

Board of Architectural Review
Meeting
for
December 17, 1996

Members Present:

Kurt Wassenaar
Dawn Thompson
Eldon Wood
Pryor Hale
Gregg Bleam
Todd Bullard

Absent:

J. Blake Caravati

Staff Present:

Satyendra Singh Huja
Marcia Joseph

Meeting began 3:05 PM

The BAR reviewed and offered revisions to the Minutes dated November 19, 1996. Minutes were approved.

I. BAR 96-11-542 Charlottesville Ice Park - Request to change the approved lighting and change the approved west end planter

Staff presented the item to the BAR insert staff report.

The applicant's consultant, Mark Keller, presented the proposed changes to the BAR. Mr. Keller indicated that the metal grid would be raised, and planters inserted. He stated he felt there would be less chance for vandalism and trash collection if the grate were raised. He said that the grid would come to almost the top of the large vent. He estimated that the grate would come within 3" of the top of the vent. He stated that the vent could not be lowered. Instead of creating another planting area in the space between the vent and Water Street he stated that they would place potted plants in this area using annuals and perennials for seasonal plantings.

Kurt Wassenaar asked about the other two vents on this side of the building. One was the pipe traveling up the west side of the building, the other the round aluminum colored structure within the Holly plantings. He stated that the pipe should be better integrated into the building design, it was not part of the approved elevations, and the aluminum pipe (or vent) should be lowered.

Mark Keller indicated that the aluminum vent could not be lowered.

Mr. Huja stated that the plan proposed would make the features less visible than they were currently.

A discussion followed concerning the planting medium proposed. Mark Keller indicated that a moisture retainer would be used with 18" a minimum depth for the planting.

Kurt Wassenaar questioned the applicant on their position concerning the light fixtures.

Mark Keller stated that the applicant had not changed his position, and that they wanted to keep the light fixtures that had been installed.

Colin Rolph stated that the lights are more like an entrance to the ice park, and didn't feel that they were going against the existing lights, and that the lights fit with the building design.

The item was then before the BAR.

Dawn Thompson commented that consistency within the area was important. She was concerned that the applicant had built something that wasn't approved. She said that she felt that if every one did not build according to the approved plan that the area would be a hodge-podge of various designs.

Kurt Wassenaar stated that he did not know when the bench was deleted. He felt that if the bench was not incorporated into the design, then he would like to see a bench of some sort in this area.

Colin Rolph said that he felt that the bench was a step inviting people into the planting area.

Mark Keller stated that the exhaust from the fan would discourage anyone from sitting on the bench.

Eldon Wood stated that he was not sure how much could be done to mitigate the situation. He didn't think that raising the wall was a solution. He stated that he could not support the use of the lights as presented. He felt the lights should be more in keeping with the existing mall lights.

Pryor Hale said that she could not support the lights as proposed. She was concerned about the west entry, and felt that the piece meal method of fixing after the fact would not work. She asked about the possibility of raising the wall around the mechanical features.

Gregg Bleam stated that the planting would be tricky. He was concerned about the maintenance. He felt that the maintenance should be part of the approval. He indicated that he could not support the lighting proposed, and felt that it would be a bad precedent to set.

Todd Bullard said that he could vote in favor of allowing the lights and let them be part of the rink, he felt that the black color of the lights helped them fit into the plan. He was

worried about the precedent set in allowing substitution. He felt that rather than removing the lights, that perhaps the applicant could do some other mitigating changes to the building and site. He included relocating the pipe vent on the west end and dealing with the planting on the west end. He felt that the wall could be raised a couple of brick courses to hide the mechanical equipment.

the vent pipe along the west wall. He also stated that he could not accept the lights as proposed. The standard for the lights had been discussed by many committees over the years and it has been agreed that the lights will be a consistent design feature in this precinct. He felt that approving any other light fixture would be setting a terrible precedent.

The three pieces of molding placed on the building were discussed. Colin Rolph indicated that they were put up on the building to help decide on which one they may use to close the gap between the brick and the wood on the cornice of the building. He stated that once the decision was made that he would come before the BAR requesting approval for installation of the molding.

The question was asked if the steam from the vent could become a centerpiece for the site. There was also discussion as to whether local artists could place some work in this area, and whether the city would fund the art work.

Kurt Wassenaar answered by stating that the city did not fund art projects for private entities, but did have a program for public spaces.

