

A meeting of the Historic District Review Board was held on **July 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 Chuck Symes, Quinn Peitz, Barbara Laurie, 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. Dickerson asked that her comment at the beginning of the final paragraph on page 2 be changed to “asked to verify that the center part would be done with Phase 2.” Also, on the final page of the minutes, Ms. Dickerson noted that in **Maxine Lutz’s** praise of Mr. Rainey, there should be an ‘s’ added to the word “decision” in the second to last paragraph. **Mr. Peitz made a motion, second by Mr. Symes, to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2014 meeting with Ms. Dickerson’s changes. The motion passed unanimously.**

REVIEW OF FULL BOARD PROJECTS

808 Bay Street, Identified as District R121, Tax Map 4, Parcel 937

Alterations, Additions

Applicant: Manuel Studio, LLC, for 303 Associates, LLC (HR14-28)

The applicant is requesting a rear addition and alterations for the purpose of converting the upper story to residential.

Ms. Kelly said this building was originally constructed pre-1884 because it appears on the 1884 Sanborn Map. In 1907, it might have been burned and replaced, but if so, it was on the same footprint. There’s an addition on the rear that appears on the 1958 Sanborn map. The applicant proposes adding an additional story over the one-story rear addition, adding a rear exterior stair and second-story deck, and adding a shed roof to an existing porch to the second story and screening it.

This is in the core commercial district; Ms. Kelly said there are no setback requirements. There is no additional building footprint proposed, only the covered deck. She cited the applicable guidelines in regard to exterior alterations and the Supplement in regard to additions to historic buildings. In regard to siting, rear additions most appropriate.

Staff comments: Ms. Kelly said this is in an appropriate location, so it doesn’t have an impact on Bay Street. It will improve the rear deck and covered parking, which will improve the view from Waterfront Park. Staff recommends preliminary approval to the request as submitted.

Ansley Manuel said this was “designed in a smart manner,” and she didn't redesign the original building; most renovations are to be done in sections of the building that have been “re-muddled” over the years. Mr. Peitz asked if the deck would be over the first parking spot; Ms. Manuel said yes, and that’s 303 Associates’ parking now. It’s a private parking spot for the building. The client’s intentions are to make the office upstairs into a residential rental. The spot won’t be for the store; it will be for the residents. 303 owns both stories, Ms. Manuel said. Mr. Symes asked if the deck goes into the building. Ms. Manuel said Saltus’s is further away. This one is back toward Bay Street. The only door she had to work with was at John Cross Tavern, which is shared access. Mr. Symes said they would still have access; Ms. Manuel said they would stop with the landing at the current entry to John Cross Tavern and come up further to get to the screened porch. It will all be on one level – at the level of the apartments. Ms. Manuel said there’s a huge pigeon problem, and a problem with “party revelers” leaving leftovers on the balcony, so the screen, she hopes, will solve two issues.

Chairman Newman said that this had come to the Historic District Review Board before, and someone was going to live there and have her office there. It received a preliminary design approval for an addition. Chairman Newman couldn’t recall what was involved, “but it never went beyond this first round” of approval.

Ms. Lutz said they haven’t met to discuss this, but based on emails, Historic Beaufort Foundation is excited about what an improvement this is, and they “hope it will discourage that activity that’s gone on.” Committee members will have concerns about the screen porch if it’s allowed. It has to be behind the structural elements and be wooden. They must not use aluminum or paint it. Ms. Lutz said the idea is “to make the screen go away.” Also, Ms. Lutz said decks in the Historic District aren't addressed in Milner, and they need to be discussed “because they aren’t traditional.” Ms. Manuel asked Ms. Kelly to show a picture. She said because of the adjacent buildings, there are a lot of outdoor patios surrounding this building “that are modern.”

Mr. Symes said he didn’t think they should have cable railings on the deck. He thinks “there should be more character than plain 4 x 4s” because they can be seen from the park. Ms. Manuel said they wanted to make it somewhat more modern; the client is open to both ways: replicating the time period of the building or “doing something modern back there.” Chairman Newman said he thinks it’s more appropriate. Mr. Symes said a porch is a deck with a roof over it, so he wouldn't be opposed to that. Ms. Manuel said they could cover the roofline eventually, but she doesn't think that’s 303’s intentions. Ms. Lutz said in regard to Historic Beaufort Foundation’s building, “the heat is relentless down there,” and the deck will be hot without a cover. Ms. Manuel said the deck covers the parking space and will give a back entry to the building. It’s being done to serve those functions. Mr. Peitz said he saw it as “a functional space, not a hang out.”

Ms. Kelly said staff had recommended preliminary approval; she felt there was enough information not to need for it to be conceptual. **Ms. Dickerson made a motion to accept the application as presented; Mr. Peitz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

509 Harrington Street, Identified as District R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 678

Alterations, Additions

Applicant: Manuel Studio, LLC, for John and Celeste Cherol, Owners (HR14-27)

The applicant is requesting a discussion about constructing a one-story master suite addition at the rear of the building.

Ms. Kelly said this application was original submitted for the Board's review, but there's a Historic Beaufort Foundation easement on the property, and HBF couldn't meet, so they emailed comments to Ms. Manuel, and she requested discussion of the general concepts of the proposal.

Ms. Kelly said that this is a historic side yard houses, circa 1860, and it is contributing. The rear has evolved a little bit over time. There's a rear addition with a deck off the front of it. There are a couple of zoning issues because it is a side yard house – so there's zero lot line – but that's not a problem, Ms. Kelly said. The size of the renovation is 554 square feet of enclosed space and an additional 143 square feet of uncovered deck.

