

**BAR MINUTES  
CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE  
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW**

**Regular Meeting**

**August 19, 2025 – 5:00 PM**

**Hybrid Meeting (In person at City Council Chambers & virtual via Zoom)**



Welcome to this Regular Monthly Meeting of the Charlottesville Board of Architectural Review. Staff will introduce each item, followed by the applicant's presentation, which should not exceed ten minutes. The Chair will then ask for questions from the public, followed by questions from the BAR. After questions are closed, the Chair will ask for comments from the public. For each application, members of the public are each allowed three minutes to ask questions and three minutes to offer comments. Speakers shall identify themselves and provide their address. Comments should be limited to the BAR's purview; that is, regarding only the exterior aspects of a project. Following the BAR's discussion and prior to taking action, the applicant will have up to three minutes to respond.

**Members Present:** James Zehmer, Carl Schwarz, Jerry Rosenthal, Jennifer Lauer, Cheri Lewis, Katherine Tabony, Ron Bailey, Roger Birle, David Timmerman

**Staff Present:** Jeff Werner, Kate Richardson, Patrick Cory, Remy Trail, Kellie Brown, Ose Akinlotan

**Pre-Meeting:**

Staff went over the incredible public interest of the project at West Main Street. Mr. Zehmer would like to pull the Martha Jefferson House project from the Consent Agenda. Mr. Zehmer thinks that the door is the original historic door. Ms. Lewis asked about moving the 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE project onto the Consent Agenda. There was discussion among the BAR members about the actionable and public hearing items.

There was also discussion regarding the time when members of the public will speak to the West Main Street project. Ms. Brown spoke to the timeliness of public comments for the West Main Street Pre-Application Conference. It was decided that members of the public should be allowed to speak at the beginning of the meeting, and again later in the meeting during the West Main Street proposal's agenda item.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

**Motion – Ms. Lewis – As permitted by the adopted bylaws of the Charlottesville Board of Architectural Review and to ensure that we can perform our duties tonight in a timely and orderly manner, we move to amend the usual meeting agenda as follows:**

- **For items 2 through 7 on tonight's agenda, staff will introduce each item, followed by the applicant's presentation, which will not exceed 10 minutes. We are going to be strict about that tonight.**
- **Following the staff and the applicant presentation, the Chair will invite comments from the public.**
- **The speakers should identify themselves and give their address.**
- **Speakers will be allowed to speak for 3 minutes. That will include either questions or comments.**
- **Comments should be limited to our purview. That is regarding the exterior aspects of a project, per our charge from City Council.**
- **Per city code, for a major historic review, following public comments, the BAR will offer questions and comments.**
- **The applicant will have 3 minutes to respond. That can be extended by the Chair.**
- **We will allow any comments at the beginning of the meeting.**

**Second by Mr. Birle. Motion passes 9-0.**

## A. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

**Latricia Giles** (911 Nassau) – I serve as the executive director of the Public Housing Association of Residents (PHAR). PHAR is the resident-led voice of Charlottesville’s public housing neighborhoods. I come before you with the concerns of West Haven and the 10<sup>th</sup> & Page neighbors, who have already lived through decades of broken promises, displacement, and exclusion. The proposal before you is not just about design. It is about whether the city repeats the mistakes of the past choices or chooses a different path. Charlottesville already scarred West Haven once when it destroyed Vinegar Hill in the name of progress. Families were uprooted, culture was erased, and communities were left carrying the wounds for generations. For decades, West Haven has lived at the bottom of the hill looking up at a wall. This is a daily view that residents wake up to now. This project would raise that wall even higher. If built, families will sleep with headlights shining into their bedrooms and children will be playing in the shadows of parking decks instead of under trees. Instead of the porches and open sky, they will be looking onto dumpsters, and service doors of the backside of someone else’s convenience pushed out into our front yards. This is not repair and not healing. This is exclusion dressed as development. We are not opposed to change. Residents have been for years have begun to design a future for West Haven that honors, history, strength, and safety. It keeps community at the center. This project does none of that. It overshadows and walls off. It predetermines the future of our neighborhood without our consent. That is why over 300 neighbors and allies to date have signed on for our call to change online and on paper. Together we are asking for major reductions in the height and scale of the building, for real setbacks, for safe pedestrian connections, and development that lives alongside community rather than looming over it. We are asking you to listen not only to the drawings and renderings but to the lived reality of the people who will carry out the weight of this decision every day. Charlottesville still carries the wounds of Vinegar Hill. We cannot afford to make that same mistake again. The city can choose a different path, one that uplifts residents, overshadowing them. We urge you to stand with the residents and say ‘no.’

**Rucia Parker** (Hardy Drive) – I have lived in the West Haven neighborhood for 20 years. I have been a resident planner since we started 3 years ago. The height of the building does not match the neighborhood field that we are trying to create with our masterplan. At ground level from Hardy Drive, it would be visible from all angles. If our buildings are going up 4 stories from the bottom of Hardy Drive and 11 stories on West Main Street, we would be looking at a 16-story skyscraper on top of us. It feels like a penitentiary, and we are living in the yard. Deep step-backs on the West Haven side might make this a little better and make our walkway/ramp feel more open. Setbacks along the memory walk side could also help avoid creating a closed-in feeling. The BAR can and should require step-backs as for pictures showing a building with big step-backs.

**Mary Anderson** – I have lived in West Haven for 8 years. I am a resident planner. I do not like the building. It is too big to be on top of our neighborhood. The only way to make it better is to have many big step-backs and have more setback spaces from the property line.

**Shirley Gentry** – I have been living at West Haven for over 20 years. I am a resident planner. I do not like the plan for the building. It will be seen from everywhere in West Haven and block us off from the rest of Charlottesville.

**Michael Salvatierra** (1321 Welford) – I have been a teacher at Trailblazer Elementary for the last 16 years. I teach the kids who live in West Haven. With all the history that we have in Charlottesville of residents and neighborhoods and communities whose voices have been pushed to the side, especially around housing, it is absurd that we would not put the concerns of the West Haven community as the first priority when making decisions above profit or convenience or any of the privileges of students or developers. The community has been isolated physically. I cannot believe that it is going to happen again. Please listen to and prioritize the members of the West Haven community.

**Betty Jones** – I have been in West Haven since April 1992. I pay my rent for a whole year. I am not paying rent until January. The place is too big. I like it where I am.

**Cindy Ivey** – I have lived in West Haven for 21 years. I am a resident planner. We need bigger setbacks. We understand that a setback that is more than what is required is being planned. However, it is not enough. More space and distance need to be found to reduce the feeling of being crowded. This also is a safety issue. When we created our masterplan, we removed any small spaces where bad people could gather to do bad things. Having openness creates visibility. Space on the ground will make the memory walk and the area used to get to the sports court more open and usable. We need more space between the access road, memory walk, and the sports court with safety measures in place. We do not want to be walking along an ugly access road. We need to see drawings that show more setbacks and lighting plans combined with step-backs. More setbacks might keep a neighborhood feel safe.

