

BERRYVILLE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
Berryville-Clarke County Government Center
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, November 5, 2014

The regular meeting of the Berryville Architectural Review Board was held on Wednesday, November 5, 2014 beginning at 11:15 p.m. at the Clarke County Education Foundation building located at 16 North Buckmarsh Street.

ATTENDANCE

The following members of the Board were present: Ken Livingston, Vice Chair; Susan Godfrey; Gene Williamson; Robin McFillen (joined the meeting at the Government Center)

Absent: Jim Barb

The following staff member was present: Christy Dunkle, Town Planner

Others present: Chip Schutte

Mr. Livingston called the meeting to order at 11:15am. Mr. Schutte described the property located at 16 North Buckmarsh Street which is under consideration by the Architectural Review Board for demolition. He said that the building had previously been in foreclosure and was owned by F&M Bank. He said the bank donated the building to the Clarke County Education Foundation (CCEF) because they had not been able to sell the structure due mainly to a lack of on- and off-street parking. He said that the building was currently on the market for sale or lease but without parking there was no interest in the property.

There was a discussion about parking and the ability of the Planning Commission to waive parking requirements in the C General Commercial Business District. Mr. Schutte said that the CCEF will be relocating the program currently held in this building to Berryville Primary School and will be vacating the building. He added that Mr. Fascelli, owner of Mario's Pizza, would like to purchase the property, demolish the structure, and build a parking lot on the site. He said that the building is in need of significant repair.

Mr. Livingston said there appeared to be a significant number of additions added to the building over the years. He said that only a small portion of the building appeared to be constructed in the 1930's. He identified exterior walls that are now inside the building. Ms. Godfrey also noted there were several places where grade changes were evident between additions.

Mr. Livingston suggested discussing the request when the meeting reconvenes at the Government Center at 12:00 noon. There being no further discussion, Mr. Williamson made the motion to adjourn the meeting to the Government Center for a 12:00 meeting, seconded by Ms. Godfrey, the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Livingston reconvened the meeting at the Berryville-Clarke County Government Center at 12:01pm. Ms. McFillen joined the meeting at this time.

Others present: Chris Fascelli, Chip Schutte, Charlie Beach, Jay Hillerson, Luanne Carey

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Godfrey moved to approve the agenda as written, seconded by Ms. McFillen. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Williamson moved to approve the minutes of the October 1, 2014 meeting as written, seconded by Ms. Godfrey. The motion passed by voice vote.

Sign Review

Clarke County Public Schools, Owner (Randy Trenary, Agent) is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness in order to replace a freestanding sign at the property located at 309 West Main Street, identified as Tax Map Parcel number 14A4-((A))-10 zoned R-1 Residential.

Ms. Dunkle described the request from the Clarke County Schools to replace the existing sign in front of the administrative offices located at 309 West Main Street. She said when Primary is ready, they will be moving these offices to the former school location and shift the sign to the front of the building. She added that the blue oval was intended to identify the address but since it was changing they wanted to leave it blank. Ms. Dunkle recommended they use vinyl letters to identify the address and simply peel off the letters when they move the sign. Board members agreed that adding the number would be appropriate. Mr. Livingston asked whether the size conformed to zoning regulations. Ms. Dunkle said it was and that it is the same size as the previous sign. She said she was concerned about sight distance from the driveway but Mr. Trenary assured her that it will be installed in the same location as the existing sign.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Williamson made the motion to approve the submission as presented, seconded by Ms. Godfrey. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Demolition Request

Mike Fascelli, Applicant (Clarke County Education Foundation, Owner) is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness in order to demolish the structure located at 16 North Buckmarsh Street, identified as Tax Map Parcel number 14A2-((A))-53 zoned C General Commercial.

Mr. Livingston said that several members of the Board were able to meet at the property prior to the called meeting at the Government Center. There was a general discussion about the ability of Planning Commission to waive parking in the zoning district. Mr. Livingston said there is no on-street parking adjacent to the building and that becomes a safety issue. Ms. McFillen asked Chris Fascelli how many parking spaces they are anticipating if the building were demolished. He said at least 12 spaces. Mr. Livingston reminded Board members that parking was not before the ARB but rather the structure itself. He said the Arundel's purchased the building in 1981 and that the Levi's ran the newspaper in the building prior to that time. There was a general discussion about uses over the years.

Mr. Livingston said that it is assumed that the structure is contributing to the local historic district due to the fact that a survey was created. He said it appeared that only a small portion of the building was actually constructed in the 1930's as indicated on the survey. He said all of the additions were created of modern materials. He added that there are exterior walls of what appear to be the original building within the current structure.

Mr. Fascelli said they would make the area look nicer than it appears now. He said that his concern is that no one will purchase the building and it will begin to deteriorate. He said with no parking, it is a safety hazard. There was a discussion about a tractor trailer delivering items to Mario and parked in the northbound travel lane of North Buckmarsh Street. Mr. Schutte reiterated that the site has no parking and safety is an issue for those stopping in front of the building.

