

A meeting of the Historic District Review Board was held on **April 9, 2014 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, 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.

PUBLIC HEARING: 301 LAURENS STREET

Requesting Development Design Exception to subdivide a lot in order to build a house

Ms. Kelly said this was a request for a Development Design Exception for the lot width and area requirements in The Point. The lot area deviation would be 21%, and the lot width deviation would be a 16% deviation from standard. The current ordinance has the Design Exception go to the appropriate Design Review Board if the variance is less than a 35% deviation from standard. Public notice was made, and letters sent to adjoining property owners, and when the staff report was prepared, staff had received no public comments on this application. Subsequently, two letters were received, and they were passed on to the Board and the applicant via email.

Ms. Kelly explained the criteria for Development Design Exception: compatibility, potential substantial adverse impact of the design on the area, and consistency with adopted plans. Ms. Kelly said staff feels the proposed exception is appropriate for its location and compatible with the surrounding lands and the development permitted in the zoning district. It will not adversely affect the property value of surrounding lands.

The earliest Sanborn map to show the lot was the 1912 version; previous maps did not show the lot. Subsequent lots show that it has evolved significantly over time in regard to building placement, numbers of buildings, and platting, Ms. Kelly said. In the 1950s map, there was a dwelling unit in a similar location as the one that's proposed if the Design Exception is granted. Staff feels the Design Exception is compatible.

The design does not have substantial adverse impact visually, or on service delivery, parking, or nuisance-making. Staff believes the impact will be positive, as it will create a more complete streetscape on Laurens Street, Ms. Kelly said.

Ms. Kelly said staff feels the proposed Design Exception will permit development that is compatible with the city's Comprehensive Plan, Civic Master Plan, and other plans. The Comprehensive Plan encourages reinvestment in existing structures and the appropriate infill of existing neighborhoods.

Staff believes there will be no significant negative impacts on residents in surrounding properties or on the general public, Ms. Kelly said, by approval of the Design Exception, so they recommend approval.

Maxine Lutz read a statement: the Preservation Committee of Historic Beaufort Foundation feels that the subdivision of this property “would violate the basic tenet of the historical development of The Point and a basic design element of The Point.” Houses on large lots with gardens are “a feature unique to The Point.” The small houses on small lots on this street and in The Point were created “due to the pressures” of the need for “post-World War 2 housing.” Ms. Lutz said they have found no historical evidence of other structures being on this lot “except possibly a small service building.” A new building would “have to be elevated to such a degree that it would not fit the culture and flavor of Laurens Street” so they object to the subdivision.

Cory Fleming said he was speaking as the trustee of the trust that owns an adjacent property. He explained the history of that property’s ownership and showed who owned which properties. Mr. Fleming said 301 Laurens Street was “at some point basically contiguous among the families, maybe not necessarily in title, but in spirit.” He said he was also speaking on behalf of a neighbor to the applicant’s property and on behalf of the owner of the large lot across the street from the applicant’s property. That owner believes that the subdivision would have a negative impact and “sets a precedent to divide up beautiful yards like his.”

Mr. Fleming said there is currently “a wonderful garden buffer” between the applicant’s house and “Alma’s” house. Putting another house between them would produce a scale that Mr. Fleming feels would be “extremely odd” and restrictive. He also believes noise - “with HVAC, etc.” – would be created in what is currently a quiet garden. Windows would have to be completely closed and shuttered because “these people will have a direct line into your bed if you look at it from that angle,” Mr. Fleming feels. Furthermore “it will completely destroy any view whatsoever” because of “the enormity of this particular proposed building,” Mr. Fleming speculated. There are also light and wind issues because of the size of the building. “Each of these things has a profound effect on that property,” Mr. Fleming said. If this project is approved, nothing can be done to alleviate the negative effects it will have on the 306 Laurens property.

Beth Grace read **John Staelin’s** letter in regard to 301 Laurens into the record, the gist of which is that granting a variance would create precedent and possibly negative issues for neighbors.

