

STAFFORD COUNTY ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES
August 1, 2016

The meeting of the Stafford County Architectural Review Board of Monday, August 1, 2016, was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chairman Paul Eakin, in the ABC Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Eakin, Range, Dodgen, McAdams (6:04), and Osborn

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bailey, Gossett

STAFF PRESENT: Baker and Dyson

GUESTS PRESENT: Reginald Perkins, Stafford County Parks and Recreation

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Eakin called the meeting to order and asked Mr. Dodgen if he would call the roll.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Mr. Dodgen called the roll and stated there was a quorum with four of the seven members present. (Ms. McAdams joined the meeting at 6:04, which brought the number of members up to five)

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Certificate of Appropriateness Application COA16151350, Brooks Park Basketball Court Fence

Mr. Eakin asked Mr. Perkins if he had any information to add to the application.

Mr. Perkins explained that the purpose for the fence was to stop players from keep having to retrieve their ball. He added that the 8 to 10 foot tall fence would be placed along the back edge of the basketball field and have wings at each end. Mr. Eakin inquired if the height of the fence would vary. Mr. Perkins explained that it was more likely that the fence would be 10 foot all the way across.

With no further questions from the Board members Mr. Range made the motion to approve. Mr. Dodgen seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. (Ms. McAdams, Ms. Gossett, and Ms. Bailey were absent)

2. Sanford-Burgess Slave Quarters Report – Discussion

Ms. Baker stated that Dennis Pogue was contracted to do the work. She added that County staff was still waiting on cost estimates.

She explained that the report was a summary of his recommendations which would be followed up with some cost estimates, which would be presented to County Administration as well as Parks and Rec to see if the work could be built into the budget. Ms. Baker stated that the work might have to be done in phases.

*Architectural Review Board Minutes
August 1, 2016*

She explained that the County intended to extend the work onto the other buildings around the slave quarters. Ms. Baker stated that the report would be given to the Architectural Review Board as well as the Historical Commission for comments.

Mr. Range inquired about the work that had been done to the quarters so far. Ms. Baker stated that some temporary stabilization work had been done.

Ms. Baker stated that she would have to provide comments within the next 2 to 3 weeks and that she would send out an email for final call for comments. She added that the Architectural Review Board members could respond individually, unless the issue required the support of the entire Architectural Review Board.

3. Falmouth Redevelopment Overlay District – Draft Ordinance

Ms. Baker explained that when the Falmouth Redevelopment Master Plan came into light back in 2011 there had been a lot of recommendations as well as a lot of community input regarding the vision for Falmouth. She stated that some of the recommendations were to keep the main area of the village intact. She added that there was the possibility for a little bit different type of development in the north-east quadrant on the north side of Butler Road and east of Route 1.

Ms. Baker explained that the overlay's purpose was to facilitate development similar to what had just happened with the Counting House. She stated that the County was trying to encourage people to want to put money into the buildings and use them by having less parking restrictions and things of that nature. She added that the goal was also to keep things in line with the existing structures in Falmouth.

Mr. Range asked if an updated map was available. Ms. Baker explained that the map had not been updated since the rezoning was approved.

Mr. Range inquired whether the ordinance would change the zoning on some of the other parcels. Ms. Baker stated that it would not and explained that all of the underlying zoning would remain and that there would be an overlay zoning similar to the historic district overlay. She added that an overlay could either allow for more flexibility or add more restrictions depending on what was desired.

Mr. Range was concerned that it would become easier for properties to rezone to B-2. Ms. Baker disagreed and explained that it would dictate things like setbacks. She added that modern setbacks were difficult to enforce with the historic structures and lots without creating a hardship.

Mr. Dodgen inquired about the permissible uses and whether property owners would have to apply for the conditional uses mentioned in the ordinance. Ms. Baker explained that the zoning ordinance currently had uses allowed by-right and by conditional use permit. She added that the conditional use permits, which were more intense uses, would have to be approved by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors for approval. She added the uses listed in the proposed ordinance very over and above what was currently permissible in the underlying districts.

Mr. Range asked if that meant that people could more easily switch back and forth between uses without any special permitting. Ms. Baker clarified that there would be two separate sets of uses, the ones that were currently allowed in the underlying district and in addition there would be the new proposed uses which staff felt would be appropriate. Mr. Eakin summarized that the ordinance would expand the by-right uses. Ms. Baker confirmed.

*Architectural Review Board Minutes
August 1, 2016*

Ms. Baker further pointed out that the ordinance also included a statement allowing the property owner to request relief from certain criteria, such as floor area ratio, open space, etc.

Ms. Baker pointed out that the ordinance also contained development standards to ensure the historic look would be preserved.

Mr. Range asked for clarification on the requirement for the provision of pedestrian circulation. Ms. Baker explained that if a developed parcel had an undeveloped parcel on either side of it, and no sidewalk to connect to the owner could opt to pay the amount it would cost to put in a sidewalk in lieu of construction a piece of sidewalk.

