

STAFFORD COUNTY ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES

October 3, 2016

The meeting of the Stafford County Architectural Review Board of Monday, October 3, 2016, was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Paul Eakin, in the ABC conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Eakin, Bailey, Range, Gossett, and Osborn

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dodgen and McAdams

STAFF PRESENT: Baker

GUEST PRESENT: Reverend Jay Morris, Gary Perkins (Aquia Church) and Bob Groman (Wack Contracting)

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Mr. Range called the roll and stated there was a quorum with five of the seven members present.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Eakin stated it was his understanding that there was a request to discuss item 2 first.

1. Fleurries at Aquia Church, Roof Replacement

Discussed after item 2.

2. Aquia Church Lighting

Mr. Eakin stated the ARB had some concerns with the lighting at Aquia Church, and asked Ms. Gossett to review the issues, since she originally had the concern.

Ms. Gossett stated the new education building came before the ARB but the new lighting had not been reviewed. She stated the new lights appear to be LED lights, which are very bright and a harsh white, not a soft yellow and they are in front of the church. She asked how the ARB missed that piece of the project and it was found it was not brought before the ARB, but went another part of the county review. Then it was decided to ask the church if they would be interested in removing those lights and replace them with something a little less harsh in front of the church to make it more appropriate for a National Historic Landmark. She stated she provided the ARB with some recommendations and since Mr. Osborn was a

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member of the church he had provided some background and discussed the need for lighting along the sidewalk between the church and the education building. She stated that was a valid safety reason to have lighting there, and stated the question was could it be better than the current tall, generic LED bright lights in front of an historic church.

Mr. Groman stated the lighting was a code issue and he did not think it would be an easy task to find another light fixture that would provide the required lighting by using a similar amount of lights. He stating the cost would be exorbitant to change the fixtures with all the work that would be involved and provide the required lighting capacity.

Ms. Gossett stated it is required by code which was a County Ordinance.

Ms. Baker stated the Zoning Ordinance does allow for lighting waivers. An engineered plan would have to be prepared and based on her discussions, the Zoning Administrator could grant a waiver based on the brightness and location of the lighting. She stated she would also note currently the Board of Supervisors has referred a Lighting Ordinance to the Planning Commission and they are looking to make changes to the Ordinance while still taking safety into consideration. She stated she was not familiar with the exact changes but it is anticipated to make things less bright, particularly at property lines and such. She stated she could pull the Ordinance up and give an overview and there is an Administrator to oversee the lighting.

Mr. Groman stated he did recall a lot of discussion concerning the light fixtures and the light levels.

Ms. Baker stated yes, that was during the actual Site Plan review. She stated the plan was actually approved before the ARB realized those lights were on the plan. Because that was not part of the original Certificate of Appropriateness application and unfortunately it was not caught when someone from the Transportation Division reviewed the lighting and she did not bring it back before the ARB to make sure it was in compliance.

Mr. Groman stated when the lighting plan was under consideration between the contractor and the church there were several considerations in getting the light post. He stated one was that the parking lot required lighting in order to go along with the new building. He stated there were a certain amount of spaces required for parking and a certain amount of lighting required. But in addition to the minimum threshold there was also a maximum to guard against light pollution and the fact that there is that narrow range and as they understood it there was no light fixture of a historical style or nature that would fit within that range. When the current fixtures were selected they were the most minimal and provide downward lighting according to code and not as bright as some other alternatives. He stated the walkway lights are a historic style on the side of the parking lot nearest the building but there was nothing comparable for the parking lot requirements.

Mr. Eakin asked if the fixtures could be used for the parking lot lights.

Mr. Groman stated no, not without increasing the amount of lights two fold.

Mr. Eakin unless there was a waiver and assuming the lumens would not be an issue. He asked if the fixtures currently there could be switched from LED to incandescent. Perhaps something that would lessen the brightness and still function as required?

Ms. Gossett stated LED may not be the issue. It is the harsh whiteness that is so strikingly different from the historic church, especially when the church it lit up on the inside. She stated she sat in the parking lot for 45 minutes watching the sun go down and watching the bright LED lights come on. She stated the custodians

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were inside the church and she stated in her opinion it was awful to have the bright white/blue light coming at her when she was trying to look at the beautiful chapel She stated she felt the modern poles closer to the cemetery and the education building were less of a distraction than the two poles in the front of the visitor's view of the church. She stated it was an iconic church in the County and State and in her opinion removing only those two poles would be a huge improvement, but another improvement would be to simply remove the bright white lighting and replace it with a softer light.

Mr. Groman stated he could not speak to what would be appropriate and if the yellow light would provide the same amount of lighting.

Mr. Eakin asked is the fixture was designed specifically for a LED light.

Mr. Groman stated it was for an LED light.

Mr. Eakin asked if LED had equivalent lumens and do lumens have a variety of whiteness.

Mr. Groman stated he was not a lighting engineer and could not speak to that.

Ms. Bailey asked if it was possible to consult with the lighting contractor to see if anything could be switched out.

Mr. Groman stated he would speak to the lighting engineer.