Ms. Grace read her own comments into the record, including the criteria for The Point, which is different than the criteria for other neighborhoods. The Point is a “Garden District” with larger lots and less density; the district must maintain mass, scale, and density and has a National Historic Landmark designation. She requested that the Board

deny the application or table it until the State's Historic Preservation Office can weigh in on the matter. In Charleston, Ms. Grace said, "The entire context of the neighborhood is looked at." Subdivided lots in The Point will set precedent, and "There's no taking back bad decisions." The Point can't be subdivided into small plats and still protect the flood plain and National Historic Landmark status. Subdivisions should be rare. A 21% variance "will forever alter" the large lot, garden-style feel of the area.

Ms. Lutz read a letter from **Collin Brooker** – an architectural historian – stating that the proposal would have an adverse effect on the character of the site and its surroundings. It would be an unacceptable alteration and should be rejected. Mr. Brooker went on to enumerate similar properties and their low-density qualities. He feels subdivision would fly in the face of the National Historic Landmark status given by the Department of the Interior. Furthermore, it's counter to acceptable preservation practice. He feels the South Carolina Department of Archives should be sent the case.

PUBLIC HEARING: 811 CONGRESS STREET

Major demolition of structure

Ms. Kelly said this is an application for demolition. The building is listed in the Above Ground Historic Sites Survey as non-contributing and has been vacant for at least a decade. The city has been speaking with the property owner and issued a repair or demolition order in September 2013. Letters have been sent and public notice made. It's circa 1950, Ms. Kelly said, but its current footprint is different than what's on the 1954 map, and staff feels it's a good candidate for removal.

Ms. Lutz said Historic Beaufort Foundation does not object to the demolition of this property, though they regret that it's going away. She hopes the replacement is sensitive to the neighborhood. There are 2 sets of 9 over 9 windows that Historic Beaufort Foundation would like to see saved, and they would be glad to use them elsewhere, Ms. Lutz said. There are also Savannah grey bricks in the piers they would like to have salvaged.

A member of the audience said they had decided not to tear it down. The group that owns it "is getting together to try to save it" and repaint it "to look much better for the neighborhood."

REVIEW OF FULL BOARD PROJECTS

301 Laurens Street, Identified as District R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 569

Applicant: Beekman Webb Construction (DE14-01)

The applicant is requesting approval of a Design Exception to subdivide and reduce the lot area requirement and the lot width requirement in order to subdivide the lot for the purpose of constructing a single-family house.

Beekman Webb is the representative and said that this house has been in bad repair for many years. A few years ago, it was for sale at a price where they felt they could restore and resell it. The house has been on the market for a year and a half now, they have had no offers, and they can't reduce the price any more. He was trying to find options to add amenities to make it more sellable. Mr. Webb spoke with **Libby Anderson**, and she suggested the Design Exception. He explained what Ms. Anderson had told him the Design Exception was. **Rob Montgomery** designed it and did as large a house as he could on the site, Mr. Webb said.

It was a small house in 1912 and started as a store that was added on to, Mr. Webb said he was told. In 1924, there were 2 houses there, but they were demolished, as was another little house he indicated on overhead maps. In 1958, Mr. Webb said, there was nothing on the lot, but there was a guesthouse of some kind on the setback. Since it's on a block of small lots, Mr. Webb said, it seemed that if it were divided, it would still be larger than some of the lots on the block: They "hoped to be able to build a nice house there and recoup (their) investment."

The block, Mr. Webb said, is all small houses, "as were there throughout The Point in those days." There were carriage houses, chicken coops, stables, etc., and those things have gone away over the years. Mr. Webb said the house on the right is right on the line of the street, which leaves a lot of space there, so it makes sense to have another building – a guest house or some dependency to the larger house or a separate house.

Mr. Webb said he agrees with Mr. Staelin's statement that rezonings are not something that should be easily given. This is not a rezoning; it is a Design Exception, which is different. He would build a nice-looking house, he said. He said the map shows that one could be built there, and there are options for a house that would be appropriate for that lot. It would be higher than adjacent houses because they weren't built to meet flood elevation, but they could build a garage with a guesthouse above; in any case, it has to meet the flood elevation.

Mr. Webb said he doesn't know about precedent, but there are 3 new houses being built on King Street on much smaller lots, and they are "generally praised." He feels if any place in The Point is appropriate, this block of Laurens is; it's full of small houses on small lots, though "one across the street takes up half the block."

