

**City of Charlottesville
Board of Architectural Review
October 19, 1999**

Minutes

Present:

Joan Fenton
Jessie Hook
Joe Celentano
W.G. Clark
Kenneth Schwartz
Linda Winner

Also Present:

Tarpley Vest

At 5:05 Ms. Fenton explained that a quorum had not yet formed and that the board could not take action. She asked if anybody had any comments to make or issues to raise that were not on the formal agenda.

Mark Briggs indicated that he lives off of Hydraulic Road and that the intersection is very dangerous.

Ms. Fenton indicated that the board deals only with design issues in historic districts.

Dan Painter, Transportation Planner, indicated that he would be happy to discuss the traffic issues with Mr. Briggs at a later time.

At this time, Mr. Schwartz arrived and a quorum was formed.

Vending Rack on Downtown Mall

Staff presented the report.

Mark Briggs, applicant, showed the group the white metal rack.

Mr. Schwartz indicated that he feels he is new to the issue but that he has heard concerns about the racks.

Mr. Fenton indicated that there are currently no permits for racks on the mall. She indicated that Heidi Misslebeck is enforcing the zoning ordinance and asking the vendors to remove the racks.

Mr. Schwartz indicated that, as he understands the issue, the concern is about what the racks can do as they proliferate on the Downtown Mall. He indicated that many racks start to erode the character of the Mall.

Ms. Fenton indicated that the vending has typically been limited to the carts and black tables. She indicated that the racks create another set of issues on that Mall that are not desirable. She indicated that this is opening them up to a different type of display, which is not appropriate to the Mall.

At this time Ms. Hook arrived.

Ms. Fenton indicated that there are no racks on the ground that have been approved at this time. She indicated that she does not want the racks to become common.

Mr. Schwartz indicated that the Zoning Administrator position was vacant and that it has recently been filled. He indicated that Ms. Misslebeck is enforcing the rules that already exist.

Ms. Fenton indicated that she understands that the one rack underneath the Paramount is on private property and is therefor permitted.

Ms. Winner asked if there is another way for Mr. Briggs to achieve his goals.

Ms. Fenton indicated that he can have a display on top of a table with a dark skirt.

Mr. Schwartz moved to deny the application on the basis that it is in non-compliance with the current guidelines.

Mr. Celentano seconded the motion.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Briggs indicated that he can't use his rack but that people vending near him are using theirs.

Ms. Fenton indicated that none of the racks are permitted.

Ms. Vest asked that staff be informed when racks are being used so that they can enforce the ordinance.

Mr. Schwartz indicated that Ms. Misslebeck is quick to respond to calls about violations on the Mall.

Ms. Winner indicated that she wants to commend Mr. Briggs for going through the process and asking for approval for the rack.

Mr. Clark indicated that if you look at it as one rack it does not seem like a big deal but that the board has to look at the entire Mall and think about the precedent of approving one rack.

Mr. Briggs asked if he could put a canopy above his table.

Ms. Fenton indicated that the canopies are not allowed and that they will begin to enforce this at the beginning of next year.

Ms. Vest stated that only tables with dark skirts can be approved administratively. She indicated that applicants have the option of requesting approval for canopies or any other element from the BAR. She indicated that no canopies have been approved by BAR.

Ms. Fenton thanked Mr. Briggs for coming.

220 East Main Street: Angelo's

Staff presented the report.

Lee Marraccini indicated that he is proposing keeping the copper trimmed windows and he is proposing keeping the glass on glass. He indicated that he wants to replace the black glass at the base with copper panels. He said that he would oxidize the copper panels. He indicated that he is proposing bronzed aluminum over and around the door.

Mr. Clark indicated that the amount of ramping was an issue at the last meeting. He asked what the situation with the ramp would be.

Mr. Marraccini indicated that there is a 5 1/2 inch rise. He indicated that the ramping would occur inside of the door.

Mr. Clark asked if they are essentially leaving the ramp in the existing location but moving the door into the middle of the ramp.

Mr. Marraccini answered yes. He indicated that the rise measures 5 1/2 inches. He indicated that they have decided to accommodate it on the interior.

Mr. Clark indicated that often with this type of glass front a glass door such as a havalight door is used. He asked if they had considered using that type of door.

Mr. Marraccini indicated that they have considered using that type of door. He indicated that the glass supplier informed him that that type of door is very inefficient.

Mr. Clark indicated that the storefront he is proposing is sensitive to the existing condition. He indicated that Mr. Marraccini is an artisan and he is surprised that he would choose to use a standard type of metal up against the existing metals. He indicated that he does not think that the door will be very sympathetic.

