

A meeting of the Historic District Review Board was held on **July 13, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.** in the City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Joel Newman and board members Barbara Laurie, Quinn Peitz, Chuck Symes, and Lauren Kelly, planning staff. John Dickerson was absent.

In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d) as amended, all local media were duly notified of the time, date, place, and agenda of this meeting.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Newman called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

### **MINUTES**

**Mr. Symes made a motion, seconded by Mr. Peitz, to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2016 Historic District Review Board meeting. The motion to approve the minutes as submitted passed unanimously.**

### **PUBLIC HEARING: 1106 CONGRESS STREET – DEMOLITION OF STRUCTURE**

**Chairman Newman opened this public hearing.** This house is not on the Historic Sites Survey, and it is circa 1965 per tax records, Ms. Kelly said. The applicant, the City of Beaufort, is seeking final approval for its demolition, which is staff's recommendation. There was a fire in February, she said, and the rear and interior were badly damaged. The planning office has been working with the fire department to try to take some action. **Chairman Newman closed this public hearing.**

### **REVIEW OF FULL BOARD PROJECTS**

#### **1106 Congress Street, Identified as R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 170**

Major Demolition

Applicant: City of Beaufort (HR16-22)

*The applicant is proposing to demolish the structure.*

**Mr. Peitz made a motion to approve the demolition. Mr. Symes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **707 Church Street, Identified as District R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 902**

**New Construction/Subdivision Recommendation**

Applicant: Tom Michaels (HR16-23)

*The applicant is requesting a recommendation for a lot-size variance, in order to construct a new house. The design of the new house is also being reviewed.*

Ms. Kelly said this project came to the HRB in May, but the applicant did not attend, and no decisions were made. The owner is requesting a recommendation from the HRB for a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBOA) to subdivide the lot into two parcels; the lot size would be smaller than is required in General Residential zoning, so the

variance is required. The applicant's second request is to construct a 1½-story cottage, if the subdivision is approved, Ms. Kelly said.

Staff is "pretty supportive" of the subdivision request, Ms. Kelly said, because "there is not a lot of context in this corner" (at the intersection of Church and Duke Streets), and subdivision "could reset the pattern," if the size, mass, and scale of the proposed cottage is appropriate on the front-most parcel. The size of the lot and type of building were concerns at the May HRB meeting, she said, but since then, plans have changed to construct a smaller structure. There are many small lots in the area, Ms. Kelly said, examples of which are in the staff report.

General comments:

- Ms. Kelly asked what the plan is for the existing structure.
- Window divisions need to be added, she said, and staff recommends 2/2 or 4/4.
- Staff feels a cottage of 1 or 1½ stories is the appropriate scale.

Staff recommends that the board support approval of the variance request to the ZBOA, Ms. Kelly said, on the condition that a structure no larger than 1 or 1½ stories is built on the lot, with window divisions and any other changes that the board thinks are appropriate added to the structure.

**Maxine Lutz**, Historic Beaufort Foundation (HBF), said last time the organization was concerned about the lot size, but they understand that there are others in the immediate area that are this small, and they agree that they would like the existing house to be restored or rehabbed if permission is given for the new structure.

Chairman Newman said the request for the HRB is only for support of the variance request to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Mr. Symes said the applicant is also seeking conceptual approval of the structure.

Mr. Symes asked what the rule is with the trees. He said there are a couple they would have to cut down to build a house. He wanted to know the city's stance. There's a 2' oak there and one that looks dead. Ms. Kelly said if the subdivision was approved, and the tree is in the footprint of the building and could not be worked around, then it would have to be removed.

Mr. Symes said the site plan "doesn't show the porch that's on the house that's there now, and it sort of indicates that there's space to park two cars between the two houses if they were built," which he doesn't "think that's really possible. **Tom Michaels** said that the porch wasn't shown because it was "part of the renovations that we were previously looking at," which they are putting on hold until they learn if the subdivision is approved.