**Paul Reeder** (211 5<sup>th</sup> Street SW) – I wish to talk about the other student housing project that is being proposed and is on the agenda tonight. I wish to talk to you about the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest luxury student housing proposal. I am the president of the Oak Grove Condominium Owners Association, which backs directly onto the land subject to this proposal. When I asked Mr. Werner if I might speak tonight, he asked that I be brief because he anticipated a busy agenda. We welcome the development of this site. As a resident here of over 30 years, I know it is a wonderfully located parcel of land in the heart of Charlottesville. It should be developed. However, we want affordable housing, not luxury student housing with a swimming pool. I suspect that you will hear the same from our friends in Westhaven and the opposition that we have already heard tonight. These 2 projects together are over 1300 students. The good news for Fifeville, which I hope will make your agenda shorter, is that this land is outside the half-mile radius of the University contemplated by the zoning code and related ordinances for student housing. Therefore, this land cannot be developed as student housing. You will see from this handout the language that is used in the zoning code that relates to this half-mile radius. You will also see on that map from the University of Virginia that shows Central Grounds. There is specific reference to the edge of Central Grounds. The language of the affordable dwelling regulation specifically says that the land must be within a half mile of the University with measurement being in a direct line from the edge of the main campus areas to the edge of the subject parcel. Outlying university owned parcels are not considered part of the campus for the purpose of this ordinance. According to Apple Maps, this land is 0.7 miles away from the Memorial to Enslaved Labor. With Google Maps, it is 0.8 miles away from the Memorial to Enslaved Labor. Student housing is an inappropriate use for this land per the city's own code.

**Stacy Rush** – I work for PHAR. I am the community intern coordinator for the Public Housing Association of Residents. Caged like a bird, I look behind me. There are no birds here. Caged like a zoo, I look behind me. There are no animals. There are caring residents. This building is a clear disservice to this community. The structure is a direct impact on the residents' safety, their health, and their lives. Luxury housing is being built instead of affordable housing that can be managed is the residents who are already waking up to a concrete wall. The Standard is that concrete wall. They are blocking sunlight. They are blocking everything else that is in the city. The impact this has on the mental health is real. Imagine waking up to a wall as a child and expecting to be happy and even further to learn. There are so many more issues that this development will cause. Let's do the right thing by the West Haven community and listen to the residents and their concerns and their needs.

**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** – May 20, 2025, and June 17, 2025

**Motion to Approve Consent Agenda – Mr. Schwarz – Second by Mr. Bailey – Motion passes 9-0.**

**Mr. Zehmer (Chair) pulled the Martha Jefferson House door replacement proposal from the Consent Agenda.**

### **C. Deferred Items**

NA

### **D. New Items**

#### **1. Certificate of Appropriateness Application**

BAR # 25-0100

1600 Gordon Avenue, Tax Parcel 090016000

Rugby Road, University Circle, Venable Neighborhood ADC District

Owner: Martha Jefferson House

Applicant: Mark Barstow

Project: Door replacement

**Jeff Werner, Staff Report** – Request CoA to replace exterior door at entry vestibule.

**Mark Barstow, Applicant** – I was the director of building and grounds at The Martha Jefferson House. I am now in charge of special projects there. That is why this project falls under my purview. City staff and I have been going back and forth on this for several months now. Our interest in this is because of the way our facility is used. The people that live there now need more assistance getting around using wheelchairs, walkers, etc. Our current entry system is this front door and another entry door just inside of that. It is going to create some bottleneck for our residents. As many of you are aware, this is probably the primary concern for us. There have been an increasing number of safety incidents in our neighborhood. With student housing there, we are surrounded by the fraternities and sororities. Some of our residents have expressed concern about our current front entrance from a safety perspective. It is not substantial enough to keep out somebody that really wanted to get in. With those factors in mind, we feel, from a practical standpoint, that we need to change to a more secure entrance. Our desire would be to replace the front door. I understand that there are questions about that.

### **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No Questions from the Public

### **QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD**

**Mr. Schwarz** – With the existing door that you are removing, do you need to make it wider? Is that part of it?

**Mr. Barstow** – When we change it out, we would like to make it wider. I think it is 39 inches. It might be a little less than that. We propose increasing it to a 40- to 42-inch door.

**Mr. Schwarz** – Is that the primary reason? I am trying to understand why you want to get rid of the existing sidelights. Is that the primary reason? Is there a structural reason?

**Mr. Barstow** – To get the sized door we want with the posts there that are beside the door that frame the sidelights and the door, we cannot get a bigger door in there with that in place. This would be an aluminum type storefront door. Our objective is to put an opener that people could use to push to get in and out. With that in mind, the frame would reduce the width even more to the point of not being practical for us. Whether it happens out here or inboard of that, that is our objective

**Mr. Bailey** – What do you know about the historicity of the door? Is it original?

**Mr. Barstow** – I don't know that. We have tried to come up with older photographs. Nobody seems to know.

**Mr. Bailey** – You see it primarily as a safety issue.

**Mr. Barstow** – That is our primary concern; safety and allowing easier access.

**Mr. Bailey** – The door would now open outward.

**Mr. Barstow** – We have considered both options. There is an inner door behind this that has sidelights as well. If we had an in-swinging door on the outermost part and we are allowed to take that intersection out, it would make a nice entryway. In that case, we would like to swing it in. If we had to keep the inner part of it, we would swing it out. It is not as convenient for the residents. It would be an option that we would explore.

**Mr. Birle** – I have a question about the muttons. Are they applied to both the exterior and the interior surface of the glass?

**Mr. Barstow** – They would be both surfaces. What staff asked me today; I did not have the opportunity to confirm whether they would have the spacer between. I would assume that would be available. It is not what we talked about when we had this door quoted.

**Mr. Timmerman** – What is your reason for going with glass and not just another solid door?

**Mr. Barstow** – It would be for visibility. Our security guard is just inside and to the right. He can see into the doorway there. It is also nice to let light in.

**Mr. Schwarz** – We have 2 options in here. I don't know if staff made that or if you did between divided lights and no divided lights. Did you have a preference?

**Mr. Barstow** – I am not a big fan of the fake lights. It is hard to make them look real. We did that as a way that it could be appealing in one sense. Personally, I would like to see it open. If it was an issue with this board or anybody else, we are happy to do it the other way. That is why we wanted to present both options.

**Mr. Timmerman** – Have you considered a half-window instead of a full window?

**Mr. Barstow** – We have not considered it. I don't know if that would be available in this type of door. It is an aluminum frame door. We are really trying to beef up the security of that area by putting in a legitimate door system, not just replacing that door with another door. We are trying to get a more secure entryway one way or another

## **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No Comments from the Public

## **COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD**

**Mr. Zehmer** – I stopped by this afternoon. I want to thank you for letting me look at the door. I did have a big question after we looked at this project a couple months ago. With the photographs, it was hard to tell how historic the door was. I think that the door is probably original based on the historic floor plans that [staff] found. The molding profile around the panels of the 8-panel door matches the molding profiles of the 2 closet

doors that are immediately adjacent to it. They also match the original rear door to the building, which is an 8-panel door. The architraves around the door match the closet doors and the rear door. It seems to me that this is the original door along with the original sidelights. By our guidelines, I cannot support replacing this door. I empathize with what you are trying to achieve. I talked with Rebecca [with M.J. House] about talking to a hardware consultant. They could find a way to beef up the hardware on the door to provide some additional security and an operator. I have done a lot of projects where we have retrofitted historic doors with operators. I know it is not our purview. There is a sprinkler pipe right over the door on the inside. That might be a challenge. Looking at our guidelines under Section 4: *Rehabilitation*, Part D: *Entrances, Porches, and Doors*, entrances and porches are often the primary focal points of historic buildings. Their decoration and articulation help define the style of the structure. Entrances are functional and ceremonial elements for all buildings. The important focal point of an entrance or porch is the door. Doors are often character defining features of the architectural style of the building. In this case, it would include the skylights and the mullions that frame the door separating it from the skylights. In the details, do not remove or radically change entrances or porches important in defining the building's overall historic character. The original size and shape of the door opening should be maintained. These things steer me towards not being able to approve this. I would welcome discussion from the rest of the BAR. There might be a way considering storm that windows with safety glass over the sidelights would be another way to achieve higher security on the sidelights without having to remove the historic feature.