Mr. Peitz asked about the building next door, and if the applicant was okay with the windows being blocked by the office. Mr. Cherol said there's only one window on that side of the house. Ms. Manuel said it has to be a firewall, and the window has to go.

The building Mr. Peitz referred to is a law office, so it would only have daytime use. There will be no porch on the front of it on the side yard. Mr. Symes said it's a deck and will protrude beyond the current wall. Mr. Symes asked if they were trying to duplicate the rhythm of the old building; Ms. Manuel said it's a pilaster wall. The first floor has no bedroom or full bath, and the Cherols would like the option of a bathroom downstairs. The tree could not be saved, Ms. Manuel said. She's at the setback all 3 ways, so there is no other option.

Ms. Laurie asked Ms. Manuel if she would renovate the kitchen area and add on the master bedroom. Ms. Manuel said the area is French doors, so you walk through the living space of the kitchen, but the working portion isn't interrupted by the entry to the bedroom.

Mr. Peitz asked, when you come in the back gate, how close it is. Mr. Cherol said St. Helena usually keeps their yard debris back there, which is another reason they don't want a window. It's a 15' rear setback for the building, Ms. Kelly said.

Mr. Peitz asked if the roofline would change, and Ms. Manuel said yes. Mr. Peitz asked if the flat roof would change. Ms. Manuel said yes, it's currently barely pitched, and they

“would like to have it die into the wall and floor band.” It won’t affect the second story floor. The clients want a vaulted ceiling in the bedroom, Ms. Manuel said.

Mr. Peitz commented that “it’s like a box being pushed into the backyard.” He didn’t know it was the only Charleston single house with a side porch in Beaufort. It would reduce square footage and not suit their needs, but it would seem to be most ideal for the porches to recess equally in the front and the rear. From an exterior standpoint, it would be most pleasing if they can do it and get the setback. Mr. Cherol they don’t have the land to the back or the side, so in order to have space for a bathroom, “there’s nowhere to go.” They don’t have room for a porch, he said, and if they added one, “it would collide with the guesthouse and disrupt the flow of the building.” Mr. Peitz said his comments were if they had an ideal scenario. He said he doesn’t know the zoning barriers.

Chairman Newman said there are probably many examples in Charleston of forming an “L” instead of what Ms. Manuel has. It would offer a “push-pull.” Chairman Newman said he’s worked on this house before; “there’s room between the structures to do something.” The side area could be more appealing than getting further into the back area.

Ms. Lutz said they have not taken a position, but they have discussed the deck, because residential decks in the Historic District “are an issue.” They would rather see a porch there, and “early discussion is that the façade could be simplified to a single door and two bays, so it doesn’t appear to compete with the original house.” They haven’t had a formal discussion yet with Ms. Manuel.

Mr. Symes said “simpler would be better,” and he warned against competing visually with the main porch. Chairman Newman said Historic Beaufort Foundation is not opposed to it “coming out.” Ms. Lutz said it's not been discussed, but she doesn't think so. Ms. Dickerson said her first thought was to make a division between the old and the new by taking the façade back to make a more visible difference between the two. She thinks it looks great, but she would put in a little recess.

Chairman Newman said the roof could go up. The existing one-story could be as it was originally, or she could put some pitch on it. Then, if the addition had its own roof, and came closer, “then it would read distinctly as its own thing,” and would not need a notch. As to whether the windows would be changed, he feels, “Whatever.” Chairman Newman said it could come a little further out and “make it useful space.” Mr. Peitz said it’s either recessed in or comes out; just not being straight across will bring a little relief. Mr. Peitz said having a porch rather than just an open deck would add character to the whole building. Then the columns wouldn't be pilasters, Chairman Newman said; they'll be columns. Mr. Peitz said these ideas shouldn't break their budget.

Ms. Kelly said the development design exception comes to the Historic District Review Board, and they could get about 5 more feet into the back, and “could pull the whole thing away from the building 5’, so it would be two separate things”; Ms. Manuel said that would let her “shift and put in a real porch with 5’ extra, but then the bedroom area would be big.” Ms. Kelly said 5’ toward the rear would help her. Ms. Kelly said it doesn't require a public hearing and comes to the Historic District Review Board. Ms. Kelly told Ms. Lutz 5’1” is the maximum they could request.

Chairman Newman said the distinctive original element is the intact element on the left; the middle happened over the ensuing years, and now they’re discussing another one-story addition. He thinks they don't need to force themselves to stay in a flat line. The side yard is beautiful, and creeping back to the back line is unreasonable. If the 5’ helps, and they want to come “forward,” he thinks they should do both.

Mr. Cherol said they have so little space, so they are trying to keep it simple to come up with more interior space. Mrs. Cherol said they have a lot of porch area to the front. There’s a porch on the cottage, and she was “concerned about adding a lot of stuff back there.” They want people to look at the front part. Mr. Peitz said some of the comments are asking for simplicity and are in keeping with what they want. This original idea is a little more embellished than it has to be. He said they’re saying that they “can keep it simple and not be governed by the middle building.” They “lack proportionality and this is basically 3 buildings ... Simplicity would really be the way to go,” he said.

Mr. Symes said the 5’ adds a cost to the budget; Chairman Newman said it’s “mostly air.” Mr. Peitz said the law office abutting in the back is going to be changed now because they are so close to each other. He wanted to know if the Cherols had approached them or not, and they said they haven’t. He said this wouldn't govern his final decision, but they will need to know that their light will be compromised as a result of this addition.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Newman moved to adjourn and Mr. Symes seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.