Chairman Newman asked if, on the site plan, the lower house has the front porch on the

north side removed to show the parking space. Mr. Michaels said yes. They “will probably try to reorient it so that it’s on the street, instead of the side.” Chairman Newman asked if there was room between the house and the setback toward the street to do a porch, and Mr. Michaels said he’s sure that they “could get a variance or work with the city on it.” Mr. Peitz asked if the old house’s formal entrance would be on Church Street. Mr. Michaels said yes.

Ms. Kelly clarified that “street-side setbacks in the Historic District are generally prevailing,” so depending on the rest of the context, they might not need a variance, but would need board approval. She said the structure “fits in with all of the setbacks and the percentage of impervious surface coverage,” except for the steps that are in the side setback. The applicant would need a variance for those to encroach into the side setback. They are allowed to encroach into street-side setbacks, but not into interior side setbacks.

Chairman Newman suggested how the applicant could save a significant tree on the property. Mr. Michaels said they “could go closer to the street,” such as houses are that are “down the block” from this one. He would look at what other setbacks are along the street.

Mr. Symes said he’s still concerned that the subdivided lot is small to put a house on. If the board agreed that a structure could be put on it, a single-story structure would be more appropriate and would fit into the neighborhood better. Because the lot is 60% of the normal size, a story-and-a-half may be too much for it. Ms. Kelly said up to 35% variance could go before the HRB with a development design exception. This is a 38% deviation. Mr. Peitz asked if Mr. Symes was okay with the property subdivision. Mr. Symes said he feels “the lot is too small to do this in,” though he understands that “there are some smaller lots” in the area. If the board agrees that it’s okay to subdivide the lot, he would support only a single-story house on it, which would fit in the neighborhood. Other lots in the neighborhood are much bigger so they could accommodate bigger houses. “Right here,” he said, “a single story house would be the right answer.”

Chairman Newman said he is okay with the subdivision. It fits in with the idea of infill in empty spaces in the city, he said, so if someone is willing to invest in this and put up a house, he supports it. He sees that the scale is a little much and feels it could be scaled back a little bit while preserving the amount of bedroom and bathroom arrangement. The scale could be cut down by running the gable “so the ridge is simply running east-west,” and then “make the two bedrooms a shed dormer on the front and back,” which would make the character of the house more modest. The gables now “make it look a little more massive,” and this would diminish the scale somewhat.

Ms. Lutz asked about the flood elevation here. She asked how much the structure has to be raised. Ms. Kelly said it’s 13’–14’. From a flood perspective, she said, it doesn’t need

to be raised, but aesthetically, it could be.

Mr. Peitz said he agrees with Mr. Symes and Chairman Newman that the building could be smaller, but he is ready to move forward with the subdivision request.

**Jay Weidner** said it should be noted that the existing gray house is the same building that's on the 1912 Sanborn map. In the 1990s, the original siding, windows, and door were removed, but the openings are the same as the original configuration, as is the body of the house, he said. To take a Beaufort-style cottage that a front porch would be appropriate on and that has a rear extension, and change the entrance to the west side of the house "would be violating the historic structure," Mr. Weidner said. "If it is decided (that) whether or not it is a contributing structure is set in stone," that's not important.

Mr. Weidner asked that the board "check how you perceive the lots that have been subdivided this tiny. In 1912, there were virtually none." He feels that the lots that have been subdivided to such small size "are substandard housing": there's no outdoor living area, no opportunity for privacy when outside of the house, and very limited parking area. Also, Mr. Weidner feels having a few houses with large front yards – not "bring(ing) every single house . . . up to the street" – is "a great asset," and varying the street frontages "adds interest to the Historic District." He has always thought that for this lot and house, the large front yard is an asset.

