

**BAR MINUTES
CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
Regular Meeting
November 21, 2023 – 5:00 PM
Hybrid Meeting (In person at City Space & virtual via Zoom)**



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 and in person at City Space. 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, Ron Bailey, Breck Gastinger, Roger Birle, James Zehmer, Kevin Badke, Tyler Whitney

Staff Present: Patrick Cory, Remy Trail, Mollie Murphy, Jeff Werner

Pre-Meeting:

Staff went over the different items on the agenda. The only actionable item is the Courthouse Complex. Staff went over the CoA application of the Courthouse Complex. Members of the BAR asked staff questions about the application and discussed the project. The application will be coming back for the December BAR meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM.

A. Matters from the public not on the agenda.

No Comments from the Public

Mr. Birle recused himself from the BAR meeting prior to the brick presentation by Mr. Amtmann.

Eric Amtmann – This public comment is for a follow-up item for a previous Certificate of Appropriateness application for the east site. There was follow-up about a year ago. There was follow-up requested for BAR review and approval of the color palette for the exterior materials, which I am prepared to present to you today. We have a 4-foot by 4-foot square sample panel of the brick put up on site on the west side of the Levy Building that is facing Park Street near the entrance. You can see that the two bricks near each other in context. A photo of that was distributed yesterday via staff along with the other secondary materials that are in that palette, including the storefront and bullet resistant glass framing, painted metal, and the cast stone sample. All those appeared in the photograph. One item, which wasn't shown in that is the assembly wall. All the pieces are there in the proper configuration. I have physical samples of those if you want to see those. We also wanted to request consideration of this as follow-up to that previous certificate of appropriateness approval, which requested to see the palette material.

Mr. Gastinger – I understand that most of us have seen the email. Only one of us has been able to see the sample on site. I wonder if you could speak to whether the panel for the regular brick above the water table

appears to be a single-color brick in the photos. In the renderings, it seemed to have more modeling. I wonder if you could explain your rationale how you got to that brick selection.

Mr. Amtmann – It was intended this way. The specification was always written that way. It is an artifact of the rendering, which is why we do physical samples so you can see what is intended. It might help to ask staff to include the renderings from last year. It may help to walk through that. The context of where these materials are might make more sense. You might be seeing it for the first time as a new board member. That is helpful there. At the first-floor level, you will see a cast stone string course that separates a rusticated base below from the first-floor wall level above. That section minus the cast stone. The brick below and the water table and the face brick above is what you see in that sample without the cast stone built into the wall. We have the storefront on this side of the elevation around on the entrance side. It changes to curtain wall around the entrance. Above at the cornice line, there is a gray band that is GFRC, which is like the cast stone. That is a lighter weight cast stone. At the top of the parapet wall, there is a wall cap flashing, which is painted metal. With front elevation, that is also painted metal, the portico assembly. All the metal infill panels at the fenestration of the entrance wall are pre-finished.

Next Slide

The first piece is the cast stone product. The next color chip is a Sherwin Williams color. Any of the metalwork, like that cap flashing that gets painted, is that color. The next two pieces are the prefinished colors that are applied to the curtain wall and the storefront. Although they are different finishes, they are all coordinated to be the same gray. The gray material that you are seeing for the window framing will not be that color. It will be the color of the sample pieces down below.

Mr. Whitney – The mortar for the sample is the intended selection.

Mr. Amtmann – That is correct. What we were trying for, when you see the photograph of the Levy Building, are the colors of the brick are in the red/brown range and less orangey salmon. Both of those are used all over Charlottesville. We wanted the colors to be complimentary but not mimicking the Levy Building. They look a little more orangey and salmon in this view. When you see it next to the Levy Building, you can see how they are complimentary.

Members of the BAR did understand what Mr. Amtmann is proposing. The BAR will need to go and see them at the project site prior to a Certificate of Appropriateness approval.

Mr. Amtmann did pass around the brick samples for members of the BAR to hold and look at.

Mr. Amtmann – The way that the brick appears in this photo is more accurate to the color. It is redder here. The other picture was in the parking lot. The lighting was different. It really looks like salmon. The best judge is to see it with the Levy Building in the background to see how close they are.

Ms. Lewis – I drove by the site. The rusticated portion looks almost like the historic low wall at the front of the Levy Building. It was a great match. I know that this is for a building that is going to be tucked behind. It was interesting.

Mr. Amtmann – The other thing to remember is that piece of cast stone will be a band between the two kinds of brick. They look close. The differentiation is not dramatic between the lower part and the above. It will be more interesting when that gray band for the string course is between.

Mr. Zehmer – The base brick is two types of brick.

Mr. Amtmann – That is correct. It is a blend. There is 10 percent of those browns.

Mr. Zehmer – Is the lighter brick of the base the same as the brick above?