**Mr. Barstow** – Another consideration of ours was taking out that inner door and putting the substantial door in there, which would not change the front of the building.

**Mr. Zehmer** – That is outside our purview. It is inside the building. You can do whatever you want to that door. Since I was able to see it, I do not think it is historic. From that perspective, it is not shown on the original floorplans. That is not our purview. I also don't think that it was historic.

**Mr. Barstow** – You are focused on the exterior of the building. That is it. Is that under staff's guidelines? I get your concerns about the exterior. I don't see a way to do it and keep it looking historic. We do need to achieve something with this entryway. If this is where your decision stops and you all don't agree to move forward with this request, that is probably the place we would go. It does create a little more of a bottleneck for people. Currently, that is our secure door.

**Mr. Schwarz** – As an assisted living facility, I think for the functionality of it and because they would be maintaining the entire ornate surround around the door, I would be willing to accept the new door in its place. I think I would favor the not having divided lights. I will leave that up to you to decide as long as those divided lights meet our guidelines with the spacer and all the other requirements.

**Mr. Birle** – I was also taking into consideration the use and was willing to think about a wider door until you said the existing door is 39 inches. That is a wide door.

**Mr. Barstow** – I cannot remember. I was not there today. I did not have an opportunity to measure it.

**Mr. Birle** – Whether it is original or a 1950s Milton Greg edition, it is still significant. There is some fine detailing in the mullion and the leaded glass. With the thought that this is not a small door, it is a door that a wheelchair can easily get through. I agree with Mr. Zehmer.

**Ms. Lewis** – With our guidelines, looking at the portions that Mr. Zehmer referenced under rehabilitation, entrances, porches, and doors should not strip entrances and porches of historic materials or details. Do not remove or radically change entrances or porches. It is important in defining the building's overall historic character. Don't remove transoms or sidelights, which is part of your proposal.

It seems like a solid door would be more secure. You want to bolster security, maybe have a push-button where somebody could open it if they need that help. It just seems like a solid door. A glass door would offer security from the exterior that you want. I would remove the sidelights and the things that are choking down the entryway from the interior of the building. I think that would mostly solve your problem. The original architecture with the closets made that passage narrow.

**Mr. Barstow** – That door would not be usable by our residents as a primary door. We keep that open most of the time. It is too heavy and cumbersome. It is an old, heavy, wooden door. From a practical standpoint, we keep that open most of the time now. The inner door is the secure one. It is not something that is navigable by our residents for the most part. When they need to get out and we have that closed in bad weather, there is a security guy who will go out and assist them out the door. It is not a practical entrance for this type of facility.

**Mr. Werner** – I found the notes from when you and I talked. The opening for the wood door is 40 inches. The idea was that when you assemble a commercial storefront frame to put in there, if it fits into that opening, it reduces it below 36 inches. It is also anchoring it into the wood frame that is there. If it allowed the entire opening to be used, that gave them freedom to have a wider door that anchored into the wall frame itself.

**Mr. Bailey** – With regards to Beth Israel, we allowed them to change the doors for safety purposes. I don't know what changes were done. The doors in that case would open outward as opposed to inward. I assume they had to do something with the original doors that modified them to do that.

**Mr. Zehmer** – That is what I was suggesting. They could talk to a hardware consultant to see if they could retrofit the existing door with electronic strike. A pushbutton-door operator could also be tied into your security system. The person at the front desk could buzz somebody in. There would not have to be a person out there. I would be Ok with that because that is trying to modernize the historic door to suit your purposes.

**Mr. Barstow** – We have not investigated the opener part. We do have the strike system on the inner door right now. I am sure that part could be done. The opener would be an issue because it is such a hard door to open.

**Mr. Timmerman** – Mr. Zehmer's idea would be my number 1. If that would not work for whatever reason, I would be willing to entertain a replacement. However, I don't think that the kind of aluminum storefront is appropriate here. I would want a replacement that is historically more in line. I agree with Ms. Lewis. A smaller light might be more advantageous to your purpose. It is such a beautiful door. I would not want to get rid of the sidelights. The width is adequate for what you need given your use. I don't want to hamper the people that are in need.

**Mr. Barstow** – I appreciate what you are saying. The issue was if we had put an aluminum frame inside of that, it would have squeezed the door too much. We need to do more homework on this part if we want to change that up.

**Mr. Zehmer** – There are a couple of different ways we can go about this. We can either vote on it and see where we land, which would be approval or denial. We can defer it, which would mean you would have to bring it back to us within a month. You can request a deferral. If you would like to explore a different hardware option, those are the 3 options.

**Mr. Werner** – My recommendation would be that Mr. Barstow ask for a deferral, and we tinker with this a little bit more.

**Mr. Barstow requests a deferral – Motion to accept the applicant’s deferral – Ms. Lewis – Second by Mr. Zehmer – Motion passes 9-0.**

## **2. Certificate of Appropriateness Application**

BAR # 24-0051

300 Ridge Street, Tax Parcel 280151000

Ridge Street ADC District

Owner/Applicant: Carla Shifflett

Project: Alteration/addition

**Jeff Werner, Staff Report** – CoA request for a second-floor addition onto and within the footprint of an existing single-story, brick structure. Notes from discussion with applicant:

- The tower and railing on the roof are the preferred option; however, that decision will be evaluated as the project budget is finalized.
- New windows will be metal, storefront to match existing.
- Roof will drain to the south (rear) elevation. Anticipate two external scuppers and downspouts.

**Greg Jackson, Applicant** – Our intent is to add another level. One of the previous times that we came to you we were thinking that we had to go to the side. What we are doing is going up above it like the sketch. We are raising the height of the main floor there. We are trying to keep it all together, keep the original building but having the addition be something different, but work with it complimentary. What we are doing is adding 3 layers of soldier course, the brick with the similar brick. We are going with cast stone. It is a typical material used in these types of brick structures, just trying to get that base high because the next floor has height. We need the height for the Pilates studio. That whole upper level is metal siding. We kept the corners because the original building has these interesting jut-out corners of a foot. We looked at maybe just trying to keep it clean up top. There are a lot of corners to track when we are doing with all the metal trim. We felt that was interesting enough to keep going with it. Capping it at the top and making it regular all the way around with the band there, all tracking to keep the height. You can see that in this section, going with canopies instead of those portico-roofed structures with columns on the Monticello Avenue side, with these more modern type of canopies with gables, and balconies on the east side. With an earlier version with the sketches, we had the stairs and the tower on the Monticello side. The tower ended up being on that corner, which makes it not too much right there demanding too much attention. It was just a much better location for the staircase to go up and down there. We have different levels because there is another level below this. It is a 9-foot, 10-foot, and 11-foot heights. The intent is to have the roof deck access up there. We will have to see how that pans out with the budget, code, and considerations like that. It is a low sloped roof to the backside, to the northside. The northside is without windows and plain. There is a chance and opportunity that there might be a building of some size up against it on that property line.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD**

**Mr. Rosenthal** – What is your HVAC situation?

**Mr. Jackson** – On the north elevation, that is directly against the adjacent property. There is an area for the units to be out there. There is a compressor unit already out there. We would just add more.