Mr. Eakin inquired whether the new ordinance would be retroactive to other properties in the district. Ms. Baker stated that existing uses were grandfathered.

Going back to the sidewalk question, Mr. Dodgen asked why property owners were not required to designate an easement for a sidewalk. Ms. Baker explained that as part of the site plan approval, which would be required, a sidewalk would have to be shown. She added that sidewalks were not necessarily always in an easement.

Mr. Eakin pointed out that parking was not addressed in the master redevelopment plan. Ms. Baker stated that it wouldn't show where the parking would be located. She explained that there were going to be different options, such as shared parking, or being allowed to have parking within 500 feet of the parcel. Ms. Baker reiterated that there had been parking proposals over the last several years and that it was a matter of the Board of Supervisors authorizing the construction. Ms. Baker was hopeful that developers coming in would jumpstart the need for more parking and convince the Board of Supervisors to authorize construction of more parking.

Mr. Eakin was curious about the cemetery use proposed in the ordinance. Since the overlay would reach down into the floodplain he was wondering if a cemetery would now be allowed in a floodplain. Ms. Baker explained that state regulations as well as other regulations would still have to be abide by and that this was simply an opportunity to establish a certain use if all other regulations are met.

Ms. Baker informed the Board that the item would go to the Planning Commission on August 24th and would go to the Board of Supervisors once the Planning Commission had taken action.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4. Aquia Church Lighting

Ms. Baker stated that she spoke with the Zoning Administrator and looked at the site plan which had been approved in 2014. She provided the Board with copies of the lighting plan extracted from the site plan. Ms. Baker admitted that the proposed lighting was missed during the plan review process since it was not mentioned on the certificate of appropriateness. Ms. Baker explained that there had since been conversation with the plan reviewers regarding how to handle historic district issues. She ensured that an internal procedure would be established.

Regarding the brightness of the lighting, Ms. Baker explained that there was a minimum requirement, however there was no maximum except for at the property lines. She further explained that in parking lots a foot candle of at least 2 or 3 and that the light poles on the plan were 7-8, which more than exceeded the minimum.

*Architectural Review Board Minutes
August 1, 2016*

Ms. Baker asked the Architectural Review Board how they wanted to address the issue since she felt there would have to be some level of certainty before approaching the church.

Mr. Dodgen felt that the pole were not in the period structure and were quite high. He further felt that the color of the light reminded of LEDs and should be less intrusive. He felt that the heads could be replaced.

Mr. Range stated that he did not want to incur additional expenses for the church, but acknowledged that Aquia Church was one of the most beautiful and well preserved historic resources in the County and the lights took away from the site.

Mr. Eakin was not sure if any light that tall would be compatible with the other historic features. Mr. Dodgen agreed that the tall lights were not and that the purpose was probably more for vandalism prevention, etc.

Mr. Eakin asked Mr. Osborn if at the time the church had any comments regarding the lighting. Mr. Osborn negated.

Mr. Osborn's suggestion was for the Architectural Review Board to come up with the desired design so he could get it priced just to get an idea of the magnitude. Mr. Dodgen estimated the cost at 1.500 to 2.500 dollar per unit.

Mr. Range inquired if the Engineer had been approached regarding the lighting issue. Mr. Osborn felt that the Board needed to come up with a solution before approaching anyone. Ms. Baker stated that she would talk with VDOT to see if they had any input on the lighting.

Mr. Osborn added that the light poles had been put close to the church because there were many seniors that attended the service, making it easier for them to get to and from their cars.

After a brief discussion regarding different possible scenarios, the Board agreed to get Ms. Gossett's input who was a historian before going any further.

REPORTS BY ARB MEMBERS

Mr. Range stated that was asked to do an archeological survey on the grounds near Union Church. He added that there was a report of some sandstone blocks being buried under one of the interpretive signs. He stated that he, his son, and Norman Schools went out to the site trying to figure out what the sandstone blocks were. After partially digging them up and getting the dimensions they were pretty certain that the sandstones had to be the original threshold and two window sills. He suspected that the stones were left there because they were too heavy to be moved.

Mr. Range added that he made a recommendation for a full archaeological survey for all the areas around the church.

Mr. Dodgen inquired if there was any documentation as to past developments around it. Mr. Range believed that the cement steps had been put in after a tree fell on it and after the wall in the back was put up. He stated that some of the bricks from the demolished back walls of the church had been used to close in the façade. He believed that when this work was done, some of the materials were taken offsite, except for the sandstone which was buried there.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Architectural Review Board Minutes
August 1, 2016*

June 6, 2016

Mr. Osborn made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. McAdams. The motion passed 5-0. (Ms. Gossett and Ms. Bailey were absent)

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Osborn made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Range seconded.

The motion passed 5-0 (Ms. Gossett and Ms. Bailey were absent)

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.