

A meeting of the Historic District Review Board was held on December 11, 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, Michelle Knoll, Inez Neal, and Erica Dickerson and city staff Lauren Kelly.

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

Ms. Knoll made a motion, second by Mr. Rainey, to approve the minutes of October 9, 2013 as submitted. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Dickerson and Ms. Neal abstained from voting because they were not present at the meeting.

REVIEW OF FULL BOARD PROJECTS

926 Bay Street – Alterations, Additions, Preliminary Review

Applicant: JHN Residential Design for Paul Thompson (HR13-51)

Ms. Kelly said this project is the old Beaufort Bank, which is currently Panini's, and is circa 1912 and contributing. The addition is 427 square feet of an open bar with an ADA accessible restroom. It is attached to the existing patio but not to the original historic structure.

Ms. Kelly said size, mass and scale are appropriate, and it doesn't attach to the existing building. Staff had questions about detailing:

- Consider a stucco base like what is already on the patio to tie it into the addition.
- Can the proportions of the column bays be square or horizontal?
- Avoid wrapping the roof around the parapet wall.
- Some of the windows should be square or vertical on the western elevation.
- Use a standing seam or 5V metal roof, not corrugated metal.

Staff recommends preliminary approval with design and details to be discussed with the board.

Johan Niemand said the owner is trying to achieve being able locking up the restaurant and having this be an autonomous bar with a separate bathroom. Secondly, the tiki hut that's on the patio now would be replaced with something more permanent and appealing, and this would bring back more seating and improve the view corridor.

Maxine Lutz said Historic Beaufort Foundation has no objection to the expansion for what the owner wants to do, but they have concerns similar to Ms. Kelly's in regard to materials and trying to make this as sophisticated as the existing building is.

Mr. Rainey doesn't think the corrugated roof is appropriate, and he assumes the tent will remain. Mr. Niemand said that's his understanding. Ms. Dickerson agrees with staff on the parapet intersection, and she thinks it looks flimsy compared to the structure of the building and thought stucco might work better than the Hardie siding. She thinks more stucco and fewer windows would look more substantial. Mr. Niemand said they were trying to make it look less massive; they were trying to break it up to make it less imposing. Ms. Dickerson said she hears that, but the Hardie plank seems out of character.

Ms. Knoll asked if it were like a shutter effect, and Mr. Niemand said yes, not a real shutter, though. Ms. Knoll asked the purpose of it. Mr. Niemand said it's at window height as an airway. Ms. Knoll asked if they had looked into mimicking the arch at the back of the building, and Mr. Niemand said he did, briefly, but they decided to use the rectangular mass of the building as the guideline.

Chairman Newman said he had discussed this with Mr. Niemand, and he thinks the idea is generally good. The shuttered things to make the building lighter might have the same effect as in a Midtown building. Where shutters go and what's solid needs more work, Chairman Newman said. They had also discussed whether the roof should tuck under the tent or if it could fall to the outside, both of which he said were tricky.

Chairman Newman said the roller shutters at the end, while effective for the owner, will not give something that will look very nice. They are typically metal and when closed look terrible. If they wanted to do something like that, they could use plantation shutters like are in the restaurant already. They could use Bahama shutters and "a stucco structure with the lightness of a louvered kind of thing." He has no issues with it not having arches and feels it would be hard to carry off. The simplicity of this is what will make it successful, not incorporating too many ideas from the main building.

Ms. Lutz asked if Hardie plank was an issue on an addition in the Historic District, and Mr. Rainey said no, it's allowed on new construction.

Ms. Knoll said the concept is good and she liked Chairman Newman's shutter suggestion. She agrees with staff recommendations on windows, roofing, etc.

Mr. Niemand asked for clarification on the column spacing comment. Ms. Kelly said the columns facing the current deck look like the same spacing as the piers that are already there. If they raised it a foot, it might help. She didn't have a direction and said it may be hard to do without making the wall too high. **Ms. Knoll made a motion for preliminary approval with consideration of staff and board comments, second by Ms. Dickerson. The motion passed unanimously.**

712 Congress Street – Alterations, Addition, Preliminary Review

Applicant: Mark W. Sutton, Architect, for Lois Smith & David Thornton (HR13-53)

This project came before the Historic District Review Board in September, Ms. Kelly said. The applicant at that meeting was encouraged to rethink the strategy for the addition. The kitchen was originally detached and had become attached over time; the Historic District Review Board encouraged the applicant to retain the existing kitchen structure in its location. Also, the Historic District Review Board suggested that the new addition should be more sympathetic to the historic structure. The square footage would increase from 1348 square feet to 1767 square feet, and the modern metal columns would be replaced with square wooden columns. Ms. Kelly said this is much more sensitive and improved the historic condition.

Ms. Kelly said the applicant wants to remove a small portion of the building – an addition to the connector between the house and the kitchen – and last time it was discussed and the board decided that was OK. On the north elevation, the columns are rectangular, but detailing appears round; staff suggests they use a less formal base and capital. Ms. Kelly said there is a requirement to submit a measured drawing of the fence and arbor shown in the site plan.

On the front elevation, Ms. Kelly said, there's a notched out portion of the dining room, and staff wants to know if it corresponds to anything that already exists, and if not, the applicant could shift the door to the west to allow room for it to be properly trimmed out. On the west elevation, consider retaining the articulation of the gable form that currently houses the master bath. Finally, a materials list for all new or changed materials must be submitted.

Ms. Kelly recommends approval of the application with noted changes to the column, the addition of vertical trim board on the west elevation, and submission of a materials list and the measured drawing for the arbor and picket fence.

