

A meeting of the Historic District Review Board was held on October 9, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. in the City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Joel Newman, board members Mike Rainey and Michelle Knoll, and city staff Lauren Kelly.

Inez Neal and Erica Dickerson were 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.

Ms. Kelly introduced the newest board member, Ms. Knoll.

MINUTES

Mr. Rainey made a motion, second by Chairman Newman, to approve the minutes of September 11, 2013 as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

807 Harrington Street – Major Demolition of Structure

Ms. Kelly said the applicant is applying for final demolition. The structure is not listed on the historic site survey. A building was on the property from 1890, but it doesn't match the footprint of what's there today. The building has been vacant and abandoned for years, and the codes enforcement office sent a letter, so Ms. Kelly sent a letter for demolition. Staff approves this request. **Maxine Lutz** said Historic Beaufort Foundation does not object to the demolition.

REVIEW OF FULL BOARD PROJECTS

807 Harrington Street – Major Demolition of Structure, Final Review

Applicant: Marianne D. Chenault, Owner (HR13-39)

Mr. Rainey made a motion for approval of the application to demolish as submitted. Ms. Knoll seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

City Block of Beaufort Inn – 811 Port Republic Street, New Construction, Conceptual Review

Applicant: R.W. Chambers Architect for 303 Associates, Owner (HR13-41)

Ms. Kelly said that the applicant was asking for conceptual approval. It's where the main part of the Beaufort Inn is. The demolition of 307 West Street has already been approved. The block is diverse in terms of the other buildings there, and what has been there historically. There are 7 buildings of 3 primary types proposed: a corner building (a 3.5 story building, on the corner of West & Port Republic, was previously approved for this corner in 2006); (5) 8-bedroom buildings with one being a 6-bedroom variant, and (1) 4-bedroom building. The floor plan will be basically the same, but there will be a change in materials.

Ms. Kelly said there's a question of circulation between the buildings, parking, and screening of mechanical equipment; this needs to be shown in the next phase. The frontage conditions will

be important, entrances to the rooms from the street are also critical, she said. Mass and scale of each building will have to be studied in relation to the exiting streetscape as well as a street section and a street elevation for each street in subsequent submittals. Staff recommends conceptual approval as submitted with more detail on utilities, internal paths, landscape design, and parking required at the preliminary submittal. The detailed design of each building will be approved separately.

Chairman Newman said they have the original cottage plans and “a 3-D thing that shows that they intend to have variety.” **Bill Chambers** said that “each building has to come in on its own,” and there may be multiple architects on the project. The inner gardens will be built as each building comes online, so they can’t design the connections until that happens. They are asking the Historic District Review Board for the spacing and the footprint, Mr. Chambers said. They have final approval on the corner building, but it’s expired, and they might change the type of commercial building and maybe include an eating area, for example. There may be rooms or offices on top. The intent is to construct 2-story buildings, not 3-story as in the lapsed approval. They would like get approval for a master plan, but they need to know what the board needs for a master plan. Mr. Chambers said he doesn’t know what the landscape architect might have in mind for the landscape. The plan is for a series of small paths and open space at this time.

In regard to parking, it’s off-site, Mr. Chambers said. **Courtney Worrell** said the lot to the west is under contract, and all the parking would be there. It’s a parking lot currently. The trash services and mechanical units have to be integrated; the Inn has a trash collection now. He would like to see the mechanical units elevated. They aren’t trying to achieve building design at this point, Mr. Chambers said. Chairman Newman said there’s no building to review, so he opened the discussion.

Mr. Rainey said the adjacent property is under contract, and that’s the adjacent parking, he assumes. He “would highly favor a landscape plan to go along with the parking” because it’s an eyesore and would be good to know that trees would be planted there. The conceptual plan is the footprint, and then the buildings will be addressed case by case, Mr. Rainey said. He thinks parking and a rudimentary landscape plan are what’s required.