Mr. Clark asked why the glass panels on either side of the door have a bronzed aluminum base instead of extending all the way down to the floor.

Mr. Marraccini answered that the interior floor is several inches above the exterior grade. Mr. Marraccini indicated that, in relation to the amount of aluminum found on the Mall, the extruded aluminum is very minor.

Ms. Fenton indicated that the storefront is a big improvement over the last submittal.

Ms. Winner moved to accept the proposal as submitted.

Mr. Clark seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Park Street Traffic Calming Improvements

Ms. Vest indicated that this is being brought before the board for consultation and feedback rather than as a formal application to the board.

Dan Painter, Transportation Planner, introduced himself and presented the project. He indicated that the city is making improvements to Park Street at the intersections between the bypass and High Street as follows: Hedge, Farish, Park Lane, Northwood, and Lyons Court. He indicated that the existing street curbing will be necked down. He indicated that they are going to bring the curbing out and add plantings. He passed out a list of planting that would be appropriate for this site.

Mr. Painter indicated that they are more likely to use groundcover than sod because it requires less upkeep. He indicated that the shrubs will be no higher than 36 inches and the trees must have a minimum lowest level of 15 feet. He indicated that some of the neckdowns will be wide enough to handle trees. He indicated that he presented the plans at a neighborhood meeting two weeks ago and about 50 people attended the meeting. He indicated that he is interested in receiving feedback from the board.

Ms. Fenton asked what stage the proposal is in and what the timeframe is.

Mr. Painter indicated that traffic calming proposals have a fairly formal process to go through. He indicated that they are in a sixty-day comment period, which began when the ballots went out to the owners in the neighborhood. He indicated that they did not send out the sheets with the drawings but they did display the plans at the neighborhood meeting and they let people know that they could display the plans at the public library. He introduced Ann Hemingway and Carrie Burke of NDRA and said that they have been very involved in the process and may be able to answer questions.

Mr. Celentano asked about the material of the crosswalks.

Mr. Painter indicated that all the crosswalks are already in place and they are the stamped asphalt material.

Ms. Fenton indicated that the crosswalks are very level but that they also indicated a place to cross.

Mr. Painted indicated that they are stamped to look like brick but that they are very smooth.

Mr. Celentano asked about maintenance of the crosswalks.

Steve Lawson indicated that, depending on the traffic volumes, he expects to repaint the crosswalks every year to two years. He indicated that repainting is cheaper than maintaining cobble pavers.

Mr. Painter stated that the stamped asphalt is consistent with what has been used in other places throughout the city.

Mr. Schwartz indicated that there are design issues with the project. He indicated that it is less of an issue of the crosswalk and more of an issue of the bulbout. He indicated that Portland has a whole series of this type of bulbout in various neighborhoods. He said that he appreciates this coming before the board and that if it is handled well it could be a real plus for the district.

Carrie Burke indicated that the main issue has been the process. She indicated that stamped crosswalks seem to be a part of the city standard.

Ms. Burke indicated that in the design phase it is unclear how the neighborhood and the city can be assured that it can be handled in the best way possible. She indicated that another concern is that it be tied together with the Court Square initiative. She indicated that maintenance over time is a difficult thing for the neighborhood.

Ann Hemingway indicated that this is the first major traffic calming initiative in the city. She indicated that is a collaborative effort of the neighborhood and Mike Fontaine. She indicated that the design issues are important. She indicated that they are at the balloting stage and that they need to be certain that the residents are in support and are willing to approve it before they invest much more.

Mr. Celentano indicated that he was involved in the traffic calming initiative in Belmont. He indicated that CDBG funds were used and money was dedicated for design. He explained that the design was run through the different committees and he recalls discussions about maintenance issues.

Ms. Fenton indicated that she was surprised by the drawings. She indicated that normally when the city brings a project forward there is a design involved. She indicated that more design attention and something to look at would make it easier for the community and give them something to vote on.

Mr. Painter stated that there is some valuable information about traffic calming on the city's website on the engineering page. He indicated that the funds for the project are somewhat limited. He indicated that an outside landscape architect cannot be considered or paid until they know that they have at least 2/3 of the neighborhood vote.

Ms. Fenton asked Mr. Painter what specific feedback he is looking for from the board.

Mr. Painter indicated that he is asking the board to consider the overall concept and flag any issues that are appropriate or inappropriate.

Mr. Schwartz said that the design issue is important. He suggested that maybe we can come to some agreement in hiring an expert and we can come up with a design. He indicated that the board's purview is design. He indicated that as long as it is executed well it should be successful. He said that a diagram seems like a good idea. He indicated that it is important how the design is actually executed. He indicated that this needs formal design work.

