hyphen in plan so that the hyphen puncture into the Levy Building is exactly the same spot. We’re not making any different hole in plan. In elevation, we’re going down in order to restore that cornice all the way across.

Mr. Lahendro – The Levy Building historic entrance and the way the architecture is designed to emphasize the entrance to the current building; that will no longer be an entrance?

Mr. White – It will no longer be a public entrance.

Mr. Lahendro – It will be a private entrance for the Commonwealth Attorneys and for the staff?

Mr. White – Yes. As they see fit.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Comments from the Public

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Zehmer – I feel that the building as a whole is too monochromatic. It’s just a huge block of red. I was wondering if there might an opportunity. You said the trim of the windows was a blue slate color. I didn’t know if even some detailing on the window sills would break up the big mass of red. (Page 169) I worry about having this muttoned enclosure with such small panes of glass; feels like a cage. I would be worried that someone who is innocent until proven guilty would not feel comfortable walking through there. We will definitely want to look at details with the penthouse. With our guidelines with rooftop screening, units should be screened from public view. Screening design and

materials should be consistent with the design, textures, materials, and colors of the building. Screening should not appear as an afterthought or an addition to the building. Right now, it is very schematic and conceptual. That's what our guidelines say when you get to detailing that. It's never an easy thing to do. With the portico, I respect the departure from that. I was intrigued by your precedent images. I wonder if there's an opportunity to make that have a little more 'pizazze.'

Mr. Strange – I would echo what you said about the portico. I think the precedents have more to offer. I appreciate the contemporary take on the portico. There is a degree of governmental transparency embodied by the examples that you showed that is lost here in the way that the fenestration is very similar if not exactly the same behind the portico. The weather lock occupies the entire portico. I feel that the purpose of the portico is to create an indoor/outdoor space. When the weather lock is in that space, it almost negates the functionality of the portico. I know it is a delicate game to be deferential but to also not be unremarkable. When I look at the image of these two buildings together, there's no question that the new building is not competing with the Levy Building. It's not very "exciting." The materiality of the portico looks very dark. It shrinks compared to the size of the overall façade. It's not doing the kind of things that the porticos do on some of the examples you showed in terms of creating a nice surface or a moment of engagement with the building, the public space. I am echoing the notion that the portico could do a lot more to engage this public space a little more effectively. I wonder if using the same architectural language to connect to the Levy Building is the right approach. This is a building of many masses. I wonder if the mass connects the existing building to the new building and should be articulated in the same way or if it should have a different kind of connection that really lets us know that it is a connection and creates a buffer zone between the new building and the old building.

Mr. Bailey – Part of the thing with the portico is that people are complaining that the portico that the applicant offered the first time was too big. The applicant has shrunk it and it's now too small. He may have offered a smaller portico because people thought it was too big the last time.

Mr. Gastinger – There has been some improvement in the way that the rooflines and the volumes of the buildings have been clarified. That was part of it. It was not just the size of the portico but its relationship to the adjacent roofline. I definitely hear the commentary on the portico and the concern about the cage-like reading of a steel façade and tightly grained fenestration. My big concern is the unremarkable-ness of the rest of the building. I am very distressed about the direction that the building and its detailing has come. The lack of any differentiation in the material leads to a reading from me of a really big brick box with the least amount of detailing possible to get it passed the BAR. It's not proportional to the scale of the building. It's not using detail in a way that breaks down the building to make it feel more approachable from a pedestrian standpoint. The facades on High Street are really disasters. Because the foundation has the most minimal treatment, it is a full nine foot tall brick wall with no differentiation. You have chosen this way using classical proportions to modulate the building. The detailing is so skinny and so thin. It's not very proportional at all in the way visually to the weight a cornice should have with the shadows it would cast. Maybe it doesn't need to be a different color. If so, it seems like it needs to have a thicker, deeper proportion to create the kind of differentiation you are hoping for. While I appreciate budgetary concerns, this is a building we hope to be living with for the next 100 years. It is underwhelming. It is really difficult to imagine. This is something that is really important to the county and the city. The community deserves a better approach to these facades that are going to be there for a really long time.