Chairman Newman asked Ms. Anderson about by-right development on the current lot. He asked if there were limits or settings for that situation. Ms. Anderson said there are setback limits for a garage with an accessory dwelling unit above it. Theoretically, there could be additional units added in the house. Chairman Newman asked if setbacks, impervious rules, etc. would determine the by-rights within the existing lot, and Ms. Anderson said yes.

Mr. Rainey said he respects Mr. Webb's work. He said "others' remarks summed up all the pertinent arguments in the negative toward this project." He said the King Street cottages that Mr. Webb cited blend in, but this house, because of flood plain regulations "stands out as new construction and doesn't blend seamlessly." It's a large building nestled between two smaller buildings. He doesn't think the project should be allowed to go forward because it's contrary to Milner's ideas of scale and proportion and all guidelines.

In regard to the Design Exception, Mr. Rainey said "it's still dividing a lot," and Mr. Webb is asking the Historic District Review Board to make an exception to "a rule of law that guides them further than Milner." The push on form-based code and infill is contrary to protecting the environment in the Historic District that's existed for 300 years, Mr. Rainey believes. The Point "has survived by luck" and people "who beat back developers." He thinks approving this project would set "a very, very dangerous precedent." There are now 9 swimming pools in The Point, something he has consistently objected to. There are also "so many lots available for subdivision," Mr. Rainey said.

Ms. Neal said "if we break the rule for one, we will have to break the rules for others." Mr. Rainey said he feels it's breaking the rules of Milner, the Department of Interior, and city guidelines. Chairman Newman said this falls within the rules, "or (Mr. Webb) wouldn't be before the Board"; the Board is to judge if the variance is an acceptable example. Mr. Webb's not breaking rules, Chairman Newman said; he was lead to this possibility by the city "because it falls within the rules."

Ms. Dickerson said they have considered buying on this street, and the charm is that it has many little cottages. She said this house they are seeing is "a worst case scenario," and she would object to its scale next to the existing house. This large of a house there would mean one this big next door. Ms. Dickerson said she doesn't object to splitting the lot and putting something small there, like most of the other houses on the street.

Mr. Webb said the 301 Laurens Street house "is barely off the ground," and the insurance cost is "going up geometrically," so soon the Historic District Review Board will have "other applications to jack up other houses," which will also change and be hard to disallow. People won't be able to sell their houses; they will have to move out. This house's flood insurance has gone from \$1200 to \$3500 over a couple years, and he's been lead to believe it will go up a lot more. Houses all through The Point are built almost a story above the ground, but a lot of houses are not.

Mr. Rainey said, "You can't live to the future." He said Mr. Webb "can't talk about flood insurance costs possibly going up." The two houses up King Street are both "huge," and they're somewhat appropriate there, but "would be totally out of scale elsewhere." Ms. Dickerson agreed but said that they could put a nice smaller-scale property on this

divided lot, and when that house comes before the Board, they could approve the mass and scale.

Mr. Webb said he'd come back with a guesthouse of some size that he feels would be approved. This was a house designed to be as large as practical there; he feels he could get a smaller house approved. He thinks chances are that he would not be able to get a house approved for this lot, but he could get a fairly large guesthouse approved. He hoped to subdivide it, but if that's not allowed, he can back up and do something different.

Chairman Newman said he feels this public hearing was very useful. He felt that, looking at the drawings and the site, it seemed reasonable, but he understands and agrees that the scale of the house and the flood elevation changes the scale a great deal. It has a completely different feel when looked at architecturally, so the public comment was helpful to him.

Mr. Rainey made a motion to deny the application as presented, adding that the Historic District Review Board "would entertain a plan for a guesthouse of suitable size with proportion and scale married to the primary house." Ms. Neal seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

811 Congress Street, Identified as District R121, Tax Map 4, Parcel 0104

Applicant: Real Deal Investment Club

The applicant is requesting final approval in order to demolish the primary structure on this site. It is listed on the Historic Site Survey as non-contributing.

Larry Holman, president of Real Deal Investment Club, said the group bought the property and intended then to demolish it and rebuild. Since then, it has deteriorated to the point where it is too expensive to repair. It's dangerous at this point and is falling in. They intend to replace it with two properties. Allison Ramsey Architects drew three houses there, which they would have to have a variance to do, so they intend to replace it with two cottages and will maintain the property once the demolition occurs.