**Ms. Tabony** – With the windows on the upper level, the grey area, there are 2 flanking windows around a vertical window. Are those double hung?



**Mr. Jackson** – They are probably going to be awnings. I imagine there is one fix and an awning. We want to have some operable windows. We wanted to have some articulation. They are the same proportion and size of the lower ones. We wanted to change it up a little bit.

**Mr. Schwarz** – You gave us this sheet. It looks like you have the vertical siding profile on there. What are you thinking for the horizontal siding? Is it a lap siding?

**Mr. Jackson** – This is the kind of siding. You can have it directly against each other or you can have a variation of gaps. (The applicant brought in a sample). We are going to have this going horizontal on the middle section. We are probably going to go with something like 16 or 18. For the vertical on the corners, we are going to keep that at the minimum they have in these at 1-foot.

**Mr. Timmerman** – What do you do at the soffit where the indent is?

**Mr. Jackson** – That could still be the same material. That is one foot and that would fit in there. We have not detailed all the trim. There is a good company. They cover everything. It is just the color that I was thinking about. I am happy to provide that when we think more about it. It could easily just be the same as what wraps the corner. I thought it might be interesting to make it a little bit darker and a little bit cooler. It is a detail that I am not sure.

**Mr. Timmerman** – With the metal paneling, what do you do at the corners?

**Mr. Jackson** – That is a trim. It is going to be a trimmed piece. They have all that. We are happy to show what that is. I don't think there are options on wide or thin. We will go with the thinnest profile the most.

**Mr. Timmerman** – Was the idea that you would keep the existing windows below?

**Mr. Jackson** – I think so. Ideally, we might change them up. They are not in bad condition. There is an intent to stay within a certain budget. There are newer windows down below.

**Mr. Birle** – With the face that has no windows (south)

**Mr. Jackson** – All the lighting and colors on the main façade are going to be north. We tried it. When we were selecting, we tried direct light and indirect light. We realized that a lot of it is going to be in shade/shadow.

**Mr. Birle** – What is that color facing? I am trying to get a sense of what that blank wall is up against.

**Mr. Jackson** – There is about 5 feet to the property line. There is a parking lot behind, which is currently a tattoo bar and then a little market.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No Questions from the Public

## **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No Comments from the Public

## **COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD**

**Mr. Bailey** – I like the design. It is a very elegant design for a space that is really boring right now. It will be an enhancement to the block.

**Ms. Lewis** – I agree. Thank you for retaining those big windows on the ground floor and taking them up and using the corners, those interesting brick corners and using the first story existing brick. I hope that you can do the deck. It really ups the beauty of the building.

**Mr. Rosenthal** – I like the design. If you can pull off doing the deck, that would enhance the property.

**Motion – Ms. Lewis - Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including the ADC District Design Guidelines, I move to find the proposed alterations to 300 Ridge Street satisfy the BAR’s criteria and are compatible with this property and other properties in this ADC District, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted. Second by Mr. Bailey. Motion passes 8-0.**

### **3. Certificate of Appropriate Application**

BAR # 25-0099

310 4th Street NE, #201; Tax Parcel 330205L00

North Downtown ADC District

Owner: Court Square LLC; Great Eastern Management Co.

Applicant: Caitlin Byrd Schafer

Project: New roof structure over existing patio

**Jeff Werner, Staff Report** – CoA for installation of a roof and columns at the existing patio facing East High Street.

**Mark Kestner, Applicant** – I don’t think there should be a return on the roof gables. The 2 wings are not symmetrical. That create an asymmetrical condition on each side, which would draw more emphasis to that condition. It is just a polite shed with a straight termination.

### **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No Questions from the Public

### **QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD**

**Mr. Birle** – With the gabled end, what material are you putting in that little piece of gable end that is sticking out?

**Mr. Kestner** – It will be fiber cement to match the rest of the trim work.

**Ms. Lewis** – Is this being driven by the occupant/tenant in that space?

**Mr. Kestner** – Both. I think there is a desire to have a more inviting space. I don’t think there is a lot of use of that patio now. If we had a cover over it and created more of a room outside, there are 2 tenants on that floor. They would both use it and appreciate it.

**Ms. Lewis** – This will encourage use.

**Mr. Kestner** – A ceiling and some slow-moving fans will bring it down to a pedestrian scale. It does not feel good when you are out there on the space. It feels like you are exposed. The roof will add to that atmosphere.

### **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No Comments from the Public

## COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

**Motion – Mr. Timmerman - Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including the ADC District Design Guidelines, I move to find the proposed patio roof at 310 4th Street NE satisfies the BAR’s criteria and is compatible with this property and other properties in this ADC District, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted. Second by Ms. Lewis. Motion passes 9-0.**

The Chair recessed the meeting until 7 PM.

The meeting was called back to order at 7:02 PM.

### **E. Other Business**

#### **4. Pre-Application Conference**

**No formal action will be taken.**

BAR # 25-0097

714 Ridge Street, Tax Parcel 250077000

Ridge Street ADC District

Owner: 270 Partners LLC

Applicant: Kevin Schafer, Design Develop

Project: Two residential structures with dwelling units

- Staff presented this project to the BAR.
- The proposal is 2 residential units on a vacant lot in the Ridge Street ADC District.
- Staff laid out how these proposed 2 residential units relate to other buildings and structures within the ADC District.
- The parcel is the most southern portion of this ADC District.
- This proposal does include a boundary line adjustment.
- This area is zoned R-A. Height allowance is 3 stories.
- Applicant stated that more attention does need to be paid to the massing of the proposed residential structures.
- Adjacent properties are residential in nature and residential in scale.
- The applicant is committing to a gable roof over a 2-story brick mass and embracing that gable roof form.
- An evaluation was completed from the street level and a pedestrian level as to the scale of the proposed units.
- The large retaining walls will be removed to work with the topography.
- The R-A zoning does allow for a duplex.
- Ms. Tabony asked whether the development could move closer to the Lankford side of the property. There are topographical issues on that side of the parcel.
- Ms. Tabony asked if the design intended to respond to Ridge Street given the adjacent properties.
- Mr. Zehmer would like for there to be slight differences with the 2 buildings, such as addressing the corner on the Lankford street-side unit.
- Ms. Tabony did point out that some of the best views of the city are at this location.
- Members of the BAR provided suggestions and feedback on how the proposed project might be improved.
- Ms. Lewis and Mr. Zehmer did bring up the significance of porches, and their appearance in the Ridge Street ADC District.
- The applicant did take note of the importance of addressing the corner, outdoor spaces/porches, and removal of the retaining walls in the rear of the structures.