Mr. Lahendro – I concur with what Breck has said. I am especially disturbed by the High Street elevation and the pedestrian lack of experience on High Street. This is disastrous.

Mr. Strange – I suspect the approach of using brick as a mono-material is an attempt to make this not just a complete copy of something classical. I wonder if there aren't other ways to use brick that are not super-classist that might relate to classical proportions but could imbue the façade with different textures. Just throwing this out as a way to possibly move forward. I respect the desire to not just make a classical building. If it has to have these different materials and follow these classical forms, how do you do that?

Mr. Gastinger – I agree. Some of the examples that were shown as precedents offer some ways of doing that. I think bringing in more of the gray-blue of the steel of the entry portico into some more of the detailing. That could be a way of offering/improving the articulation of the structure, even with its current modulation. Things that Mr. Strange is mentioning, either with the hyphen or with the foundation, give it more depth.

Mr. Timmerman – I am new to this. I was given the images of the previous submission. I noticed on High Street that there used to be windows at eye level. Is there a programmatic reason why you took them out?

Mr. White – We do have some programmatic function in the basement. It is mostly sunken. We may have been exploring that at one point to try to get some eye level windows into this surface space down there. We can certainly look at ways to modulate the water table course to give it some interest and create some more visual interest to the façade.

Mr. Timmerman – I will reiterate what the other board members have said. While High Street is not the front of the building, it's really important to all of us. The whole site is really important. We live in a small city without a lot of real estate. These projects don't come along very often. When they do come along, we really want to capitalize on them and not end up with something that is underwhelming. In that particular location, we all have experienced walking around the Levy Building. As you walk around that building and walk down High Street, we want something else there. We're not looking for background. There's a certain amount of focus that needs to be paid to that elevation beyond what the current expectation is. Underwhelming came up for me when looking at the front portico. Looking back at some of the previous project renderings, I favor the older one more than this one. This one seems diminutive. It almost seems residential in scale. While I appreciate the sensitivity that you're going for as far as breaking up the massing and I appreciate opening up the public space in the front, seeing that elongated was good. You're left with this little contraption on the big red brick building. It looks like an added on appendage. The original design/the front started to create its own pattern and its own texture; maybe breaking up the rest of big block behind it. I really liked Clayton's idea about the transparency that we're looking for in these kinds of public buildings. The idea of a portico is a first step to bridge that gap between the inside and the outside. That diminutive appendage that is there now seems to be more of a barrier.

Ms. Lewis – I wanted to thank the applicant for two things that were achieved from the last iteration. One is this weather lock/vestibule area. We had noted that we wanted a place where litigants, attorneys, and other people coming to court would be gathering. I know the creation of this space was a response to those comments. With the breakup of that huge wall on East Jefferson Street, I really appreciate the windows that have been inserted in the detail and how that is articulated in that it wraps around to Seventh Street on the other side. I actually wished we had seen some of this with this slate/blue accents that you're talking about; whether they be lentils, window surrounds, or whatever that looks like. It might have addressed some of the comments that my colleagues have about the solid brick. The brick samples you have given us would make the building a whole lot different than what it looked like in some of these renderings. It would be great to see that and what that looks like. I have a

real problem with the High Street side. Fifty feet long of nothing but nine feet of brick with nothing else is not going to happen. High Street is an entrance corridor. It is designated as a very important corridor in our city. That is not going to fly for any of us. I was disappointed to see that. I understand that the garage entrance needs to be there. There has to be more detail on that. I understand that's programmatic. I will definitely add support to the other comments about the portico. I know it sounds like we're giving mixed messages. The width was reduced. The depth was also brought in. That's one of the things that makes it unremarkable. It could be quite remarkable. The portico is a face on the building. This is not a very pretty face. I really regret that there's no natural light in either of these courtrooms. There's a way to figure that out. This is not a federal court. Half of the cases heard in these courts will be civil cases. There are no detainees in civil cases. There is no separate corridor in any of the four local courts. The detainees are brought in the same way that public enters. There are things we need to think about. This is not a prison. My last comment is about this weather lock. I completely agree with James' comments. We have to look at the separation. It looks like a cell to me. It looks like a place I don't want to be. The idea of having something that insulates people from the elements is very appealing. It's a really important building for us.