Ms. Kelly said it's only *non-contributing*, not *non-conforming*. Chairman Newman said there's been no presentation to the city as to what would replace it. Chairman Newman said in the past, when they entertain a demolition, they see what might go back in it, but that is when they are contributing structures. Ms. Dickerson said she hates to see it go, but it's not contributing. **Mr. Rainey made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dickerson, to approve the application as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.**

807 King Street, Identified as District R121, Tax Map 4, Parcel 1024

Applicant: Hefner Design for Elizabeth Pisano, Owner (HR14-16)

The applicant is requesting approval to construct a new single-family residence.

Ms. Kelly said this is a unique opportunity to review two houses that are next to each other. This property is located in the Old Commons neighborhood, and the parcel is currently vacant. There were two duplex buildings there at one point, but it has been vacant for ten years. Ms. Kelly reviewed the setbacks. The impervious surface percentage was not provided, but the maximum is 55% and staff estimates show it at 53%, so that needs to be clarified by the applicant. In regard to guidelines, the Preservation Manual Supplement says to consider scale, elevation of the first floor, floor-to-floor heights, bays, windows, and doors, etc.

Staff comments, Ms. Kelly said, pertain to siting, proposed materials for the parking area and walkways, and an impervious surface calculation; there's a mechanical wall, but no units are drawn in. Mechanical equipment can't encroach into the 6' side setback so the applicant must specify where the HVAC unit will be placed and how it will be screened.

In regard to scale, this block has predominantly two-story cottages with south-facing porches, and the Old Commons neighborhood in general has one- and two-story houses, so this scale is appropriate for the neighborhood. Ms. Kelly reviewed the other elements that she said are all in keeping with the Preservation Manual Supplement. Staff recommends final approval as submitted, she said, with calculation of the impervious surface area, location of HVAC units, and details about parking paving materials to be provided with the building permit submission. Ms. Kelly showed some of the material samples.

Ashley Hefner said that they could have a ductless, wall-mounted compressor unit that blows air, mounted above a window or door outside of the building.

Ms. Lutz said Historic Beaufort Foundation is happy with the plans, and they have discussed reconfiguring the front stairs. She had a conversation with the owner, and she explained the setback. Ms. Lutz said they would like more details on the porch, and there was a question about the size of the dormer and whether that should be increased.

Mr. Hefner said the high side of the porch is 4' above grade. They have decided not to go off both sides since the house is so symmetrical. Mr. Rainey said he thinks it's a great addition to the neighborhood. From a personal standpoint, he would like to encourage landscaping in the back.

Chairman Newman asked about the reference to 'access easement' and a size differential. It's not shown on the ground, he said, "but it's shown here." **Steve Tully** said the rear alley will stay as it is. Chairman Newman said there's a property line going down the center of the alley, and the Baptist Church of Beaufort owns it. The only place for landscaping is the north edge of the access easement off the property, between there and the fence. They could only put landscaping on the Baptist Church of Beaufort property or potted plants on the porch.

Chairman Newman said he had a comment about the windows in the top; he finds them “stocky.” Some are better proportioned and more appropriate. Mr. Hefner said that’s on the cathedral ceiling side, so they didn’t want to put operable windows in it. Chairman Newman said he understands that there is a cathedral ceiling; he thinks the windows on the west should match those on the east. He doesn’t care if they’re operable; the proportion doesn’t look good. They look too short, he feels.

Mr. Hefner said because of the location of the fireplace, they could center a double hung on the gable to match. Chairman Newman said that would look much better. **Ms. Dickerson made a motion to approve the application; Ms. Neal seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

805 King Street, Identified as District R121, Tax Map 4, Parcel 1024

Applicant: Alan Patterson Residential for Melba Thomas, Owner (HR14-17)

The applicant is requesting approval to construct a new single-family residence.

Ms. Kelly said this project is also new construction, directly next door to the property just reviewed. The applicant wishes to construct 1472 of heated square footage, 224 square feet of porches, and 307 square feet of covered carport. The front setback is prevailing in this district. The side setbacks are 6’ on the west side, and on the east it’s 15’ because of a large live oak that they want to preserve. The rear setback is 22’6”. The rear setback is well within the requirement as is its height.