#### **5. Pre-Application Conference**

**No formal action will be taken.**

BAR # 25-0095

835 West Main Street, Tax Parcel 310183000

843 West Main Street, Tax Parcel 310175000

847 West Main Street; Tax Parcel 310174000

West Main Street ADC District

Owners: Kim T. & Chris Dabney; Fluvanna Holdings, LLC

Applicants: Megan Nedostup & Andree Sahakian, Contractor

Project: Multi-story housing development

- Staff provided an introduction for project.
- The proposed development would combine three city parcels of record, on which there is one structure, and a largely vacant area utilized as a parking lot.
- Applicant does need to address the questions and issues about height, massing and scale. The project team should address and respond to the concerns raised by area residents [Westhaven].
- The Design Guidelines do require recognition and care for surrounding neighborhoods.
- The applicant presented both the site plan and building design.
- The applicant and development team have initiated neighborhood outreach to Westhaven and 10<sup>th</sup> & Page neighborhoods.
- The applicant did emphasize the importance of the pedestrian connection from Westhaven to West Main Street in the *Westhaven Redevelopment Plan*.
- The project proposal has focused on safety and security by using lighting and bollards along the pedestrian connection to West Main Street.
- The applicant stated the need for housing as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.
- The parcel is zoned CX-8. The setbacks for this zoning are 0 feet. The proposal does not intend to have 0 foot setbacks.
- There are trees within the proposed landscape plan.
- 11 stories/156 feet are allowed for the CX-8 zoning.
- The applicant introduced a 25-foot step-back at the northwest corner of the proposed building.
- The applicant did provide the context of the building and the surrounding buildings, structures, houses, and the neighborhoods around the proposed building.

## COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

**Joy Johnson** (Hardy Drive) – I am the Chair of PHAR. I have lived in Westhaven for many years. I do not appreciate using my name in your presentation after the fact of what you did. I know some of what I might say you cannot consider. You need to know the facts. They started their planning in April. For 3 years, we worked on our site plan. The first I heard of it was when they came to a meeting to say that ‘this is what we are going to build.’ That is not how we operate in Westhaven. That is not how we operate in the whole redevelopment of our public housing. We suggested to them that what they should have done was have a meeting with the whole 10<sup>th</sup> & Page Neighborhood and include Westhaven to talk about the design and to incorporate what we were doing in their plans. This is very disrespectful the way this went down. Our residents work very hard to come up with a design of what their neighborhood could look like. I am hoping tonight that you all can do some setbacks with what they are doing. We talked about the memory walk. That is the idea you all took and went back. If you look at the side of the building, it is going to block our memory wall. It is going to be a wall that is blocking the history of Vinegar Hill, the history of what we are trying to present. You have the Drewery Brown Memory Wall Bridge right there, which is very historic. What I am pleading to you all is to think about how Westhaven was built, how it was dug out, how we were sitting in the bottom. If you can look at our plans, they showed you some of our site plans. There is a rendering of where we can show where we are looking up. We are not looking at a building. We are looking into a community that we would like to be connected to. Please don’t ever use my name unless I ask you to use it in not telling the truth.

**Avana Key** – I am a resident of Westhaven. I have been a resident of Westhaven for 8 years. Can you show more images and ranges of lighting along the memory walk? The way that you showed the image of the walkway, the memory walk to Main Street, is very little. The Standard is right there. I am on the bottom. I have kids. I don't want my kids to be going up to Main Street. You have steps. I understand you have steps on this side. You have a very narrow spot. Where the train is, can you show more space, put more space if you are going to put this building up? That is all I am asking.

**Betsy Roettger** – I am on the Planning Commission. Some of my issue with this whole thing is the city's fault. That site should have been looked at more sensitively. Since we are here and it is by right, there are some things that could be looked at. You will hear a lot about how Westhaven feels and literally is often walled off. We heard from people on Westhaven Day talking about how the chain-link fence used to be locked to West Main Street at 9 PM every night. There is a lot of want and to get some connection back up to that street. That is what the site plan does. It connects people to bus stops. Right now, there is no accessible way to get up there. You must walk all the way to 10<sup>th</sup> Street and around. The basketball court is up there. One of the concerns is how that is going to fit in with this large student housing project. Some of the things that I was looking at in the guidelines was how the building should relate to the adjoining neighbors. 'Relate' is a subjective term. I did think a couple of things reinforced the human scale. Along the promenade, that edge is seen as a side street. In this case, it should be seen as a public walkway just as important as Main Street. Some of the images showed coming over the bridge looking at the building. That is the entrance to this cavern of student housing. That edge having the parking garage along the walkway loses some of the liveliness that was alluded to along West Main Street. With the transparency, that does not have transparency along that edge because we are looking at cars. That whole edge is problematic on the street level. There is one exit door. On the back elevation, start showing the HVAC equipment, delivery service, the garage doors, and how those trees might screen some of that. I don't think we have seen what that back looks like. We mentioned the headlights shining into the apartments from that side. With working with the resident planners, a couple of things have come up. One of the things that we don't see is the way some spaces are used. What I thought was striking was the way private security influences neighbors. We have heard that the security at The Standard has been difficult. That edge needs a lot more work. Any step-backs in getting more sunlight down the hill would be helpful.

**Brandon Collins** – I have lived here my whole life. I have had the great honor to work with Westhaven residents for the past 3 years on developing their masterplan and moving forward with a buildable and livable new community with 5 main goals. Those goals have been hard to meet. The reason why we bring up their plan is because it relates to this building that you are talking about today. If you understand our plan, you will see the same things we are seeing. I think you will find the same issues. You will find that your design guidelines allow you to comment on these issues that we have seen. Two of the biggest goals we have had are how we increase density for affordable housing but still have a neighborhood that is not crowded, not too tall, and how we access West Main Street in a meaningful way. That has been blocked off. The neighborhood has been secluded from sight and from access since before 1964. Our resident planners, who have spent a lot of time on this, have come up with something. It is very uncomfortable to increase density. They have come up with some buildings about as tall as they can handle in the neighborhood. As a result, we are providing more affordable housing. They have also expanded their usable open space by 4.5 times. When they are looking east, it is not a giant cavern between the apartment buildings they will have and the townhomes they will have on the other side. What this building does is present 11 stories on top of 3 or 4 stories that they are building for about a 15- to 16-story skyscraper from every point in the bottom of Westhaven. People in Westhaven must deal with this from The Standard. It is a psychological burden and a symbol of exclusion. No matter how much of a setback there is, it is still going to be there. It is a giant wall there psychologically blocking the community from the rest of Charlottesville. That is a shame. One of our goals is making up for those past injustices. We are not going to be able to do that if we continue to seclude the neighborhood. How do you address it? Maybe step-backs and a tree

line. The footprint needs to be smaller for that building. With the walkway to West Main, it is not enough space. They need to put in an access road. It is unsafe because of how people gather.

**Janet Nordinson** – I have been at Westhaven for 31 years. This building is a big distraction to what the residents want. It blocks everything. I don't like it, and it is ugly. What they have planned to put there, without this building, looks nice. I hope you all consider it. The safety issue is another thing for everyone around it.