Chairman Newman said he agrees with Mr. Weidner's comments, and the idiosyncrasies are part of the character of the historic houses, but he doesn't know "how to regulate idiosyncrasies." Ms. Kelly said pre-1960s, the lot subdivisions evolved naturally as larger lots with multiple buildings on them were divided as the buildings were given to family members. Chairman Newman said he agrees with Mr. Weidner about the desirability of idiosyncrasy, but there are a lot of examples of these small lots in the neighborhood. He also agrees about having an area for outdoor living. People who choose to live in this context sacrifice that, except for their porch.

Mr. Peitz said he thinks some of the new construction is very good, not substandard, even though they don't have the outdoor space, which is sometimes sacrificed. The applicant will also improve the pre-existing house on this lot. A variance of housing types and pushing them to the street may be a good idea in some instances and not in others.

Ms. Kelly said the board could make a statement or a motion to recommend to the zoning board. **Mr. Peitz made a motion to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals that they consider approving the variance request so that the applicant can subdivide the lot. Ms. Laurie seconded the motion. 3-1, Mr. Symes opposed.**

**305 East Street, Identified as District R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 495,**

## **Alterations, Additions**

Applicant: Johan Niemand for Arthur Namerow (HR16-24)

*The applicant is proposing an addition/remodel to the master suite of existing residence.*

Ms. Kelly said this is an addition to a structure, which is located in The Point and is circa 1944. It is not in the *Historic Site Survey*. There was a substantial addition to the building in 2011–2012. The applicant is requesting approval to make an addition on the northeast corner that would add 465 square feet of heated space. Since it's not a contributing structure, there are not a lot of applicable guidelines, Ms. Kelly said, though some that are typically used in historic areas could apply.

The general location, mass and scale are harmonious with the existing structure, Ms. Kelly said. Staff feels the roof form seems complicated and recommended simplifying it by pulling out the eastern wall of the master bedroom to align with the balconette. This would be make it more equivalent with the roof on the opposite wing, she said. Also, there are a variety of roof pitches, and "this one may be equal to or exceeding the height of the main roof," Ms. Kelly said, so the applicant should see if it could be reduced. Also, the spacing of the piers along the foundation should be considered, and making them "have a relationship with the openings above" them would "simplify and standardize that elevation.

Staff recommends approval based on board discussion of these minor elements, Ms. Kelly said. Chairman Newman said he agrees with staff about the roof profiles following the same general lines. He thinks the roof would end up being the same height as the one on the right. Ms. Kelly said she thinks it's wider. Chairman Newman said the master bedroom and master bathroom could be made a little lower. The main addition could be the same ridge height "as the right-hand one."

Mr. Niemand said the pitches are different because the sunroom has a vaulted ceiling space, and the owners want to recreate that in the bedroom. In regard to Ms. Kelly's comment about bumping out the section next to the open porch, there are 3 palmetto trees there, he said, and if they did that, they would have to take out one or two of the trees, which they would like to keep because they give them shade in the morning on that side of the house. Mr. Weidner said palmetto trees "could be popped up" and easily moved, if the applicants would like to do that.

Mr. Symes said he has no objections; the roofline is "a little complicated," but he has no problem with that. Mr. Peitz said this is not a contributing structure; he agrees with Chairman Newman's comments about the roof, but other than that, he thinks it's appropriate. Ms. Laurie said she has no objections. Ms. Lutz said HBF thinks it's a nice addition and does not intrude into anyone else's space or privacy.

**Mr. Symes made a motion for final approval of the project with the condition that an effort is made to simplify the roofline. Mr. Peitz seconded the motion. The motion**

passed unanimously.

**701 Bay Street, Identified as District R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 947,**

**Alterations, Additions**

Applicant: Beaufort Design Build for Fordham Enterprises, LLC (HR16-21)

*The applicant is proposing alterations and additions to the interior and exterior.*

Ms. Kelly said this structure, the Fordham Market building, is circa 1907; it is listed as contributing in the *Historic Sites Survey*. The applicant would like to modify the fenestration, with additional shopfront windows on the Carteret Street façade of the structure.