37% is the staff calculation for impervious surface. Staff appreciates the effort to retain the tree. The issue with the mechanical equipment can’t encroach, so a new location for these should be proposed, as well as the screening details. Any paving materials are required. In regard to the scale, staff feels it’s appropriate for the neighborhood. With regard to proportions, particularly on the side and rear elevations, staff feels the windows are “too vertical” and suggests widening them or keeping them in the same proportion as the front windows. The right elevation will be visible from Scott Street, so staff recommends re-thinking the window alignment to be more consistent. Similarly, though not visible from Scott Street, the left elevation windows could be more symmetrical as well. All trim should be the same color, staff feels.

Staff feels the 30” first floor elevation off grade, prominent steps, 10’ clear first floor height, 5-bay façade, absolute size and massing, orientation to the street, overall building materials, proportions, and forms are all in keeping with the Preservation Manual Supplement, and staff recommends final approval of the request with the following: calculation of the impervious surface area, relocation of HVAC units, details on parking paving materials, colors, and better window proportion and alignment as discussed, to be reviewed by staff.

Alan Patterson said 41% of the lot is impervious. They will enlarge the windows to match the proportions of the front windows that Ms. Kelly identified. The windows on the left elevation will be wider, and on the right elevation will be 2-8 or 3-0. The gravel will be plantation mix in the driveway. At the bottom of the stairs, there will be pavers or a solid piece of concrete, Mr. Patterson said. They will fill the space and move the HVAC unit. Mr. Patterson said everything will be lined up; on the new plans, there is a fireplace, and that makes things more symmetrical. They are fine with the paint colors being the same on the dormers. Mr. Tully said the architect had put the HVAC on the Scott Street side of the house and asked if that would work "if it's shielded directly." Ms. Kelly said he has to look at it, because it can't be visible from the public right-of-way.

Ms. Lutz said Historic Beaufort Foundation likes the project and agrees with Ms. Kelly's recommendations. **Mr. Rainey moved for approval of the application, with the changes as suggested; Ms. Dickerson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

1401 Duke Street, Identified as District R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 347

Applicant: Charles Ferguson, The Meridian Company (HR14-18)

The applicant is requesting approval to remodel the existing shell into a two-unit suite.

Ms. Kelly said this building is in the Northwest Quadrant and is circa 1910 and contributing. It's the former J&N Grocery and Market and one of the few remaining corner stores in the Historic District. The applicant wants to turn it into a duplex. The applicant has been working with Building Codes to move forward on this property. It doesn't change current setbacks or height. The project is staying within the existing building footprint.

Ms. Kelly read the guidelines as they apply, and said that in the Preservation Manual Supplement introduction, it says that this Board's role is "to regulate the exterior character." Staff is very excited to see the plans move forward for restoration and reuse of the building. Ms. Kelly said there is a question of where mechanical equipment will be. Also: What materials are proposed for the carport area and the landing at the base of the stairs? They also need to provide an impervious surface calculation for the site.

The main concern is with regard to the orientation. In the plan that was submitted, the original interior floor plans to make this a 2 unit building didn't take in the historic functioning of the building and changed the spatial relationships of the historic property. Staff recommends putting the bathroom and closet against the shared interior wall to solve the problem and then the more public spaces would be open to the street. The additional window and door proportions are in keeping with the building's historic character.

Staff recommends preliminary approval with the condition that the interior configuration better utilizes the existing historic elements. Staff could approve this, Ms. Kelly said, if the Board provides the applicant with enough direction.

Sean Ryan said, “This is more conceptual in nature ... The idea is to maintain the character of this really cool old building.” They have discussed opening the front and making it a useable façade. The logic to the courtyard entrance is because the front entrance would spill out into the access, as opposed to being a private residential access. They could change it, Mr. Ryan said, but they want to open the front wall with windows. They know they want to keep it to two studio spaces and repair and restore as necessary. They may have to relocate windows as shown on the side elevations and are open to suggestion.