**Wendy Goyo** – I am a community organizer at the Public Housing Association of Residents. Westhaven and 10<sup>th</sup> & Page neighbors are greatly concerned about the incredible height of this building and how it would tower over Westhaven, making residents feel more crowded in, claustrophobic, and entrapped. I know that I am supposed to comment on architecture. There are several historians on this board. You cannot talk about architecture or height without understanding the history of Westhaven. This is an 11-story building, which is already a gigantic building from ground level. To talk about height, you must acknowledge the fact that Westhaven was purposefully dug into the ground 16 feet when it was constructed in 1964 to house the displaced residents of Vinegar Hill. When we are talking about an 11-story building, this is an 11-story plus building to residents of Westhaven because Westhaven already sits at the base of a hill. The thing with architecture is you cannot divorce it from the legacies of enslavement, Jim Crow, urban renewal, and gentrification. It has long been priority for Westhaven residents to have an accessible walking path from Westhaven to West Main Street once Westhaven redevelopment is complete. This building would sit on top of the Westhaven residents' proposed walkway and obstruct their accessibility and visibility. Things that might help include adding several step-backs on the Westhaven side to gradually increase height, increase the step-backs even more than the developer's voluntary proposal of 60 to 75 feet, and improve the safety on the pedestrian walkway by adding an access road for the Westhaven residents' memory walkway.

**Sofia Marrero** – I am a community organizer with the Public Housing Association of Residents. There are a lot of concerns concerning this building. I am here to further demand that consideration is taken into place about Westhaven residents. More step-backs starting at the second floor increased, more step-backs starting at the second floor are added. Increasing the step-backs improving pedestrian safety by adding space to separate the road from the memory walk and removing the massive wall along the Westhaven walking path to West Main in the current plans to allow for more connection.

**James Bryant** (10<sup>th</sup> Street Northwest) – I am the Vice-President of the 10<sup>th</sup> & Page Neighborhood Association. I was compelled to come tonight because I have a deep connection and affection for the residents of Hardy Drive. I once lived on Hardy Drive from 1965 to 1975. When I first heard about this project/building being placed on West Main Street, I was astonished and dismayed that the residents again must endure this tall building, feeling boxed in. I am hoping that this Board of Architectural Review will take into consideration that the residents, based on the feedback that they received at the community meeting at the Heritage Center, is not in favor of this project. I cannot imagine waking up every morning looking at this tall building hovering over Hardy Drive. I walked over there yesterday. I stood in the middle of Hardy Drive. I looked to my left, my right, and up. I was probably more depressed after having taken that walk. The residents of Hardy Drive have not even had an opportunity to rebuild. Hardy Drive has not had a makeover since 1964. It is time for them to have a makeover. To have a makeover and to look up at this building hovering over them, it is not what the residents want to see or have in the neighborhood. The 10<sup>th</sup> & Page residents feel the same way. The 10<sup>th</sup> & Page neighborhood does not yet have a small area plan, but neighbors have consistently said that 'we want gradual, not abrupt building height increases.' As you are looking and dissecting this project, I hope that you will take that into consideration; the height, the way it looks, and the residents of Hardy Drive and of the 10<sup>th</sup> & Page neighborhood.

**Michael Payne** – I echo what everyone else has said. This is the only body that the residents of Westhaven and 10<sup>th</sup> & Page have any opportunity to make their voices heard or have any opportunity to have democratic

control over what is built in an area that they have spent years designing. This will not go to the Planning Commission or City Council. There is a reason for that. The zoning on this parcel is CX-8. It allows 11 stories by right with unlimited density. There is a reason it is that designation. When we developed the zoning, there was a strong push to maintain special use permits around 10<sup>th</sup> & Page, Fifeville, Rose Hill, Kindlewood, Westhaven, and other public housing sites. Not to say that increased density or height could not be built, but to give the residents a voice and have the ability for them to have what is built match the designs they have spent years building. That decision was rolled back by planners who thought they knew better. One of the exact words was, 'This area of West Main is an area where large student apartments want to go.' That change was rolled back. We all know the history of urban renewal. There are a lot of lessons to take from it. One of the lessons I take is the importance of humility in city decision makers and the danger of arrogance for decision makers who never have to live with the consequences of the decisions they have made. There is a great documentary about West Main Street. It is about the 80s and 90s on West Main Street. It is a fascinating look at the history of West Main when it was an intersection of historic black neighborhoods, working class white residents, and UVA students. It made me think of what alternative futures could have been. Now, it is a corridor of, by, and for UVA students. What if the city had been as intentional about creating a black business district as we were in creating the Downtown Mall? What if we thought beyond either or decision-making and beyond the free market delivering what is going to create historic justice? Are we confident that we are not able to repeat the mistakes of urban renewal? Is this time different? Is this time the decision makers who did not grow up in Westhaven, did not live in Westhaven, don't socialize in Westhaven? Do they know better this time? If on reflection, anyone listening feels that they are not confident that this time we do know better, we need to return special use permits and discretionary decisions into more areas of the zoning, especially areas where we are allowing 7 and 10 stories by right. It does not block change in density. Our largest apartments were approved under the old zoning with special use permits. It allows for community benefits, agreements, addressing hyper-local concerns and addressing the history of the city. If anybody in the audience is concerned about this, you need to email City Council to change the zoning, to reintroduce more special use permits. You need to come to our meetings and let us hear that. You need to go to Planning Commission meetings and let us hear that. Unless that changes, this is going to be the future throughout Fifeville, 10<sup>th</sup> & Page, and Rose Hill. There will be nothing you can do about it.

**Anthony Malabad** (4000 City Walkway) – While I was here listening to the first public comment period, there was something that struck me, the idea of being caged in, being blocked from the outside world. I investigated the numbers. What I found was concerning. I understand the Board only dealing with exterior things with buildings. I feel that this is pertinent to the exterior and to the Westhaven community. The elevation of the front of the parcel in question is 505 feet above sea level. I looked on the city GIS website to get these figures. The closest building in Westhaven sits at 476 feet. That is a difference of about 30 feet. Assuming 10 feet per story, that is 110 feet. That is 140 feet difference in total. Assuming there is 90 feet in between the building and Westhaven. That means someone standing on the ground in West Haven would be looking at the top of this new building would be looking up at a 57-degree angle. If you extend that to the 100-foot distance from the presentation, 75-foot distance between buildings, and a 25-foot setback, you only lower that angle to 54.5 degrees. This is the problem. We sit almost exactly on the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel north. The sun at equinox reaches a maximum of 52 degrees above the horizon. While the sun gets higher in the summer, what this building would mean is that there would be parts of Westhaven that would be in complete shadow for more than half the year. That is unacceptable. I would urge the Board to listen to the concerns of Westhaven residents.

**Earl Hicks** (808 Hardy Drive) – I am a resident of Westhaven and a native of Charlottesville. I come here today to say this. I don't approve of this building. I don't approve of the design of this building. I want to say that you look at generations that have lived on Hardy Drive. I stand on my porch every day. I look up and down Hardy Drive. I see kids playing in the street. I see kids running up and down the sidewalks. When in my backyard, I look up and imagine an 11-story building standing in our backyard depriving us of, not only sunshine, but locking us in. I know that some of you heard about urban renewal. Do we want to go back to that again? Do we

want to relive that? I know I don't. I am 52 years old. I have family that lived on Hardy Drive from the 70s, 80s, and onward. I am the next generation. I am speaking for the next generation. I had to say something. I could not let this pass without saying something. I am for my residents, my Westhaven community.