Kurt Wassenaar then moved to approve the proposed planting scheme as presented with the understanding that the plants are maintained and every effort is made to conceal the mechanical devices. He further moved to deny the change of light application based on 1) the fact that urban character and design standard used for the mall were not followed and 2) that this would be precedent setting and 3) that maintenance of standards were important to bring the urban character to the precincts. Changing the lights is a violation of the character.

The motion was seconded by Gregg Bleam.

The vote was 5 to 1 to approve the proposed planter and deny the lights, with Todd Bullard dissenting.

2. **BAR 96-11-538 Mono Loco**

Mr. Huja explained that a subcommittee had met on the site with the applicant and has been working to find a color that is acceptable to the BAR and the applicant.

Kurt Wassenaar said that the discussion concerning the color was still in process.

Ms. Hublitz indicated that the process used to paint the columns had been left on too long. They used copper paint and acid to get the natural patina look and the weather had prevented them from stopping the process.

Ms. Hublitz's associate presented a sample board illustrating the two building colors, a terra cotta for the face of the building and a copper with small traces of blue for the columns.

There was general discussion concerning the weathering process of the wall color. It was suggested that the hue might be brightened, because the color might darken as a result of environmental factors.

The BAR unanimously agreed that the color sample reviewed was acceptable. (terra-cotta building face with copper with faint blue streaks for the columns)

3. **Other Business**

Mr. Huja presented the BAR with information concerning the West Main Street Design District. He said that the 1st reading had been on Monday December 16, 1996. He stated that there was concern that a set of design guidelines be completed before the ordinance was adopted. He felt it may not be necessary to hire a new consultant, and that they could act quickly by using the existing guidelines. Council and consultant has also asked to involve the property owners in the process.

He also informed the BAR that council had asked the BAR to consider the following:

- 1) To inform adjacent owners if an owner is requesting building demolition.
- 2) Whether or not they would support requiring an engineers study prior to demolition.
- 3) The composition of the BAR to include one member from each district, including business people. The list included - 2 architects, 2 owners of commercial property (one from W. Main, one from downtown), 2 people residing (one from each ADC area), 1 planning commission member, 1 landscape architect or historian, 1 citizen at large.

Mr. Huja explained that he would like feed back from the BAR to bring back to the Planning Commission.

There was general discussion about the residence of the commercial property owners, and the question was raised if county residents might be allowed to sit on the BAR if they owned commercial property in one of the districts. There was no consensus on this topic.

Kurt Wassenaar indicated that he would like to produce the design guidelines after the council voted on the district. He said that he supported building on the Frazier work. He felt that a separate ordinance would be very difficult to administer.

Mr. Huja said he had been asked to raise the topic of newer buildings and whether they should be considered differently for demolition, because the site could be used for economic development.

Pryor Hale said that once the guidelines start waiving things it becomes easier to demolish the buildings. She stated that part of the strength of the guidelines was that it allows the BAR to look at the contextual element in relation to the building. If you make certain buildings exempt it makes it difficult to do that.

Kurt Wassenaar felt that the guidelines for demolition should be left alone.

Mr. Huja wondered whether the BAR had comments concerning the composition of the BAR.

Kurt Wassenaar answered that the BAR had no problem with the composition proposed. He did want it noted that if a position representing any area were left unfilled for 6 months that the position become an at large representative.

Mr. Huja then requested that the BAR consider the meeting time, and whether or not it should change. He stated that most localities were split on when the meetings were held, some in day some in evening hours.

The BAR indicated that it would contact Mr. Huja with their comments concerning a meeting time change.

Kurt Wassenaar stated that in January 1997 he will begin his last year on the BAR. He said that it would be a good time to consider electing a new chair. There will be a transition period necessary to ensure continuity.

Eldon Wood felt that they should wait until the new board was appointed, and then elect the new chair. The BAR agreed to this concept.

Kurt Wassenaar said that there have been some good people that have gone off the BAR and would like to ask council in January to recognize former BAR members.

Dawn Thompson stated that it would be also good to recognize successful renovations that had occurred.

General discussion continued concerning press coverage and combining the renovation recognition with some other seasonal occurrence.

Eldon Wood suggested that the recognition of renovation could be part of Architect week, the third week in April.

General discussion concerning press coverage, the communication concerning the design guidelines committee and the BAR, and the Main Street train station proposal continued.

Kurt Wassenaar stated that to his knowledge the proposal to refurbish the train station did not include a master plan for the entire station. The approval from the city only included toilet and roof improvements. There was no plans for preserving the large existing building.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 PM.