

CITY OF BEAUFORT
Historic District Review Board
Full Board
Staff Report
Meeting of February 10, 2016

Case Number: HR16-03
Property Address: 500 Port Republic Street
Applicant: Scott M. Sonoc
Type of Request: Addition of Boat Lift and Electricity to an existing dock
Zoning: TBR – Traditional Beaufort Residential – The Point

Historical: This parcel on Port Republic Street contains a contributing building, c. 1825-1840. It has a south-facing porch overlooking the river. In 2009, an applicant came to the HRB for approval of a new 104’ dock on this property, to be placed 3’ above mean high water. The HRB approved the dock on the condition that neither a boat lift nor lighting be added. In 2013, Mr. Sonoc submitted to the OCRM to build a 306’ dock in the same location, to extend into the Beaufort River. After he was denied by OCRM, a lawsuit ensued and he was granted permission for the dock. The OCRM approval included a boat lift and lighting. That construction of the dock, per OCRM/lawsuit, was approved by the city staff, but the boat lift and lighting were not approved.

Request: **The applicant wishes to add a boat lift and lighting to the 306’ dock recently constructed.**

Size: **The boat lift would be 12’x13’ and sit a maximum of 6’ above mean high water. A 3’x28’ catwalk with 36” high handrails would connect to the boatlift.**

Zoning: **TBR – Traditional Beaufort Residential – The Point**

- Purview: The Unified Development Ordinance, Article 4 –Zoning Districts, Section 4.9.D.2 discusses the designation of the Historic District. Section c. states “The boundaries of the Beaufort Historic District and the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District are the same with the following clarifications/exceptions: Structures attached to the high ground are deemed to lie within the district and shall be reviewed in entirety in accordance with the provisions of this section. This gives the HRB purview over the aesthetics of the dock, including boat lifts, lighting, handrails, etc... It does not give the HRB purview over whether a dock is permitted.

Synopsis of Applicable Guidelines:

- UDO, Section 3.20.E Defines the Review Criteria for the HRB.
- Secretary of the Interior Standards #2 states: The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The replacement of intact or repairable historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Staff Questions, Comments & Suggestions:

- When this project appeared before the board in 2009 aesthetics were a concern and a board member asked specifically about the boat lift and lighting. The applicant, a representative of the Sonocs, assured the board that that was not part of the proposal. A boat lift and lighting at the end of a 306' dock is an even greater aesthetic concern. Not only does it detract from the classic, south-facing part of the house as it interrupts the view, but given its length and prominence in the water, it is visible by everyone entering the Historic District via the Woods Bridge (see photo attached).
- Staff contends that the defining features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize this property, and the marsh line of the Historic District as a whole, will be altered by the boatlift and lighting.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends denial of the request to add a boat lift and lighting. The previous HRB decision, based upon a shorter and less obtrusive dock, should be upheld.