Ms. Knoll said she has concerns about density. She asked if they have compared the footprints to other nearby blocks. Mr. Chambers said they can do that. Ms. Knoll said it appears dense to her. Mr. Chambers said the gaps are 10-12’ between the buildings and one’s 14’. They’re trying to pick up the established scale, Mr. Chambers said. They won’t be smaller than 10’. The gaps will probably not all be walkable for security. He discussed the various densities they have considered thus far in relation to adjacent streets. He said this is a core commercial zoning, and they are treating it as residential rather than core commercial. Zoning-wise, they have a zero lot line, but that’s not what they want to achieve at this point, he said. Ms. Knoll said she had pulled the Sanborn map, and historically, the densities seem different. Chairman Newman said this could be a wonderful project, and its success will be based “more on the overall landscape and master plan for the user group on the inside of this.” Its public face is on the outside. The success will be based on the overall plan, and the buildings will be

variants of architecture to give it the vitality it will need, he feels. The master plan needs the most intensive scrutiny on Mr. Chambers' part. Chairman Newman said he's not worried about historical density – this is a new instance – and fits in with the idea of infilling where there are vacancies.

Ms. Worrell said how this is phased – how many buildings will come online at a time – will determine the gardens. The tabby garden that used to be a parking lot was turned into green space and will be that until a building is built. They will probably start with Craven Street for the first building(s). They are prepared to phase in buildings, then gardens and the internal circulation. It's hard to say what the ultimate master plan will be, she said.

Mr. Chambers said they can do a master plan for this submission, though. Chairman Newman said he understands that the market and economics will change, and it will depend on the success of it, which will make it go faster, but they need an overall idea with flexibility, a “good road map, kind of an intention,” he believes. Mr. Rainey said “the whole concept will be met with enthusiasm, not resistance.”

Mr. Rainey made a motion that the plan as presented be granted conditional approval, with the caveat that any future plans will present changes discussed. Ms. Knoll seconded and amended the motion to include that individual buildings would be approved separately. The motion passed unanimously.

915 Craven Street – Alterations, Additions, Final Review

Applicant: CBL Architects for Tabernacle Baptist Church (HR13-42)

Ms. Kelly said this project was previously approved in 2007 and extended in 2009. There have been no changes since then. Staff recommends final approval as submitted. Chairman Newman asked if Historic Beaufort Foundation objected to this being extended again. Ms. Lutz said they did not.

Ms. Knoll asked if there was a rear elevation, which wasn't in her packet. **Ms. Knoll made a motion to approve, second by Mr. Rainey. The motion passed unanimously.**

1103 Bay Street – Alterations, Additions, Conceptual Review.

Applicant: Allison Ramsey Architects for Frank & Amy Lesesne (HR13-43)

Ms. Kelly said this project, known as The Anchorage, is an important, old, prominent building in the Historic District. It was listed in almost all surveys done on the Historic District. It underwent extensive renovations between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Historic Beaufort Foundation has a facade easement on this property, so they must also approve any external changes to the building.

There are a significant number of proposed site changes, which Ms. Kelly enumerated:

- A pool and a sunken courtyard to alleviate ADA issues.
- A commercial elevator – masonry with glass.
- Relocation of the windows on the east side of the rear wing of the building - The wing has

always been there and has evolved and become two-story post-1950.

- Reconstruction of the rear entry.
- Installation of glass behind the existing rail on the roof of the porch; the new roof deck will be utilized and require additional security by means of this glass guard.

Site issues:

- New impervious surface coverage – need a proposed amount with the new paving plan, pool and the additional outbuilding.
- Is there evidence of any historic landscaping or garden design on this property?
- The Preservation Manual should be consulted in regard to landscaping elements and practices.
- If there are no historic precedents for them, formalized raised garden beds, and other elements are discouraged.
- The new accessory building will be required to meet the appropriate setbacks but in the Historic District, the side setback can be reduced to 5’.

Architecture:

- Staff appreciates the glass rail and elevator.
- The rear portico maybe a little out of style and character.
- Staff recommends a hipped roof on the portico so as not to contrast with the exiting architecture of the building.
- The building has had a number of outbuildings historically, and staff appreciates them putting the existing outbuilding back into service.
- This is being doubled in size, and since the outbuildings have varied in size historically, this may be appropriate. Staff suggests trim variations and breaking up the masses, e.g., lowering part of the roof, to show what’s old and what’s new.

They are excited this project is coming back to life, Ms. Kelly said. The building has been vacant at least five years. Staff recommends approval with some conditions that were already discussed.

Cooter Ramsey introduced **Frank** and **Amy Lesesne**, the soon-to-be-owners. They have met with Historic Beaufort Foundation and are going to make changes to what the Historic District Review Board has before it. The glass elevator is going away, Mr. Ramsey said, and they are going to keep it inside the existing structure on the back, so they don’t have to make a decision on it. The proposed windows to be relocated back there on the east elevation won’t change. That portion will stay as-is, he said.