Mr. Gastinger – There were a number of sheets dedicated to the plaza. That has developed nicely. It seems flexible with the changes made to the portico. I would encourage the design team to think carefully about the amount of brick in that plaza, especially given the comments about the amount of brick in the façade. I would also encourage the design team to continue to make sure that the detailing allows for enough soil volume to make sure those three trees thrive in a pretty hard surface.

Mr. Strange – On the Mall, they use a utility brick for the plaza. That's one way to think about differentiating the plaza and buildings.

Mr. White moved to request a deferral. Ms. Lewis moved to accept the deferral request. (Second by Mr. Zehmer) Motion passes 9-0.

The meeting was recessed for five minutes.

D. New Items

7. Certificate of Appropriateness

BAR 22-02-04

540 Park Street, TMP 520183000

North Downtown ADC District

Owner: Jessica and Patrick Fenn

Applicant: Ashley LeFew Falwell / Dalgliesh Gilpin Paxton Architects

Project: Raze pool house, construct new; addition and alterations to house.

Jeff Werner, Staff Report – Year Built: 1900 District: North Downtown ADC District Status: Contributing, including two outbuildings: garage and pool house. (Note: While designated contributing, the pool house was constructed between 2000 and 2002. See images in Appendix.) 540 Park Street is a two-story asymmetrical wood house with a Doric veranda. Constructed by William T. Vandergrift for the Maphis family. Wood siding was covered in stucco.

Application

- Applicant's submittal: Dalgliesh Gilpin Paxton Architects narrative (two pages) and drawings (15 sheets, including five sheets from Wolf Josey Landscape Architects) for 540 Park Street, dated January

25, 2022. Request for demolition of existing pool house, exterior alterations to rear addition, new pool house construction, and the execution of a new landscape plan.

From applicant's submittal

Architectural Summary: The architectural plan proposes to demolish the existing pool house structure, construct a new lower profile pool house, and revise the east addition within the existing footprint. The goals of the project are to achieve a new coordinated aesthetic for the rear pool courtyard, add square footage, and improve the functionality of the existing square footage for the current owner.

Front of House:

- Removable screen panels are proposed for the southwest portion of the existing front porch.

Back of House:

- Overall, the new architecture around the rear pool courtyard of the house will be thoughtfully considered, holistically designed, and will result in improved functionality for the owners upon completion. The architectural language of the altered east addition and new pool house will be modern, rendered in colors and high-quality materials that are compatible with the main house, but not intended to imitate the house stylistically. The stucco exterior walls will have a smooth finish, clad metal windows and doors will be dark in color, and the roofs will be copper.

Landscape Summary: The landscape plan proposes renovations to the existing hardscapes at the front and side of the house as well as modifications to paving and planting at the back of the house to support the proposed architectural changes.

Front of House:

- Existing crushed stone paths will be realigned and replaced with stepping stones in lawn. The north path section will be removed and replaced with lawn.
- The crushed stone landing in the front of the house will be paved in bluestone and raised slightly for drainage purposes.
- The steps down from the front porch will be rebuilt to adjust to a revised landing elevation. Stair treads will be lengthened.
- An existing black walnut along the street is in poor health and is proposed to be removed.
- The front lawn will be regraded to a more gentle pitch. A new stone seatwall at the west end of the lawn will retain approximately 12" of soil.

Side of House:

- Pathways and hardscapes on the south side of the house along Farish Street will be upgraded and paved in bluestone or brick.