Applicable guidelines include the *Preservation Manual and Supplement*, Ms. Kelly said; much of the plan for improving the façade has been implemented since these drawings were done. The Civic Master Plan proposed conceptual improvements for the Carteret Street façade. She said she had noticed while doing research that in the *Preservation Manual and Supplement*, there was an effort to make the Bay Street façade uniform and “almost symmetrical, aside from where the door is,” but “historically and currently,” that’s not the way it has been. “It’s symmetrical on top,” she said, “but asymmetrical on the bottom, with this corner always being a little bit different.”

“In the Milner reports, the Carteret Street façade was never taken into account,” Ms. Kelly said, even though “this is a very prominent corner at a very prominent intersection.”

The modifications to the more recent rear wing along Carteret Street, Ms. Kelly said, tie the old and the new together with some consistency on the ground floor. Staff commented that the applicant could consider replicating the tripartite window at the southern-most shopfront on Carteret Street, and then transition into the larger plate-glass shopfront window going further north. Modifying openings is more flexible on this kind of building than on a residential structure, she said; shopfronts change all the time, based on uses.

Staff recommends final approval of the request, Ms. Kelly said, with board discussion of how the southern-most shopfront window is articulated.

Ms. Lutz said she agreed with what Ms. Kelly had said about “the window as you come around the corner.” Mr. Symes said that in the proposal the applicant had made, there are “two doors coming out,” which he indicated on the projection of the plan. He asked if it would be within code to change the plan “so you only cut one door into the building.” The architect, **Adam Biery**, said, “That would be a fire-rated wall. You could put a door there by rights, but I don’t think you can exit through an egress path to a second floor.” Mr. Symes explained that he’d been asking if an alternative idea to what was presented in the plan would be legal. Mr. Biery said it would not be. Chairman

Newman said it would also be “confusing” to people trying to access the second floor. Mr. Symes said he had been trying “to eliminate one hole in the wall.” He asked if the back door is an emergency exit or another entrance. Mr. Biery said it will be there for entrance, not as an emergency exit.

Chairman Newman said he feels “the more animated it is along the street, the better.” He likes the idea of bringing the corner window around the corner. Mr. Biery said they want to mimic the existing shopfront as much as possible. It will not be a metal storefront. They have met with a number of representatives about this.

Mr. Symes said the side of the building doesn’t look good at present, and bringing the windows around would makes it look better and more inviting, but this is a historic building, and though it’s commercial, they are “saying it’s okay to . . . chop big holes in the side of the building” for windows. He asked how they could both protect this historic building and also support its use in the twenty-first century. He understands that they will have to cut two doors, Mr. Symes said; he asked if the applicant would be satisfied that it “would give you that feel” to open up the existing bricked-up windows and put awnings over them, but with smaller windows (i.e., the original sizes).

Mr. Biery said they have discussed this with the owner: opening up two corner windows, putting an awning over them, and “reclaiming the existing bricked-up opening would be fine,” but he replied, “Yes,” when Mr. Symes asked him if they “still want to put the big (window) in.” Chairman Newman said Mr. Biery is saying that there are two bricked-in windows there now, and using them is “less invasive,” then “begin the new openings further down Carteret Street.” Mr. Peitz said he likes what staff recommended about “making the windows identical.”

Mr. Weidner said the left-hand bricked up window was a door, and it is 6” wider than the one it’s paired with, so it might be nice to restore it to use as a door. Other than that, the entire building is intact as it was in 1909. The plate glass windows on Bay Street are original, he said, including the one on the corner, which “mimics the one that’s above it.” Mr. Weidner feels that first, the windows should be un-bricked to see how functional they are. Then, the northernmost pair of windows upstairs has two windows below it that are tiny, with high sills; they were “just meant to give illumination,” he said, not be display windows, and he would not object to them being opened to full length.