The portico entry and sunken garden off the back will offer accessibility, Mr. Ramsey said, and the best way to do that is to go down to the basement area through carving out the back yard and having “a sloping entrance to that space as a nice entry for those who will use it as they come from parking.” They have no concerns with putting a hip roof on that back part, he said. On the outbuilding itself, “it will probably change pretty drastically.” They will probably come

back with a totally different concept for how they use it. It won't be quite as massive as what they proposed.

The approach they come back with will be preserving what's there and not changing the massing very much, according to Mr. Ramsey. He would like to get feedback on more than one outbuilding out back as well as the rear entry. If they are going in the right direction on that, they will keep going, he said.

Chairman Newman said it sounds like they have conveyed the commentary from Historic Beaufort Foundation, and Ms. Lutz said they understand the situation of not changing the façade of the outbuilding and not risking adding the elevator to the exterior of the tabby wall, which was Historic Beaufort Foundation's big concern.

Chairman Newman asked if there was reticence about putting the elevator completely outside. Mr. Ramsey said they looked at that, but it wasn't a great addition when they did that approach, so he'd rather get it inside. Ms. Kelly said she studied the rear addition, and originally it was a wood frame addition until not long ago. She thinks the stucco tabby was done in the early 2000s. Mr. Ramsey said he "honestly (doesn't) know what it is at this point." Mr. Rainey said he thinks integrating the elevator inside was good.

Mr. Ramsey said on the upper level, there's an observation platform, and they would like to take advantage of the deck and redo the surface on the whole upper level. The guard level is only 24" tall, so they would like to bring in a glass barrier for the entire 4th floor deck. They haven't worked out all the details, but it would essentially be all glass. Mr. Rainey said he has no problem with the rear entrance or the sunken garden.

Chairman Newman said he wasn't clear on the plan for where windows are, etc. The attachment to the outbuilding they had before "looked too fussy" to him. He feels these two structures, if they did another outbuilding, don't have to match. There's an opportunity for a lot of different shapes based on the existing building. The outbuildings can influence the garden. Mr. Ramsey said they would drain the sunken garden with pumps. In regard to the railing, Chairman Newman said it's a good idea. He thinks they will "have to pull it back a couple of feet to make it do what it needs going to do."

Mr. Lesesne asked if the pool counts as impervious space, and Ms. Kelly said yes. He asked if there are materials they can't use historically for paving. Ms. Kelly said in keeping with the preservation manual, they prefer materials that are more indicative of what has historically existed in the whole district, as opposed to modular paving blocks. Chairman Newman said they can use blue stone and slate. Mr. Lesesne asked if they could use newer hardscape materials that were pervious, and Ms. Kelly said that was viable. They have a 60% impervious surface maximum, and they probably won't get there. Mr. Lesesne said it's a small lot for the house size. Ms. Kelly suggested crushed shell for pads, etc.

Mr. Lesesne said they would like a conceptual approval for financing. **Mr. Rainey moved that the conceptual approval be given and that the comments made be taken into consideration. Ms. Knoll seconded.** Chairman Newman said he hoped that they get their financing.

DISCUSSION

212, 214 Scott Street & 812 Port Republic Street – New Construction, Conceptual Discussion

Applicant: Coast Architects for Beaufort Inn, LLC (HR13-40)

Ms. Kelly said the applicant submitted a conceptual site plan, not building plans and elevations, to get feedback. Staff questioned the fact that the Greyhound Flats/Lanier parking building is not in this plan. That's parcel A, Ms. Worrell said. The site plan shows a building 180' long, Ms. Kelly said. It's not a typical mass and length seen in this type of building. It's over double the size of the Palm and Moon building. She suggested breaking up the mass and suggested they consider connecting the parking with the parking for the running store. Parking should remain internalized. The idea of having unit entries directly onto Scott and Port Republic Streets is a good idea, and Ms. Kelly encouraged them to keep that. They should consider stoops and external porches as they are traditional to Beaufort architecture.