Mr. Sutton asked for clarification of staff recommendations. Ms. Lutz asked about the window over the kitchen sink; Mr. Sutton said it's over a window seat. Ms. Lutz said HBF had an objection to the double mid- twentieth century window and would like to see it switched. Mr. Sutton said his clients aren't hung up on the window; they could mull two windows together. Ms. Lutz said HBF thought separate windows were more in keeping with the rest of the house. Chairman Newman said there should be a few inches of trim between the windows. Mr. Sutton said there would not be siding between them, and Chairman Newman said no, but 3.5 – 4" trim, and Mr. Sutton said that had been his intention.

Ms. Lutz said they are delighted with the project. Mr. Rainey said he agreed with Historic Beaufort Foundation's concern, but he had only positive things to say about the project. **Mr. Rainey made a motion, second by Ms. Neal, for approval of the application as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.**

Ms. Kelly said they had pulled the Anchorage project because it had an Historic Beaufort

Foundation easement, and there wasn't Historic Beaufort Foundation consensus on it. Mr. Rainey said he objected to the elevator and would "fight it with his last breath." Chairman Newman asked why. Mr. Rainey said he is always concerned with what will set precedent, and they set it in regard to elevators with the Harvey house. He came out against swimming pools 20 years ago, and now there are a dozen pools in the Historic District.

Ms. Dickerson said she's so excited that someone is doing something with the project. Ms. Kelly said the Historic Beaufort Foundation consensus wasn't reflected in the most recent drawings. Ms. Lutz said as the easement holder, they take them to their attorney, and he advised against them supporting the exterior elevator and the entrances to the porch. Ms. Dickerson asked if it looked worse than an abandoned building.

Ms. Knoll said it can be differentiated, and there are a lot of good things about it, but she had an issue with the height and mass of the building with the elevator addition, and they were going to cut into the porch. Ms. Lutz said this would affect the façade of the building, and if the IRS checked to see if HBF was holding up its side of the easements, they would be in trouble. Chairman Newman asked how the IRS is involved. Ms. Lutz said when the owners gave HBF the covenant in 1971, they got a tax break, so if Historic Beaufort Foundation doesn't honor it, then the owners have to pay the taxes back. Chairman Newman asked who decides on compliance. Ms. Lutz said the IRS has begun to check in the last 5 years, so they are trying to be kept clean.

Ms. Dickerson asked if there's an elevator that doesn't require extra height, and Chairman Newman said yes, hydraulic elevators could work, though they tend to be slower. Ms. Dickerson asked if they're more expensive, and Chairman Newman said typically residential buildings put in a pulley elevator. Ms. Lutz said **Cooter Ramsey** had said the city required a commercial elevator in the Anchorage. Ms. Kelly said if they put in an elevator, it has to be commercial, but there was never a conversation that they *had* to put in an elevator. They discussed a limited access elevator, which can typically be a lot smaller and is used in historic applications typically; there are ideas on the table but nothing's been decided yet.

Mr. Rainey said an exterior elevator was approved on the Beaufort Inn by Historic Beaufort Foundation and Ms. Lutz said HBF doesn't have an easement on it. Marshlands used a lift from the ground to the first floor porch. The Anchorage is individually listed and HBF represents the secretary of the interior, so that's why they have an attorney who looks at it. Ms. Lutz said Marshlands never put in an elevator, so they used a lift.

Ms. Lutz said she hoped that the owners were aware of the Bailey Bill tax breaks available to them. Ms. Kelly said she didn't know if they were giving up on the project, but they just found out about the comments this week, and the special meeting next week may be an option for them.

Chairman Newman asked how the original tax easement works. Ms. Lutz said the original

owners are the only ones who get a tax break. There was a discussion as to what happens if someone breaks it. Mr. Rainey said the ownership of the façade and easement is in perpetuity. When it's sold, the limitation is still in place, Chairman Newman said. Mr. Rainey said *not* having one is a selling point. Ms. Lutz said it's always a consideration when someone buys a property with an easement on it. Mr. Rainey said sometimes people modify properties with easements on them if they are done sympathetically to the property. Mr. Rainey said the changes have to be reviewed and approved by Historic Beaufort Foundation. Ms. Kelly said the owners know about the tax program.

DISCUSSION: EFFECTS OF MODERN BUILDING CODES ON HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Ms. Kelly said there are certain things that contributing historic buildings are exempt from to come into modern day standards. Fire and flood are not exempt, so they have been trying to prevent the board from approving things that can't be built because of these codes. A house on West Street was built on the zero lot line with windows, which had fire implications, but they were able to work that out. The Anchorage, if it's approved, would be built on the flood plain, and they are trying to be proactive about it.

Mr. Rainey asked if, for the grey areas, the city attorney could draw up an agreement that the owners could sign saying that "I'm in the flood plain, and I'm building this outbuilding and it may flood at some point, and I release it from liability." Ms. Kelly said only if it's paid for in cash, because they have to have insured if there's a mortgage. **Bruce Skipper** said it could also affect the CRS rating city-wide; if that drops, everyone will feel the impact of it in the cost of their flood insurance. Ms. Kelly said the more buildings in the flood plain, the worse the CRS rating.

Ms. Kelly said going to codes concurrently will save a lot of time. Ms. Dickerson asked about the pre-application review. Ms. Kelly said that's not required for single family residential. They are going to start figuring out a process so that the projects will know if there are code concerns. Ms. Lutz asked if the excavation at the Anchorage is a possible problem, and Ms. Kelly said they haven't submitted anything about it. Chairman Newman said it's an engineering as well as a flood problem.

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:49 p.m.