Ms. Lutz feels strongly that the front door shouldn't be abandoned as access. There's an Italianate bracket on there on the side, and that's the only decorative element to the building, so it would be nice if they could reproduce that for the other side, too.

Mr. Rainey saluted the applicant for adapting this to use with minimal changes to the structure. He doesn't oppose entrance doors on the side or back. Ms. Dickerson agrees with staff about the front, but she thinks it can be easily made to work. Chairman Newman said he has no problem with the other entrances on the side as a solution to make it more private, but the original façade would still have original windows and doors. **Mr. Rainey made a motion for approval as submitted with the exception of windows and doors and the cornice on the top of the building. Ms. Neal seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

411 New Street, Identified as District R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 347

Applicant: Ansley Hester Manuel, Architect, for Barbara Cochran, Owner (HR14-19)

The applicant is requesting approval for alterations and additions to this building, including changing out windows and doors and constructing a new rear fireplace addition.

Ms. Kelly said this property is in The Point. It is known as the Laura Chaplin Cunningham House and is on the Historic Site Survey. It is estimated to be circa 1886. The building has evolved over time from a single-family house to a school to a single-family house again. They are proposing additions to the early 1900s addition. Ms. Kelly detailed the additions and modifications.

Ms. Kelly said in regard to zoning, there are no issues with the setbacks, and there will be no changes to the height or square footage. Originally, when staff looked at this, it was difficult to discern what was original and what was additional. She showed the historic house, the historic addition, and then the expanded building. She showed the proposed additions.

The removal of the exterior closet and the addition of the chimney seem to be in character with the existing historic fabric of the building, Ms. Kelly said, and this is part of the evolution of the building. In regard to the window and door swap, staff wondered

if they had considered retaining the existing door and swapping the foyer and hall functions, so they could have a door to the porch but maintain the window and door openings. This could work and still have closet space in the hall. Staff recommends this and no windows would need to be switched.

Ms. Manuel said that they want to keep it as-is. The front of the house faces the street; Mr. Webb said there are four doors in the facades. Ms. Manuel doesn't want traffic flow into the small room; there, it is most naturally a window, and functionally it doesn't lend itself to being a door. Given the flow of the house, it makes more sense to keep the proposal as they have it. Ms. Manuel said. This house lends itself to not having to do much to the important exteriors and work on the renovations in the awkward area of the house where the schoolhouse and the main house met, and they will flow better now if they concentrate the work there.

Ms. Lutz said Historic Beaufort Foundation agrees with staff's recommendations. Mr. Webb said if they would go back to the elevations, the west elevation has a corner stair that is confusing as to where to go, and there is a door on the wall right next to the door that is next to the exterior closet. There are four doors as you walk up, so it makes the most sense to walk up the stairs to the door, rather than a door that leads into a room and not the foyer.

Mr. Rainey said he has no problem with the proposal as submitted. He thinks this particular building has been moved around and shifted over the years, but what Mr. Webb presented about the windows and doors counterfacing each other makes sense to him. The proposal looks better than the existing, Mr. Rainey feels, and shifting the openings doesn't go counter to the existing constriction.

Ms. Neal said she is "amazed at the house" and remembers some people who lived there at one time. Ms. Dickerson likes it as drawn but questioned the shutters; they aren't the right proportion, she feels. Ms. Manuel said they are already on the building, and they will add them if they add a window. Ms. Dickerson asked if the shutters would cover the window when closed, and Mr. Webb said yes.

Chairman Newman told Ms. Manuel and Mr. Webb that there was a house this size in The Point, and it was lifted up above the flood elevation, and he asked if this house is above the flood elevation. Mr. Webb said it's not, and there are no plans to lift it. This is not an extensive renovation, he said. He explained some changes that have been made. They are well under the dollar amount that would require them to consider having to lift it. **Mr. Rainey moved for approval of the project as submitted; Ms. Dickerson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

MINUTES

Mr. Rainey made a motion, second by Ms. Neal, to approve the minutes of March 12, 2014. The motion passed unanimously.

Gail Westerfield left the meeting.