Back of House:

- Paving along the back and east side of the house will respond to the architectural changes and match or complement existing paving.

Discussion

Staff recommends that the BAR refer to the criteria in Chapter II--Site Design and Elements, Chapter III--New Construction and Additions, and Chapter VII--Demolitions and Moving.

Re: razing the existing pool house: The pool house was constructed between 2000 and 2002. (See Appendix.) Staff is uncertain why it was designated a contributing structure. While a formal review will require compliance with Code section 34-2779(a), there is nothing to indicate this structure is historic or that its demolition would negatively impact the character of the ADC District. (Per 34-277(a), a CoA is required for the demolition of a contributing structure.)

For the new pool house: From G. Garages, Sheds, and Other Structures in Chapter II

- Choose designs for new outbuildings that are compatible with the major buildings on the site.

- Take clues and scale from older outbuildings in the area.
- Use traditional roof slopes and traditional materials.
- Place new outbuildings behind the dwelling.
- If the design complements the main building however, it can be visible from primary elevations or streets.
- The design and location of any new site features should relate to the existing character of the property.

For the rear addition: From the checklist for Additions in Chapter III.

- Function and Size
- Location
- Design
- Replication of Style
- Materials and Features
- Attachment to Existing Building

Additionally, the discussion should address any questions regarding the materials and components. For example:

- Roofing
- Gutters/Downspouts
- Cornice
- Siding and Trim
- Doors and Windows
- Landscaping
- Lighting

The proposed alterations to the rear addition include a new shell within the footprint of the existing addition. This rear addition was substantially altered in 2014; the second floor of the addition is older than the floor and was previously supported by columns over an open porch. In 2014, the BAR approved a first-floor addition that enclosed the porch under the second floor. It is unclear if when this second floor addition was constructed, but given these substantial changes, staff finds the proposed alterations consistent with the guidelines.

Mary Wolf, Applicant – For this property, we’re essentially renovating the front yard of the property and the side yard along Farish Street and creating some new landscape in association with the new pool house. The renovations along the front include removal of an existing large walnut tree that’s in poor health. We’re planning to reshape and repave the crushed stone paths in front of the house and create a new landing at the front door. We’re also proposing to regrade some of the front lawn to make it a gentler slope and more functional for the family. This is the only lawn space on the property. As part of that leveling out, we’re also proposing a stone, low wall inboard of the property by about 25 feet from the sidewalk. We’re also proposing, along Park Street, to remove the existing tall hemlock hedge that exists. It’s about 12 to 14 feet tall. We’re proposing to replace that hedge with a boxwood hedge that we would like it to ultimately be 4 to 5 feet high that you can see over. We would back-plant that with some deciduous shrubs that would allow views into the property. The house sits pretty low down from the sidewalk. It’s the only house on Park Street that has that low siding relative to the street. We feel like having a little bit of height involved along the street without blocking views is really necessary. Along Farish Street, we’re also proposing to upgrade a lot of the existing stepping stone paths. We’re also proposing to remove two large ash trees that are growing very close to the existing shed along Farish Street.

Ashley Falwell, Applicant – We’re looking at a zoomed in version of the site with the existing building, existing pool house. The red-hatched area is the proposed demolition. We would like to take