Ms. Kelly said that in 2007 a similar building was proposed for the block across from this one, and there were similar comments by the city architect at the time; Ms. Kelly said she could provide those if they want them. Ms. Worrell said they had the site plans, and they wanted feedback to give the architects further direction. They understand the comments about the massing along Port Republic Street. Ms. Worrell had brought something from the Civic Master Plan to show a mass with forms that are broken up. She confirmed that Parcel A is Greyhound Flats. They don't own the attached parking lot, so they haven't looked into connecting to it yet, she said. It can be two or three stories, and she said she would like the board's initial thoughts on the project.

Ms. Knoll said she agrees with Ms. Kelly about the massing. The other blocked proposal's massing was one of her favorite parts of it. A big stretch, even broken up architecturally, could be a concern. Those are her initial thoughts – that the massing could be heavy for the area – but she doesn't know how they could get that many units in that small of a space without having them connected.

Mr. Rainey said his concern is the same as the last time something came up like this. "It takes something out of context for Beaufort" - a townhouse concept – "and plops it on that street," blocking off the street. "It's more attuned to Savannah and is an inner city concept," Mr. Rainey said, that he doesn't think belongs in Beaufort. He thinks it will be "alien to all the architecture and all the space and all that Beaufort is."

Chairman Newman said he feels that they are constantly being given these "images in the Civic Master Plan and with imagery that is New Urbanism imagery," as in Habersham. Where it's a new, planned community, it works, but this is a different context. There are precedents for multiple height buildings in other places in town, and there doesn't have to be a porch on every

building. This is hard to evaluate other than as a site plan. Architecturally, “the only internal view is the tabby environment of the little area collection of buildings.” For gross planning ideas, “it looks like a monolith,” Chairman Newman said. The scale doesn’t look “realistic” to him. They “need to come up with the right collection of footprints,” Chairman Newman concluded.

Ms. Lutz asked what would be in the buildings, and Ms. Worrell said they are apartments or condos at this point. Ms. Lutz said the tabby is very fragile, and to disturb it would be serious, so she hopes they consider it. She agrees with breaking up the mass and loves the idea of Bay Street, but she wants to make sure it doesn’t look like townhomes in any other town. There was a general discussion of how to integrate the buildings into the existing buildings.

1401 Duke Street – Minor Demolition, Conceptual Discussion

Applicant: Chuck Ferguson (HR13-46)

Chairman Newman said this is a little building on the corner of Duke and Harrington Streets. Mr. Ferguson said his dilemma is that the building sits over the property line. The city has suggested that they remove the rear addition because it’s falling down. Once this addition is torn down, Mr. Ferguson wants to know if he can put a building back there, which he thinks would be violation of the new setback rules. Ms. Lutz said it’s in the same block as the Frogmore Lodge. Mr. Ferguson said he “would like to build an addition that would fill the lot up one day.”

Mr. Ferguson is concerned he’d be in violation of the setback requirements if he has no plan as to what he would do once it’s torn down. Mr. Ferguson wanted to know if the grandfathering is still in place if it’s torn down. Ms. Kelly said in the Historic District, they *are* in the right-of-way, but they can put it at the zero lot line. Ms. Kelly said side setbacks in the Historic District are anywhere from 6-10’. Chairman Newman clarified that Mr. Ferguson can get a zero setback on the front or street side but not necessarily the others [internal side or rear]. Ms. Kelly said the others would have to conform with the Historic District setbacks, though he could also appeal to the board, and Ms. Kelly said the setback requirements would depend also on whether it was for commercial or residential use.

There was a discussion about the need to meet current flood elevations with another building. Chairman Newman said there’s no prohibition to raise a historic structure to meet flood elevation. He can do it with the blessing of Historic Beaufort Foundation. Ms. Lutz said they have no easement on this building. Ms. Knoll said she thinks that is at the discretion of the Historic District Review Board.

There followed a discussion of “life safety issues.” Chairman Newman said he recommended doing minor demolition of the rear, then doing restoration and bringing a plan back to the Historic District Review Board. Chairman Newman said stabilization seems like the right plan so that Mr. Ferguson can preserve his future options. Ms. Kelly said they have a set of stabilization standards that include closing up all holes. Mr. Ferguson asked if he can get a demolition permit that preserves the grandfathering with regards to the flood elevation. Ms. Kelly said they would

set up a meeting with the building code official. Chairman Newman feels that the ideal scenario seems to be to preserve the ability to have the 12 x 12 addition level and at the same elevation as the current store, so he would take it off and have the right to put it back within the context of the other building. Ms. Kelly said again she would set up a meeting next week.

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m.