Ms. Winner indicated that she is in favor of traffic calming on Park Street but that she does not have a design to react to.

Mr. Clark stated that he disagrees. He indicated that a public street is part of the public domain and that any interference with the public domain is obnoxious.

Ms. Burke explained that the on street parking is not shown on the plan and that the neckdowns are between parking spaces.

Mr. Clark indicated that if they are defined by parking then he is much calmed. He indicated that, as for the material aspects, he wonders if stone might be better than painted asphalt. He also indicated that he wonders if a stopsign might do the job.

Mr. Celentano indicated that, in working within a project budget, decisions are to be made about how to spend the money and whether it is worth doing fewer traffic calming measures.

Mr. Painter indicated that crosswalks are not considered traffic calming measures, but that in this case they are bounded by traffic calming features.

Mr. Lawson indicated that he has an in house crew that is trained to maintain the stamped asphalt. He indicated that the stamped asphalt is \$2 per square foot while the cobble pavers are about \$12 per square foot.

Ms. Hook asked if, over ten years, there is still a cost differential.

Mr. Lawson indicated maintaining the cobble is very expensive. He indicated that, from the maintenance standpoint, the cobbles don't even come close to the stamped asphalt.

Mr. Clark indicated that every two years the traffic will be shut down while the parking crews repaint.

Ben Ford indicated that they have been stamping and painting crosswalks on Rose Hill Drive and it has not had much of an impact on traffic flow.

Mr. Celentano indicated that the stamped concrete is not the same quality as the architecture and the streetscape in the historic district.

Mr. Painter indicated that some things that are historic are good and some things went away for a very good reason.

Ms. Fenton indicated that she is not sure if there has been a consultant hired for the Court Square project. She indicated that it would be nice to coordinate the designs together.

Ms. Hook indicated that it is essential that a landscape designer participate in this project.

Mr. Schwartz indicated that he is happy to volunteer to work with Ms. Vest to make sure that the questions are answered.

Mr. Clark indicated that between the lights and the bridge there are no traffic lights and Park Street appears to be a greenway. He indicated that this is unusual in an urban context.

Ms. Hemingway indicated that they asked similar questions before they got to this point. She indicated that the studies that took place revealed a volume too heavy to accommodate lights and stopsigns.

Ashlin Smith stated that this project should be brought before the Urban Design Committee.

Archeological Resources

Ms. Vest explained that Preservation Piedmont had raised the issue of protecting archeological resources. She distributed a letter from Preservation Piedmont and a response memo from Craig Brown, Deputy City Attorney.

Ben Ford, archeologist, introduced himself. He indicated that it is not outside of local government to evaluate archeological resources. He indicated that Alexandria and Fairfax have programs in place for archeological resources. He indicated that he would be more than happy to draw together some information on what other communities have been doing. He indicated that Albemarle County has recently unanimously approved protecting archeology within their larger historic preservation plan.

Approval of Minutes: September 14, 1999; September 21, 1999

Mr. Celentano stated that Marco Marraccini is not technically an architect and this word should be struck from the minutes.

Mr. Clark moved to approved the minutes of September 14, 1999 and September 21, 1999 with the change.

Mr. Celentano seconded the motion.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Other Business

Ms. Fenton indicated that Lee Danielson recently bought the property on Main Street and she would like to ensure that the board does not get into a situation similar to the Marriott situation. She asked the board members what they would like to see done to ensure that the process works.

Mr. Celentano suggested that a letter be sent to council suggesting why it is valuable for applicants to come to the board in the very preliminary stages. He indicated that it is important to convey that they are willing to look at very preliminary concepts.

Ms. Hook indicated that the board has gotten a lot of information about these properties. She asked if they could have it back to review again. She indicated that there is a wealth of history on the property.

Mr. Schwartz indicated that there are two positive things that the board can do. First, he stated that a letter from the board to Council would be positive. Second, He requested that at the next meeting staff provide a historical overview of the significance of the site with background information about the board's involvement with the site over the years.

Mr. Fenton indicated that removing the board from the Marriott process after they were overruled was a mistake and she would like to avoid that mistake in the future.

Mr. Clark indicated that it is important that the board keep an open mind about the project. He stated that they should discuss it as little as possible until there is a proposal on the table. He indicated that the board does have a clear track record about the significance of the buildings. He indicated that at this point they have to presume that the proposal will be something extraordinarily worthwhile.

Mr. Schwartz indicated that he has class until 5:30 on Tuesdays for the rest of the semester. He asked the group if they would be willing to change the meeting time to 5:30. The other members were not willing to change the time.

Mr. Clark moved to adjourn the meeting.

Ms. Winner seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

At 6:30 the meeting was adjourned.