**Emily Axelboom** (Monticello Road) – I agree with so many that have spoken tonight about the massiveness of the building, not only 11 stories tall, but 120 feet long. The height is out of scale with all the surrounding buildings. It is even out of scale with The Standard. In terms of context for each proposal tonight, I have heard you talk about your feelings about a historic door, a rooftop patio, a porch, and these small details. I have heard the community reacting to a very large structure/building. I hope you are listening closely to how those individuals that are living the closest are feeling about this project and taking their feelings at the center of your decision making. I heard at the beginning that you don't have all the power. You do have some power as individuals in this community and as the volunteers that you are on this board, I am encouraging you to use the power that you have, even if it is a small piece of a larger puzzle of ways that we can ask for changes that the community wants to see.

**Gloria Beard** (1116 Page Street) – It took my 30 years to buy my home. I am from Staunton. I used to come over here as a teenager to visit friends on Hardy Drive. It is 2025. They have never given these people air conditioning. That is horrible. Everybody is building up, fixing up, doing whatever. Why haven't these people been raised up? What is going on? They want to build a big and tall building. My taxes are going to go up. I work too hard. I use my social security check to pay more taxes for other people. I don't know how long I have left on this earth. You consider these people on Hardy Drive and us on 10<sup>th</sup> & Page. You can find another spot to build this 11-story building. It does not have to be right there. It cannot be all about money all the time. Think about all the people, not just some of the people.

**Jessie Gamman** (810 Page Street) – Everyone has already had a lot of beautiful comments. I don't think I need to add much. I hope that you support the residents of Hardy Drive and do the right thing.

**Zyanna Bryant** (North Downtown) – I want to make it clear that there are people in this room who have spoken to you this evening, who have been advocating for the Westhaven community for decades. Ms. Joy Johnson is an example of that. They are all examples of people, who have been advocating for this neighborhood since before I was born. Being that I am 24, this is an intergenerational fight. This is something that people, who are my age and younger are paying attention to. As someone, who is a homeowner at a young age, I am thinking about how I want to continue to invest in this community and invest in Charlottesville, the greater metropolitan area. It is important to think about what the trajectory of that future looks like. Councilor Payne is correct. This is the only public on the record forum where people can come and bring their concerns. I hope that they are being taken seriously. We appreciate your time. Thank you for not cutting anyone off who has gone off the design comment parameter. It is important to make sure that everyone feels like they have a voice, and they can make their voice heard. In 1975, there was a riot. There are historians who are on your body. It is important to remember that in 1975, there were young people who were walking from Westhaven to the Safeway. They were being harassed by the police. When we think about this idea of design and architecture and how that can either stand in the way of community or it can create open dialogue and open opportunities for community to be built. That 1975 riot is a prime example of what neighbors are fearing. It is an incident that was documented in the newspaper. It is discussed how the young people from Westhaven felt very unwelcome in that corridor, that space between Westhaven and Main Street and the surrounding neighborhoods there. It is important to think about how space will be navigated and how people will exist in space who are from Westhaven, 10<sup>th</sup> & Page, and what it looks like when students, those who have wealth, access, and privilege are put into a neighborhood where there are people who do not have as much wealth, access, and privilege and that confrontation within space and how that happens. Students are looking for affordable housing. That is the part that nobody is saying out loud. Students at UVA are not willingly just paying \$2,000 for rent. If they have cheaper options, it pushes them into low-income neighborhoods. Keep that in mind.



**Eugene Yong** – I am a resident of Charlottesville and in the unique position of being the landscape architecture consultant for both projects: Westhaven and for LB Collective. They have their own landscape architects. We have been asked to work on the promenade or the connection from Westhaven to Main Street. We joined this project to be an advocate for Westhaven. We have not had the position to be an advocate because we were given the path on the edges of the building. We have not been able to work on the promenade or connection. We were just given a space to plant. We spent 3 years working with the community to design a real neighborhood. If you could step back and designed a neighborhood and someone built a couple block long 140-foot building right over it and you were in shadow half the year, you would think differently about it. This is from the last meeting we attended. It was the security issue. Security for white students or white people usually means violence for black, brown, and low-income people. That is something to consider as well. If there is a promenade that honors memory and history, it would have some width and breadth to it. Maybe it becomes a city and safe promenade for everyone.

Multiple letters were sent to city staff and added into the record. Those letters will be added to the minutes for this BAR meeting. The letters reiterated many of the comments made by members of the public during COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC.

### COMMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

- Staff reminded the Board that the BAR is responding to the ordinance within the City's Development Code as approved by City Council.
- There are 2 tools relative to height, massing, and scale that the BAR can use. Conditions can be adopted that might require a reduction in height or massing consistent with the City's Design Guidelines subject to the following limitations, per code:
  - BAR may reduce the allowed height by no more than 2 stories (within this zoning district).
  - BAR may require upper story step-backs of up to 25 feet (on any façade).
- Staff is concerned about some of the comments made by members of the public. The BAR is operating 'in a box' with the zoning ordinance that was not adopted by the BAR. The BAR does not have purview to change the zoning ordinance or consider "use"- the BAR's purview includes only the exterior design of the proposed building and site.
- There are conflicts between the zoning ordinance [and the Design Guidelines] that still need to be evaluated and understood.
- Since the building has more than 10 units, 10 percent of those units would have to be affordable at a certain rate. The other choice is to pay into a fund.
- If the BAR does consider a reduction of height, there will be concerns that this action is limiting affordable housing funding.
- Staff reminded that the BAR cannot require a private landowner to make their property accessible.
- The BAR discussion began with measured height of the building and how height is perceived, given the already elevated topography of the site.
- Mr. Birle stated that the building was too tall for West Main Street.
- The Chair reminded all in attendance that there would be no vote on this proposed project.
- Mr. Schwarz did state that he voted for the new zoning ordinance. Commissioner Schwarz voted for this, and that the BAR would have full control.
- Special use permits were removed from the updated Development Code because it was thought that special use permits could interfere with housing production.
- Mr. Schwarz said that there should be 25-foot stepbacks on the north, east, and south sides of this building.
- Mr. Schwarz said that the height of the building should be reduced by 2 stories for a good part of the north side, creating 2 stepbacks facing Westhaven.
- Mr. Schwarz said that the base as parking is a hostile environment for pedestrians.