Ms. Bailey asked who the contractor that installed the lights was.

Mr. Groman stated Wallace Electric.

Ms. Bailey stated she felt that would be the individual that could answer that question.

Mr. Range stated he visited the site during the day no lights were on or needed to be on. But the style of the light is not historical. He stated he is an Energy Manager and works with lights all day long, and there are downcast street lighting that provide the required lumens that are historic in nature. But putting the lumens discussion aside, the lights are not historic. He stated he loves taking pictures of historic sites, so he took out his camera and took a picture of the church and both of the pole lights are in the way and they disrupt the historic view of the church. He stated he would agree with the lumens discussion and he could live with that, but the fact that the fixture is not even remotely historic was a concern.

Mr. Eakin stated he felt something could be done but he did not know what the solution was as this time. He stated the ARB was looking to see what options were available and then figure out a solution.

Mr. Groman stated like was said earlier, they tried to get light fixtures that met the needs of the county. He stated to break the issue down the concern of the ARB was the two light fixtures adjacent to the church.

Ms. Gossett stated if that piece of lighting plan had come before the ARB she would be very surprised it would have been approved. And she was sure everyone knew the property was very photogenic and it is impossible to take a picture and not get one or both light poles in the photo.

Mr. Groman asked if it had come before the ARB before the lighting had been put in, what would the recommendation be.

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Mr. Range stated he would have recommended that the lights on the opposing side of the parking lot from the church received twice the amount of lumens to project on to the parking lot so it would not block the view. He stated he also would want to know if the required lumens were for each light fixture.

Mr. Groman stated there is a lighting plan that shows the required lumen level.

Mr. Range stated Sternberg Lighting, which is a lighting company, has approximately 150 downcast street lighting options that are historic in nature. He stated if it had been brought to the ARB he would have offered an option that provided enough lighting on one side to cover the parking area or provide historic fixtures.

Ms. Gossett stated in her opinion it would have been a completely different conversation. If it had come before the ARB they would have had the opportunity to work with designers and architects to come up with something that was much lower near the church. She stated if it had come before the ARB she feels a design solution could have been reached that would be acceptable to everyone.

Mr. Perkins stated they relied on the guidance of their general contractor and sub-contractor to know what is available and also satisfy county code requirements. He stated they wanted to get it right the first time and that is why the church has always worked in good faith with the ARB and the County Transportation Office. The last thing they want to do is cause problems for us or anyone in the county. And the normal staff procedures in the County did not catch this. We are not sure how the solution, if there is one available, is to be paid for when we worked in good faith with everyone.

Mr. Eakin stated that is understood and a fair point that needs to be addressed. He asked if in the mean time they could have some options to rectify and then figure out how to make it happen.

Mr. Range asked Ms. Baker if a request could be entered to remove those two pole lights.

Ms. Baker stated a waiver request could be submitted to the Zoning Administrator.

Mr. Range asked if that would be something that was cost effective, solve the issues and not cause a life safety hazard until a better solution could be determined.

Ms. Baker stated they would have to show how it is still meeting the intent by removing those poles.

Mr. Perkins stated prior to the parking lot being in that location, a VDOT Street light was there. By removing the two poles you are removing the light from the front of the church, but there is lighting going down the walkway.

Mr. Eakin stated at this point it may safer to leave them where they are as the issues are worked through. He reiterated the ARB is looking for what options are available and then figure things out.

Mr. Osborn suggested that Mr. Range and Ms. Gossett form a subcommittee to have discussion with the church and the contractor and possibly come up with some ideas.

Mr. Range stated he would be happy to bring a lumen detector to the site and read the lumens for each pole and determine the safety.

Mr. Groman stated he would like to think the lighting plan would provide guidance on the numbers.

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Mr. Eakin asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none he thanked everyone for coming and moved on to item 1,

1. Fleurries at Aquia Church, Roof Replacement

Mr. Eakin reviewed some items discussed from the site visit. One concern was the roofing material on the Fleurries and the different materials on all the buildings. In order to make the campus consistent, he felt it would look better if the campus was consistent and suggested the same architectural shingle as on the education center. He asked if they brought roofing samples and asked if anyone would like to see them.

Mr. Perkins showed the shingles he brought in showing the style and the slate color and stated these were the shingles that are currently on the education building. He stated this was the shingle they would like to put on the Fleurries now and the Parish House in the future.

Mr. Eakin told Ms. Bailey and Ms. Gossett one of the things discussed on site, since they were not there, was the education center and the Parish House are similar looking buildings and these shingles would certainly be a good match and would make the campus more consistent. He asked if there were any comments or questions.

Ms. Gossett asked what was currently on the Fleurries now.

Mr. Perkins stated cedar shakes on top of 3-tab asphalt shingles.

Ms. Gossett stated very few people use cedar shake unless you are in Colonial Williamsburg or very wealthy. She stated she did not have any particular objection to the newer version of the shingle presented. She stated her objection to the metal roof was not keeping in with the historic nature of that particular building and unfortunately a current day metal roof does not look much like an historic metal roof. She stated with the guidelines and the Secretary's standards, you cannot go wrong generally with replacement in kind. You can try to restore back to the original time period, if you want, but replacing in kind generally you are good to go.