Mr. Symes said HBF's position is “to allow the doors to go in but to keep the windows . . . in there, the original four. Mr. Peitz asked if Mr. Symes meant that on the Carteret Street side, HBF feels the applicant should “leave the four existing windows from the original building, take out the two little windows, and also put that other door in.” Mr. Symes said that they also agreed that awnings should be “put . . . over the whole thing and that will give you some more character down the street.” 55:35

Mr. Biery said his client is fine with taking the brick out of the corner windows and opening them back up. On the storefront, “we have to discuss more,” because the building owner “wants to keep a larger storefront presence on Carteret Street.”

Chairman Newman suggested the applicant could also “use the four windows that are open,” and add two more new “window openings in that 16’-wide thing that correspond to the upper windows . . . The next doorway down (would be) a completely new opening.” Mr. Peitz felt that would be a good idea. This would open the façade back up, Chairman Newman said, “but following the context that already exists, just adding some more of it.” Four windows with brick between them isn’t “as open as a storefront,” he said, “but it’s not bad.”

Chairman Newman said they could gang the four windows together, rather than using a large plate glass window. Mr. Biery said he would have to take that back to his client. Mr. Peitz feels Mr. Biery should talk to the owner before the board makes a motion that forces the owner to do something. Chairman Newman asked if the board could make a motion stating what the HRB would approve, and then the applicant could come back to Ms. Kelly.

Mr. Biery asked, if the owner objects to four windows being replicated under the four existing windows, if a compromise could be having the two larger windows “with these lines brought straight down, with a center.” He thinks that the owner may be thinking of having a restaurant there, so he’d like for people to be able to see people inside the building “and have that interaction on a busy corner.” Mr. Symes said if he were a guest at a restaurant inside this building, he’d prefer a smaller window. Chairman Newman said Bay Street feels “kind of plodding,” while Carteret Street is busier, with “less of a big storefront face to it.” He said Mr. Biery could let his client know that what the board is recommending is what the board would approve.

**Mr. Peitz made a motion for final approval of the application as submitted with the following conditions: open the existing four openings on Carteret Street; add two new openings further north on Carteret Street that match the window openings above; allow a door opening where the small windows are, and allow the new door opening to the upstairs to be done as shown. Openings in the annex are approved as shown. Mr. Symes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Kelly said she hasn’t completed the mural policy, but she will have it ready for the next HRB meeting. She will give Ms. Laurie the list of the lanes that need to be named following this meeting.

Ms. Lutz said she had received an email that said there had been a public arts commission in Beaufort at one point. They “weighed in,” and council accepted their recommendations on public art “as policy.”

In response to a question from Ms. Laurie, Ms. Kelly said that in the early 2000s, the city had changed its focus to restricting the city's growth boundaries and focusing on infill, rather than sprawling the city out.

Ms. Laurie said asked the next step for demolitions that come to the board and are approved. Ms. Kelly said with a standard demolition, there's no timeframe, unless there's a code enforcement issue, so the next step would be for the applicant to apply for a demolition permit. Ms. Laurie asked if the applicant is responsible for taking the building down. Ms. Kelly said if the city is responsible for the demolition petition, it would go to city council for two readings, and if it were approved, the city would hire the contractor for the demolition. The cost would be added to the tax bill, so if someone were to buy the lot, they would pay for the demolition.

Mr. Symes asked what had happened with the vacant lot next to Old Bull; the HRB had given preliminary approval for a building there. Chairman Newman said that project had the same owner and architect as the Fordham Hardware project. Mr. Biery had told him that the owner is going to deal with the Fordham Hardware project now, then do "an infill on the empty lot that is beyond this," and then work with the lot next to Old Bull.

Ms. Lutz introduced HBF's board chair, **John Troutman**. There was a discussion about the roles and relationship of HBF and the HRB.

Chairman Newman noted that Mr. Niemand is a designer, not an architect, as he had been referred to in the June 15 minutes.

There being no further business to come before the board, **Mr. Symes made a motion, second by Ms. Laurie, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously**, and the meeting adjourned at 3:26 p.m.