- With the proposed Memory Walk, it may feel dangerous at certain times of day given its design layout. There will be lots of various lighting elements projecting onto Westhaven and 10<sup>th</sup> & Page [below].
- Mr. Schwarz did not know why the Westhaven masterplan with the walkway up to Main Street did not make it into City's overarching plan.
- Mr. Schwarz would like for the applicant to make the walkway to Main Street a reality.
- Mr. Schwarz had concerns about the height and heaviness of the tower piece coming down Main Street on the northeast corner. It is not an entry feature to the University.
- Mr. Schwarz commented on the massiveness and breaking down the façade.
- Ms. Tabony stated that there was a missed opportunity with the walkway to Main Street and incorporating the Westhaven Master Plan and engaging the neighborhood in a public partnership.
- Ms. Tabony stated that this [Memory Walk] is not a celebration of anything and feels more 'shoved out of the way.'
- Ms. Lauer asked the applicant to talk about the concept of the promenade and connecting the historic bridge with the community.
- The applicants stated that they were continually exploring ways to connect the walk to Main Street.
- From the property line, there is 20 to 25 feet of a setback to allow the access, according to the applicant.
- Mr. Zehmer did visit the site. Mr. Zehmer told the applicant that this proposed building is entirely too big and too tall.
- Mr. Zehmer also asked the applicant to engage the surrounding neighborhoods including 10<sup>th</sup> & Page and Westhaven.
- Mr. Timmerman provided feedback to listen to what the community members have said and respond to the feedback provided by the community.
- Mr. Timmerman did point out that past BAR decisions have been overturned by City Council, however the BAR is happy to take this project on [given the challenges].
- Ms. Lauer asked the applicant how they have responded to the concerns of the community in the public engagement in the spring.
- The applicant did say that the proposal does have a step-back to address the looming feeling members of the community had expressed to them previously.
- The applicant also stated that there is an additional step-back from their building and where the outdoor spaces are located.
- The applicant stated their intent is to follow the Design Guidelines and City Code. The applicant also stated that they do extensive research on the code and rules before proposing a project.
- Mr. Zehmer and Mr. Schwarz did have feedback surrounding the materiality of the building. Mr. Zehmer did state that the applicant should make the building 'pretty'.
- Ms. Lewis agrees with other members of the BAR that reducing the height of the proposed building by 2 stories is a potential path forward and further requested the applicant to voluntarily reduce the height further than 2 stories. The step-backs need to be on 3 sides.
- Ms. Lewis did ask that the materiality and architecture reflect the City of Charlottesville, there should be a 'reference to Charlottesville' in the building.
- Ms. Lewis stated the memory walk should have a direct and straight access to Main Street.
- Ms. Lewis stated that Cedar Street/8 ½ Street needs to be reinstated and directly connect to West Main Street.
- Ms. Lewis did encourage members of the public to contact the councilors and commissioners regarding the zoning ordinance and development code.

Meeting was recessed for 10 minutes until 9:40 PM.

## **6. Pre-Application Conference**

**No formal action will be taken**

BAR # 25-0084

Tax Map 29 Parcels 71,73,74,75,76

202, 204, 208 & 214 7th Street SW & 613 Delevan Street

204 & 208 7th Street SW - Individually Protected Properties

Owners:

202: Monticello Media LLC

204: William Lynch & 204-7 LLC

208: Michael J. Christian

214: 7th St LLC

613 Delevan St: Mattie L. Hall

Applicant: Mitchell-Matthews Architects

Project: New multi-story, mixed-use building

- There was a prior discussion on this project and the applicant is presenting materials and information to the BAR based on the prior conversation.
- The applicant presented the proposed project to the BAR. The applicant wants to make sure that they are following the comments from the previous conversation.
- Two smaller parcels have been added to the proposed project and to incorporate the comments on the project, including a house on Delevan Street that is within a National Register Historic District, but is not City-designated.
- The applicant added pictures of the conditions of the existing buildings and deterioration of the existing buildings. The 2 existing buildings are going to be documented.
- The applicant did present the roof plans for the project. The bulk of the massing has been moved to the back of the property near the railway line.
- Most of the shadows of the proposed project are cast on the railway and on the backs of West Main Street with the change in the massing. The applicant did have shadows studies.
- The center of the building has been moved back 114 feet from the street.
- There has been a marginal increase in the size of the building. The wings of the building have been stepped down from the street.
- The applicant did remove the brick towers. It allowed for a 2-story stepping up along with the houses to pull into the street façade.
- A 1-story element was kept behind the houses and that opened into the courtyard and an amenity space.
- The primary entry space will be on the left side (A). Students will enter through that left side and exit on the right side (B).
- The applicant did present renderings of what the pedestrian experience will look and feel like as people walk along the front of the proposed project.
- The applicant is going to preserve, protect, and maintain the existing buildings as part of this proposed residential project.
- The proposed names of the 2 buildings are Hawkins Cottage/House 1 and Hawkins Cottage/House 2. Historical markers are also going to be provided.
- The vertical brick elements have been removed in response to the comments from the BAR.
- The applicant did present the landscape plan and lighting plan for the proposed building.

## COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

**James Snyder** – I am the original owner of 206b 5<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest. That is one of the cottages built in 2005. The architects have done a lovely job of talking about this project. Is this even an allowed use? I would remind you of my neighbor Paul Reeder's early discussion to you about the half-mile radius. We now face projects that show the dangers of treating student housing as if it was apartments. The 800-unit, 11-story project and this project reveal the flaws in our zoning code. It is as if the Starship Enterprise landed on a small heavily treed

village in this site. That is not really planning. That is market speculation, which has overwhelmed the community fabric. The ceiling of the RX-5 zone has become the floor. If you read the intent, it was supposed to develop duplexes, cottages, 4-plexes, middle housing. What you have now is that they have gone to the maximum. Student housing is an asset class that is economically more competitive than any other use. As long as you are allowing this, that is all you will get. They can finance it. The company that does this is skilled with this. They rent by the bed. You are not going to have any affordable housing. You are going to have student housing, and you will be selling density. You are going to get money. You are going to risk the neighborhood character. Historic neighborhoods like Fifeville will be overshadowed, destabilized, and economically displaced. Charlottesville has recognized the needs for limits. That is where the half-mile issue came up. Other universities have defined student housing as a distinct use. It is not the same as apartments. You need to have that half-mile overlay rule work and contain student housing where it belongs: within walking distance of UVA. Special use permits need to be involved. You are not getting the things that people want. There are a lot of issues with student housing that can be at odds with a community. The city is at a crossroads where we allow the market to build these starship dorms that land in our neighborhoods. We can set clear, fair, and forceful rules to protect the residents while accommodating student demand.

### **COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD**

- There was concern and questions about the distance of this proposed project to the University Grounds.
- The applicant was told by staff that the site was outside the half-mile radius to the University Grounds.
- There needs to be clarity on the distance from the University Grounds with regards to the zoning.
- Staff reminded the BAR that this site is not within a historic district. The review is to be the compatibility of the architecture to the surrounding neighbors.
- Staff reminded the Board to continue to refer to the guidelines with this proposed project.
- Mr. Zehmer did like the improvements made to this proposed project from the prior discussion.
- Ms. Lewis did not have any concern about the demolition of the buildings.
- Ms. Lauer also had positive comments about the changes that have been made for this proposed project.
- Ms. Tabony did say that this proposed project was inappropriate with regards to the historic neighborhood. Ms. Tabony did have hesitations about approving this possible CoA application.
- The applicant did mention that there was a setback from the street, a step-back, and another step-back to the backside of the building.
- The applicant did have concerns about the community engagement and whether community engagement would be a requirement.
- Mr. Bailey and Mr. Birle did have positive comments with the improvements made to the proposed project.
- Mr. Timmerman did have questions regarding the height of the proposed building.
- Mr. Timmerman said that the scale is inappropriate. Mr. Timmerman stated that this is a part of the zoning and a massive increase in scale.
- Mr. Timmerman wants to see a response to the surrounding neighborhoods further down the street.
- Ms. Lewis mentioned the guidelines and the applicability of the guidelines with this proposed project.
- There was discussion about the applicability of the guidelines on IPPs (Individually Protected Properties), such as this site. There was the concern of where the guidelines and zoning are in conflict.
- Mr. Schwarz said there needs to be a streetscape plan provided where it is possible. Mr. Schwarz expressed the need for more street trees where possible, especially along Delevan.

7. ~~Staff Questions/Discussion~~ Staff determined that due to the lateness of the hour, the discussion items will be circulated to the BAR either over email, or at the next monthly meeting.

### **F. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 PM.