

A meeting of the Historic District Review Board was held on January 14, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. in the City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Joel Newman, board members Erica Dickerson, Chuck Symes and Barbara Laurie and city staff Lauren Kelly. Quinn Peitz 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

Ms. Dickerson made a motion, second by Mr. Symes, to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2014 meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

REVIEW OF FULL BOARD PROJECTS

1005 Harrington Street, Identified as District R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 512

Minor Demolition, Restoration, Additions

Applicant: Jim Jones (HR15-01)

The applicant is requesting HRB approval for minor demolition, restoration and a two-story rear addition to this contributing historic structure.

Ms. Kelly said this is a single-family house in the Northwest Quadrant, circa 1900, and it is listed as contributing. A rear addition was made around 1960. The applicant wishes to restore the original portion, remove the addition, and add a new two-story rear addition. It's in General Residential zoning, and there are no zoning issues. There are 1000 square feet of building, and with the additions and 200 square feet removed, it's about 800 additional square feet net. A porch is an additional 400'.

Ms. Kelly reviewed the applicable guidelines. Staff is excited about this project. The siting is in conformance with the guidelines for the addition. The massing and roof form for the addition and its relationship to the existing structure is a concern, however. There is a 1 in 12 roof pitch on the addition; the current structure has a 10 in 12 pitch. Staff presented an idea to the applicant to break up the roof form into 2 different forms, eliminating the large massing of the shed roof in the back.

Staff's other comment was on the size and proportion of the windows being proposed. The mullions should create square or vertical proportions. In regard to codes, on the north side of the property, they can keep the current non-conforming setback, but there will be fire code issues; if it's between 2' and 5', the applicant would need fireproof windows, which are expensive, and the wall would be fire-rated.

Jim Jones showed drawings of a different roofline, designed based on conversations with staff, which he said they “love,” and which won’t change the square footage, etc. He discussed the new plans with Chairman Newman and the rest of the Board. There will be wooden sashes put in. **Bill DeBlasio** said that they couldn’t restore the original windows because they have mostly already been replaced with “really crappy windows.” Mr. DeBlasio said, to make this economically feasible, it should be a 3-bedroom house with a master bedroom on the second floor. Ms. Dickerson asked if this was applicable for the Bailey Bill. Ms. Kelly said renovations to additions aren’t part of that, but she could look at it and see if they could do it as long as it’s for restoration of 75% of the assessed value of the historic structure.

Mr. DeBlasio praised the work the Historic District Review Board does.

Chairman Newman asked about the original stairs, and Mr. Jones explained that they were poorly constructed and showed him how they worked in relation to the closets. Chairman Newman showed where they could put a stair on the new plan. He said he had the same impression as Mr. Symes did, which is that they could have “run the addition straight down the back” and thereby “preserved the little house’s relationship to the new space.” If “instead of chunking the addition onto the back,” they had an “L” shape house, a piece of the existing house would be able to go out to the back, instead of sealing it off from the backyard by the addition. They could build on something with more of a relationship to the old house, and the old house could have a relationship to the backyard. In terms of adding on in a way that is sympathetic to the scale and shape of the original, Chairman Newman said, his idea would work.

Chairman Newman said many one-story houses in Beaufort have had a one-story shed addition, but a 2-story shed “doesn’t work.” The new addition the applicant proposed “breaks it up a little,” but he feels it’s “barely passable.” He thinks it would be “a lot nicer” if it were a gable coming out with the same pitch as the main house and then a porch roof running along the side.

Mr. DeBlasio said he didn’t like that idea because of what it “would do to the flow of the house.” Chairman Newman said the bedroom at the end would be the “real master bedroom.” It would be away and private, the same as a bedroom upstairs would be. Ms. Dickerson said a bedroom at the end would be nice, but they could also put the kitchen at the end, if they preferred. Mr. Symes said Chairman Newman’s idea gives them something they “can develop into a courtyard.” Chairman Newman agreed and said they could have a garden entry side this way. He said they could go all the way to the back setback. It would be like a linear Charleston garden. The porch could be enclosed, or just some of it could be enclosed; it need not “all be proper porch.” He thinks there’s “an opportunity for...a richer experience.” He thinks the applicant’s solution “doesn’t really suit what the building is.”

Ms. Laurie said that in general in the Northwest Quadrant, it's good that this house has been purchased, and there are plans to renovate it. She hopes that renovation is done "in a fashion" that "will not overshadow" the surrounding properties. Whatever the architecture is, she hopes it doesn't overshadow the houses of "those that aren't able to do this type of work." Mr. Symes said it will fit in well, because it will seem small, but when you walk in, it's really a large house – like the Charleston houses are. Mr. DeBlasio asked Mr. Jones if he felt that "foundation-wise" Chairman Newman's idea would be more of an expense. Mr. Jones said it's not that much more square footage. He said he loves the idea. Mr. Symes said Chairman Newman's suggestion would also give them more options if they wanted to expand. Mr. DeBlasio said they have to think about how they would deal with the existing part on the second floor.

Chairman Newman asked about the dining room. Mr. DeBlasio said there's a fireplace that's not shown on there. Chairman Newman said if they opened it up, they could "add a stair in there," and without the hallway wall, it would make it a big enough dining space. He proposed different ways to configure the bedrooms and the kitchen to make use of the courtyard. A porch to extend the master bedroom, if it's at the end, could be glassed in. Ms. Kelly showed a way they could "split the difference" with the stairs.

Mr. DeBlasio said if they did it this way, they could do 2 baths, rather than 3, with a shared bath between two bedrooms and another one off the master.

Maxine Lutz said the Historic Beaufort Foundation Preservation Committee didn't like the big addition on the back, which she found to be out of scale, and they would like to turn the conversation has taken during the course of this meeting. This building is in the Historic Beaufort Foundation's guide to historic architecture Ms. Lutz said, and they'd like to keep it that way.

Mr. DeBlasio asked about the Bailey Bill and how it works for the addition. Ms. Kelly said the assessor is not likely to assess only the addition and not the rest of the structure. Ms. Kelly offered to show the applicants how they could take advantage of the bill on this project.

Mr. DeBlasio asked what the process is from this point, and Ms. Kelly said that the applicants can bring the new plans and the Bailey Bill forms – which require documentation of details about what they are planning to do in the interior as well as the exterior – to the next meeting. Mr. Jones asked if they would be able to move this along fast enough that they can get through the process and start construction in March, which is what they would like to do. He asked if they could get a building permit to work while they are waiting to find out about the Bailey Bill. Ms. Kelly said the Bailey Bill wouldn't be enacted until the next year, anyway. Mr. DeBlasio said it's independent of the process of the house. Ms. Kelly said the Bailey Bill and HDRB approval need to happen at the same time. February 11 is the next HDRB meeting, and they can submit for a permit after that.

Chairman Newman said this potential course looks good, and Ms. Kelly can meet with them at any time and can direct their course, so they should “use her as a resource.” That way, when they come to the meeting, she can know their plans are “close to working.”

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Dickerson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Laurie, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Chairman Newman adjourned the meeting at 2:46 p.m.

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