DOWNTOWN WAY-FINDING SIGNAGE UPDATE

Mr. Rainey made a motion that the Architectural Review Board (*sic*) has purview over architectural elements, freestanding or attached, that affect the architectural standing of the Historic District, whether it be core commercial or residential. Ms. Neal seconded. Ms. Kelly said staff had determined that the ATM in question was a sign, not an architectural element, and therefore fell under the sign ordinance; signs don't fall under the purview of the Historic District Review Board, she said. Mr. Rainey called the ATM under discussion a "carbuncle." Ms. Kelly said ATMs are not listed as an element that falls under the purview of the Historic District Review Board. She said freestanding elements could be signs or fences, and all of them are defined as falling under the sign ordinance. Mr. Rainey said, "There's no way an ATM is a sign." Ms. Kelly said, "But a sign is a free-standing element." Mr. Rainey said an ATM is like a parking meter and asked if a parking meter is a sign.

Ms. Kelly suggested that Mr. Rainey should change his motion to say "ATMs" rather than architectural or freestanding elements, because freestanding elements include signs, fences, and mailboxes. **Mr. Rainey amended his motion to state that the Architectural Review Board (*sic*) establishes purview over the influx of ATMs, either freestanding or attached to historic structures or located within the boundaries of national historic landmarks.** There was no second to this motion.

Mr. Rainey went on to make a motion that the Board approach the owners of Luther's Rare and Well-Done and explain to them that the ATM is not suitable for placement within its current location in the National Historic Landmark District, and it should be moved to an unobtrusive location forthwith. Ms. Kelly said she wondered if a Board member could make a motion without the applicant present. Chairman Newman said he had no idea. Ms. Kelly said she would discuss this issue with Luther's owner to see how it can be resolved.

LaNelle Fabian, Main Street Beaufort, said she and Ms. Kelly had appeared before the Historic District Review Board with their plans in regard to signs, and she was there to sum up their efforts over the last several months. Way-finding signs were incorporated into the Civic Master Plan and the Redevelopment Commission had it on a priority list. Main Street Beaufort had a conceptual design that "let us take it from there," Ms. Fabian said. Other than the Civic Master Plan and Main Street Beaufort's branding plan, Ms. Fabian said, there as no "look" or plan for the signs including size and location. Main Street Beaufort hired a branding company from Greenville, which gave them logos, color palettes, etc.

Ms. Fabian showed a conceptual design. Mr. Rainey asked about the color palette and if the colors were being suggested for awnings. Ms. Fabian said no: it is "being suggested

for our brand, and our identity ... colors in advertisements and logos.” The Main Street Beaufort logo uses the colors, she said. She showed conceptual ideas gleaned from the branding charette.

They came up with a map and went to Historic District Review Board, the Preservation Committee at Historic Beaufort Foundation, and members of the Redevelopment Commission to get feedback, then moved on to design. She showed the Board “life-sized mock-ups,” which they had made so they could determine how far away the signs could be seen.

Mr. Rainey asked if a business, to be listed, had to be a member of Main Street Beaufort or the Chamber of Commerce, and Ms. Fabian said they just had to be a business located downtown off of Bay Street. Ms. Dickerson asked how the signs could be changed (e.g., if a business closed). Ms. Fabian explained the process. She said they would be strategically placed on Bay, Port Republic, and Craven Streets to include businesses that might be interested in being on a sign.

Mr. Rainey left the meeting. Ms. Fabian said they are making the presentation again the following day and then would be sending out RFPs. They will pick a company, then go to council. She said the effort is further along than it’s ever been, and they “intend to keep going until signs are up.” Ms. Neal asked if these were directional signs. Ms. Fabian said, “There are gateway signs coming into the city into downtown Beaufort.” Then there are “destination signs to let you know you’re at a specific location.” There’s also a directory and map, and then signs in Waterfront Park. She described how the signs would look and where the information would go.

Chairman Newman said the signs appear to be very big, and he has concerns about “getting bombarded with more and more signs,” including the “horrific, gigantic new signs” that DOT put up and “signal ahead” signs that aren’t useful. Ms. Fabian said they wanted to take the pictures to ensure that they weren’t too big, and the company they chose is very experienced, and they knew they wouldn’t have to spend too much time on research because of that experience.

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Ms. Dickerson made a motion to adjourn, second by Ms. Neal. The motion passed unanimously** and the meeting ended at 4:27 p.m.