Mr. Eakin asked if there were any other comments or suggestions. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the roof on the Fleurries and the Parish House in the same material.

Ms. Gossett stated she had a technical point, that while it could be recommended to look at the Parish House in the future, it was her understanding that a COA was only good for a year and will not be valid in two or three years.

Ms. Baker stated since it was not included with the original application, the application would need to be amended and would have to include drawings for the Parish House, if the ARB desired to include it in the approval.

Mr. Eakin asked that it be put in the minutes that it was discussed because it may be five years from now and the ARB membership may have changed.

Ms. Baker suggested it be included in the motion that the ARB would approve the same shingle for that building subject to a new application being submitted and going through the process.

Mr. Eakin thanked Ms. Baker for the suggestion.

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Ms. Gossett stated she would further amend to say the same or similar, because this product may not be available in five years.

Mr. Perkins stated that flexibility was very helpful for their planning.

Ms. Gossett asked for the specs on the shingles.

Mr. Perkins stated it was Timberline Ultra HD and the color is slate, which is the same as the educational building.

Ms. Gossett repeated Timberline Ultra HD slate color asphalt shingle.

Mr. Eakin asked for a motion.

Ms. Gossett stated in the matter of Aquia Church COA application to place a new roof on the Fleurries building, she makes a motion that the ARB approve the church's proposal to roof the Fleurries with Timberline Ultra HD slate colored asphalt shingle roofing and recommend the same or similar roofing be considered in the future when the church returns with a proposal for the Parish House.

Ms. Baily seconded the motion.

The motion passed 4-0-1 (Mr. Osborn abstained; Mr. Dodgen and Ms. McAdams were absent).

Mr. Range stated he would like to have it added to the record that is in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior standards for rehabilitation, page 22, paragraph 2.

Mr. Eakin thanked everyone for coming and asked if there were any reports from ARB members.

REPORTS BY ARB MEMBERS

Ms. Bailey stated no report.

Mr. Range stated no report.

Ms. Gossett stated it was not really a report, but a question. She asked Ms. Baker if anyone came up with a proposal about the Civil Rights funding that could be pursued.

Ms. Baker stated no, because most of them were related back to things like the slave quarters and buildings that didn't meet the intent. She stated they were looking at the 20th Century time period and they did not really come up with anything in that category.

Ms. Gossett asked Ms. Baker if she spoke with DHR because she thought the Park Service was looking at thing there were beyond the 20th Century Civil Rights movement.

Ms. Baker stated she spoke with the National Park Service and was given a table that went through the time periods applicable. She stated the Rowser Building may have been eligible but there is not really any work to be done on that building.

Ms. Gossett thanked Ms. Baker.

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Mr. Osborn stated no report.

Mr. Eakin stated he had no report either, but asked Ms. Baker and Ms. Bailey if they had an update on the Counting House.

Ms. Baker stated everything has basically been approved and staff is working out the details though the County Attorney's Office with the Memorandum of Understanding and all the associated documents. She stated everything has been sent to the proposed owner who needs to concur and return the documents back to the County.

Mr. Eakin asked how that dovetails with the proposed zoning changes. He asked if there were public hearings coming or if he was being subject to that.

Ms. Baker stated no, that really did not affect him as he was operating under the current zoning standards. She stated the new zoning overlay would not affect the existing B-2 zoning.

Mr. Range stated he does have something for a report. He stated he stopped by the Barnes House the other day when Jay was working and a lot of work has been done on the house, such as the foundation, the chimneys and the structural support on the inside.

Mr. Eakin asked if Jay got approval to do the addition.

Mr. Range state yes.

Ms. Gossett asked Ms. Baker if there was an update on the Ferry Farm project.

Ms. Baker stated they are building and working. She added that a few weekends ago they were allowing people to come watch what was going on.

Ms. Gossett asked if Ms. Baker knew when they expected to be finished.

Ms. Baker stated no, but she would forward the article to the ARB members.

Ms. Baker stated when Shelton's Cottage was open over the weekend they had over 400 visitors over 2 days and the inside was very cute with the furniture. She stated she had no idea the handicap ramp was going to be so large, but it is temporary and can be removed. They are keeping it up until they hold the Christmas event since it is not that far away. She stated the budget cycle will be starting in the next month and Parks and Recreation is looking to budget money in the CIP to possibly phase work on the slave quarters and additional work at Shelton's Cottage.

Mr. Eakin stated it was very nice to see Shelton's Cottage open.

Ms. Gossett agreed.

Mr. Range stated he look forward to future years where we can get more creative with resources in Falmouth.

Mr. Eakin agreed and moved on to the approval of minutes.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 12, 2016

Ms. Baily made a motion to approve the September 12, 2016 minutes.

Mr. Osborn seconded.

The motion passed 4-0-1 (Ms. Gossett abstained; Mr. Dodgen and Ms. McAdams were absent).

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Baily made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Osborn seconded.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.