out an existing exterior stair on the north side of the main house and the pool house that was built between 2000 and 2002. The gray hatched areas are the new building footprint or altered footprint. We are altering the shell of the east addition of the main house. It will be within the footprint of the existing east addition. We are making some changes to the exterior. We're also showing the proposed pool house. We're really trying to create an aesthetically unified courtyard around this existing pool. These are drawings showing what is there. You can see the east addition. We are keeping that footprint; altering the lower level and extruding that footprint up to the first and second floors. This is the south view showing that addition. We are going for a bit more modern expression with this addition; trying to keep the color palate very similar, high quality materials. We're looking at a low slope, flat seamed, copper roof with stucco for the first and second floors and with a smooth finish. The existing house has a textured stucco finish, new metal clad windows and doors. The historical reference sheet for this original house references the noble and serene quality of the existing house. We're trying to carry that into the addition and the new pool house. This is the new pool house that is a low bar building to create a courtyard space and have a more modern dialogue with the east addition. It has a stone chimney, copper roof, metal clad windows and doors, and going to use some smooth stucco for the exterior walls. The last time we presented, the Board was looking for a cut sheet on windows and doors. We're looking at using Pela-reserve contemporary clad wood unit. This is the quality and detail that we're going for. We have some exterior reference shots. The bottom three show the area that we're effecting. We're looking at referencing the stone on that existing privacy wall. This is the existing pool house structure that we would like to demolish.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Questions from the Public

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Gastinger – Can you describe the stucco product you're thinking of using?

Ms. Falwell – The stucco on the main house has a significant amount of texture in it. I think we're trying to imitate that on the pool house. We're definitely looking to do something fairly smooth that's not going to have a modeled texture at all. It's more about the massing, the planes, and continuing the color that would be consistent. It's going to be true stucco.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Comments from the Public

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Gastinger – This is a huge improvement to the way that this house is presented. Thank you for that approach to lower that existing hedge and improve the visibility of this remarkable house. I find the additions really appropriate in the back.

Motion – Ms. Lewis – Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including City Design Guidelines, I move to find that the pool house demolition, new pool house construction, rear addition alterations, porch screening, and landscape plan at 540 Park Street satisfy the BAR's criteria and are compatible with this property and other properties in the North Downtown ADC District, and that the BAR approves this application as submitted. Second by Mr. Lahendro. Motion passes 9-0.

E. Discussion Items

8. Preliminary Discussion

0 Preston Place, TMP 050118001 (or 050118002 or 050118003)

Rugby Rd-University Cir-Venable ADC District

Owner: Preston Place Properties, LLC

Applicant: Leigh Boyes

Project: New residence

- Staff introduced the proposed project to the Board for this preliminary discussion on Preston Place.
- There have been multiple COA applications from Preston Place in the recent past.
- The applicant is proposing to build a single-family residence, three bedroom, and two stories with a mix of materials.
- The plan is to use all of the existing stone walls that used to retain the storage container on that site.
- The house will have a number of porches.
- The applicant did present a summary of what they're planning to do in terms of landscaping and plantings around the house.
- After a brief presentation from the applicant, members of the Board provided feedback and guidance for the applicant for the project.
- Mr. Gastinger had some concerns about the garage structure and the character of the garage structure.
- Mr. Timmerman brought up fitting the house into the parcel could be an interesting design and inspiration and could tell a story about the site.
- Mr. Timmerman wondered about the engagement with the neighboring house. The applicant was responsive to finding engagement with the neighboring house.
- There is a mixed bag of different styles within this neighborhood.
- The applicant does want stone elements within the house.

9. Preliminary Discussion

1301 Wertland Street, TMP 040303000

Wertland Street ADC District

Owner: Jeanne and Roger Davis

Applicant: Kevin Schafer / Design Develop

Project: New residential building

- The applicant presented the project proposal to the members of the BAR for their review and discussion.
- The current house is the oldest structure within the Wertland Street ADC District.
- The surface parking area on the property is the best place for the building of this new residential building.
- The plan is to keep and maintain the current historic structure as part of the proposed project.
- Members of the BAR posed questions for the applicant regarding the proposed project on Wertland Street.
- There was concern about the primacy of the garage to Wertland Street and the imposing residential building compared to the historic structure.
- Staff did remind the BAR that there are going to be more of these projects coming in front of the BAR in the future.
- Members of the BAR provided constructive feedback and suggestions to the applicant as to what can be done to improve the project proposal.

F. Work Session (TENTATIVE – May only introduce the matter for later discussion)

- Brief work session to go over and discuss the Zoning Rewrite.

G. Other Business

Staff Questions/Discussion

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 PM