Mr. Amtmann – It is the same color. It has a different texture on it. It is a very smooth brick above. It has more texture on the lower part.

Mr. Gastinger – You’re still planning on the rustication on the base. It is just in the panel. It is constructed as flat.

Mr. Amtmann – It is rusticated in the surface texture of the brick. It is rougher than it is on the upper part of the wall. The way it is in the sample is correct.

Mr. Gastinger – I feel good about the direction. I know that many will want to go see it in person. It is very much in keeping with the spirit of the application. I have no issues with it.

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. Meeting Minutes – September 2023 and October 2023

Move to Approve – Ms. Lewis – Edit to the September Minutes (correction to page 10 of the September 2023 minutes: change “scot lights” to “sconce lights”) – **Second by Mr. Zehmer – Motion passes 7-0.**

C. Deferred Items

No Items

D. New Items

2. Certificate of Appropriateness Application

Certificate of Appropriateness

BAR 23-11-01

410 East High Street, TMP 530033000

North Downtown ADC District

Owner: City Of Charlottesville & County Of Albemarle

Applicant: Eric Amtmann, DGP Architects [on behalf of Albemarle County]

Project: Albemarle Co. Courthouse 1938 Building – south entrance alterations

Jeff Werner, Staff Report – CoA request for alterations to the south elevation of the 1939 office building. At loggia, install glazed panels within the five arches. (Frames will be Aluminum storefront finish color is anodized dark bronze.) Within the loggia, at the building’s south wall, replace the two windows with entry doors (retaining the jack arches) and replace the contemporary glass doors with a painted, wood panel (retaining the 1938 frame and trim). [On October 17, 2023, Mr. Zehmer (BAR) and Mr. Werner (staff) met with the applicant. This submittal reflects the results of that discussion.]

Eric Amtmann, Applicant – The paint question did come up in the last review. That is very easy to comply with. When that renovation maintenance work was done. There was a BAR Certificate of Appropriateness that has the color numbers in them. That was previously approved as a match. What was there before it was

painted badly, later. We can do that. I did bring a sample. That is the storefront color. That is also the color of sallyport coiling door, which was previously a question. We said that it was dark bronze. You have a sample to go with the previous comment.

Next Slide

We previously had divided light, many small window lights and muttons. It has now been opened so that perimeter is dark bronze storefront framing. The center opening has a transom bar and muttons to get an operable door in the center, which is ADA compliant. We can't do a double door. Neither relief would be wide enough. On the portico side elevations, left and right, that would be the same window treatment as the flanking windows on the Main south elevation.

Next Slide

This is the back wall. It shows the center opening there with the pilasters and entablature above is the current, existing entrance. The pilasters and the entablature date to 1938. It is just the door infill that is currently there, which dates to 1983. The mill work is original. We will not be modifying that, only modifying the 1983 frameless door intervention, and keeping the transom light as it is but with a blind panel behind it or painting it black on the inside. This would be a marquee for notices or other things posted by the county. The entrance door would be on the left. The exit door would be on the right, flanking the center opening in the same position.

Next Slide

This detail shows the aluminum storefront entrance installed in the brick arch openings. We have brought the plaza level to the left on the exterior up to the floor level of the new flooring on the interior. The brick piers, as they are, go all the way down uninterrupted to floor level. There is no added base or other work. Your masonry opening is preserved in its current state. The storefront sits inside that, with the framing set as far as it can go towards the interior face, just a half-inch reveal from the face of brick to the face of storefront framing. On the exterior, you have about 7.5 inches as deep as we can possibly get that window set back. The shadow line is as deep as it can be on the exterior to preserve that appearance of the void of the opening rather than having a white door and window system installed there.

Next Slide

This is the detail for the intervention on the back wall. The existing openings are kept as they are. It is a new door frame system set within the openings as they exist. The left drawing shows that blind panel in the center opening.

Next Slides

The next slides respond to some questions that were asked. This clarified that the door leaves are 1983. The mill work was 1938. This is the whole sequence for where it was documented in the 1983 construction drawings.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Questions from the Public

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Ms. Lewis – Was Mr. Schwarz's comment about the main door? Why would he insert that into tonight's conversation?

Mr. Amtmann – The previous certificate of appropriateness application had these arched openings infilled with white doors and windows. It brought the façade forward inappropriately instead of preserving the deep porch appearance that it currently has. What we’re proposing today keeps that historic aesthetic.

Mr. Werner – It was a sidebar thing. We said, ‘oh by the way I know that they had painted it.’ They asked, ‘can we go back to that color that was less stark than the white they have now?’ I did ask the applicant. I told Mr. Schwarz that I would ask it at the meeting. We could reiterate what we discussed.

Ms. Lewis – It would match the rest of the project.

Mr. Amtmann – With all the buildings (1938, 1983), all the intermediate additions, there is a full repainting being done as part of this work. It will all match what we’re going to do.

Mr. Whitney – For all the frames that are part of this project, they all get the dark bronze?

Mr. Amtmann – No. That is just in the arcade.

Mr. Whitney – I understand the 5 arches that are the exterior get the dark bronze. With the new doors on what is now the exterior wall, are those now in dark bronze?

Mr. Amtmann – No. They will all be white. As the windows are now, the windows are removed. The brick is cut out below the sill. Those windows become doors. The scheme remains white on that back wall.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Comments from the Public

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Zehmer – I want to thank the applicant for reaching out and meeting with us to go through the details on loggia infill. They addressed all the comments and questions that we had during that meeting about verifying the mill work around the front doors being original and being sensitive to that, and working hard to find a frameless window that will work in those loggia openings. We had looked at some frames. Understandably, we need it for the door. It is great that we’re able to achieve a full window. With the other openings, preserving the fenestration of solids and voids, which is typical of Virginia courthouses.

Mr. Gastinger – I agree. I also want to thank Mr. Zehmer for teaching us a little about Virginia courthouses. The project was improved through this back and forth. Are there any comments on the lighting direction?

Mr. Whitney – All the frameless looks nice. You’re achieving what you’re setting out to do. I am wondering about the color. We see the hand-rendered sketch with the mullens in the white for the exterior. Inside that vestibule, if you have the exterior windows in the dark bronze and the doors on the interior on the white, whether the dark bronze is really going to achieve the disappearing that you’re trying to do or if it was in white on the exterior, if that would blend/make it all fit together. I am sure you have thought about it.

Mr. Amtmann – It is surprisingly effective. We did the same thing, not with arches, but with lintel openings for the Madison County Courthouse. It is surprisingly effective as a darker color that drops back into shadow-line. The Caroline County Courthouse has a similar kind of intervention. It is very effective. It is not invisible because it is a solid material. It does recede more into shadow-line and respects the original aesthetic more than the white material does. It is deliberately different than the doors and windows on the back wall by intention.

Motion – Mr. Zehmer – Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including the ADC District Design Guidelines, I move the proposed alterations to the south entrance of the 1938 office building at the Albemarle County Court House satisfy the BAR’s criteria and are compatible with the North Downtown ADC District, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted. Second by Ms. Lewis. Motion passes 6-0.

E. Other Business

3. Staff Questions/Discussion

- BAR appointments, elect chair/co-chair (In December?)
 - Mr. Gastinger would like to not be Chair of the BAR for another year.
 - Ms. Lewis will not accept a nomination for Chair or Vice-Chair.
 - Council will be reviewing re-applications for BAR. Application deadline is December 8th.
 - It was decided that nominations and voting will take place at the December BAR meeting.
- Windows (update recent activity/inquires).
- BAR awards 2023 (See list below)
 - Ms. Lewis suggested 201 East High Street as a possible nomination for a BAR award.
 - There was strong support for 201 East High Street on the BAR.
 - Mr. Gastinger made a recommendation to recognize Preservation Piedmont for the role in the planning and zoning.
 - There was a discussion with staff and members of the BAR regarding the nominations for the awards in 2023.
- Update: City streetlights – LEDs.
 - The city is changing the public lights following one of the Comprehensive Plan goals.
 - Staff is pushing for 3000K with the new lights for the new lights.

4. Design Guidelines discussion (Time permitting)

- Update
 - Staff passed out copies of the following Historic Districts: West Main Street, North Downtown to discuss changes to be made to ADC.
 - Staff also passed out development of the urban form in Charlottesville. There are not a lot of old buildings and structures in Charlottesville.
 - The goal of re-evaluating these district descriptions is to determine the character defining features of the historic districts in Charlottesville.
 - One of the things currently being discussed in the new zoning ordinance is height and stories.
 - Staff provided examples of different buildings within the historic districts.
 - The Design Guidelines discuss buildings being articulated in the façade. Staff provided examples.
 - Staff doesn’t know how to incorporate what has been built within the historic districts and whether a CoA would be needed for a demolition.
 - Staff did start with the North Downtown Historic District and the characteristics of North Downtown.
 - Board members did provide feedback and suggestions on how to go about changing the Design Guidelines of the historic neighborhoods.
 - Staff suggested breaking up into smaller teams to go and visit the neighborhoods. Mr. Gastinger said that it was daunting. He recommended a smaller chunk.
 - Mr. Zehmer brought that it is going to take less time for West Main Street versus North Downtown.
 - At the last meeting, there was a good discussion on how to approach the Design Guidelines.

- DT Mall
 - The Downtown Mall will soon be on the National Registry.
- Tree List
 - The Tree Commission has changed the tree list. Ginkos and Sugar Maples were removed from the tree list.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.