Mr. Livingston asked for further discussion. Ms. McFillen said that if it were approved, it needs to be well designed. Ms. Dunkle added that anyone modifying the parcel would be required to submit a site plan that will be reviewed by both the Planning Commission and ARB.

Reiterating that only a small portion of the structure was constructed in the 1930's and numerous additions have been built over the years, Mr. Livingston asked for a motion. Mr. Williamson moved to conditionally approve the demolition request as presented pending site plan approval, seconded by Ms. Godfrey, Mr. Livingston abstained, the motion was approved by voice vote.

Discussion – Materials Review

Charlie Beach, Owner, is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for modifications to the structure located at 300 North Buckmarsh Street, identified as Tax Map Parcel number 14A2-(A)-8, zoned C-1 Commercial.

Mr. Livingston asked Mr. Beach to join ARB members at the table. Mr. Beach said he wanted to either remove or cover over the existing siding with Hardiplank due to its condition and issues with waterproofing and insulation. He said under current conditions the siding would allow mold and gaps in the siding which would create drafty conditions inside the structure. There was a discussion about tax credits he was anticipating and the denial of the tax credit application by the Department of Historic Resources. Mr. Livingston said he visited the site. Mr. Beach said he realized the issue with the siding after the interior plaster was removed. Ms. McFillen asked whether he wanted to move on due to the denial by DHR or commit to completing the project as originally presented. Mr. Beach said the historic element of the house was questionable at best due to adjacent properties on Buckmarsh Street. Mr. Livingston said they were not arguing about the historic district itself but were trying to discuss the siding on the structure. There was a general discussion about the visual aesthetic of Hardiplank versus wood. Mr. Livingston said he wanted to see the differentiation between the old and the new.

There being no further discussion, Ms. McFillen made the motion to approve the placement of Hardiplank (smooth side visible) over the existing siding, seconded by Mr. Williamson, the motion was approved unanimously by voice vote. Mr. Williamson added that he was appreciative of what Mr. Beach has done with the site.

Demolition Request

Jay Hillerson, Owner, is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness in order to demolish and rebuild a structure located at 606 E. Main Street, identified as Tax Map Parcel number 14A3-((A))-28 zoned C-1 General Commercial.

Mr. Hillerson said he would like to demolish his building located in the 600 block of East Main Street behind the hardware store. He said he has been trying to rent the building for over a year and has had no activity. He said it is no longer viable for its previous use as a lumber storage facility. He said he would like to construct a new metal building on the site in this location. Mr. Livingston asked if he had plans for the building and Mr. Hillerson said he had included a building similar to what the building would look like. Mr. Livingston asked staff whether the ARB would review the building again when the actual plans

had been submitted and Ms. Dunkle said they would. She added they would look at building elevations, landscaping, lighting, and other site-related issues. Mr. Livingston said the end of the building facing Main Street will be highly visible and special consideration should be taken on that façade. Ms. Dunkle said the existing building was not a contributing structure.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Williamson made the motion to approve the demolition, seconded by Ms. Godfrey, Mr. Livingston abstained, the motion carried by voice vote.

Banner Review

Jay Arnold, Agent, Berryville Main Street, is requesting modification to the location of banners installed on the utility poles located in downtown Berryville by lowering the banners to be not less than 8'-6" above the sidewalk and right-of-way in order to more easily remove and install the banners.

Luanne Carey said she was representing Berryville Main Street as Mr. Arnold was unavailable. He said that some people don't realize there are banners downtown in Berryville. She said Berryville Main Street has had to install and remove the banners twice a year and the cost to rent a bucket truck has become prohibitive. She added that six banners have blown down. She said they would like to lower the banners to be 8'-6" above the sidewalk so they could use a ladder to access them. She said that is the lowest height that Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC) would allow. Ms. Carey distributed photographs from Stephens City where banners are the same height they are proposing. She reiterated that both REC and VDOT recommended the 8'-6" height.

Ms. Carey said Berryville Main Street representatives are determining new locations for the banners so as to not block signage and trees. She said the banners would be placed over the sidewalk on Main and Buckmarsh streets and over the travel lane on Church Street. There was a general discussion about conflicts with high profile vehicles. She added that if trucks might be an issue they could install them over the sidewalks. Ms. McFillen said she felt the banner lowered near Blossman Gas was too low. She added the banner was not hanging straight and did not look good in the streetscape. She asked if there might be a compromise in the height of installation of two feet. Ms. Godfrey said her concern was the clutter on the street and that the banners would block directional and business signage if they were lowered. She asked what the highest installation could be without a bucket truck. Ms. Carey said it depended on the height of the ladder. Mr. Livingston said 8'-6" is too low.

Ms. McFillen said that she felt the visibility was good with the current placement of the banners. Mr. Livingston said there can be too many banners and said they are decorative elements and should enhance the street not add clutter to it. Mr. Williamson said the banners were intended to appeal to drivers and not to pedestrians. Ms. Godfrey said she likes them where they are currently placed.

Mr. Livingston told Ms. Carey they could either vote now, which would likely be to not approve the request, or she can discuss other options with the Board. Ms. Carey said they will be meeting within the next few weeks and would like to discuss it with them.

Ms. Godfrey asked whether BMS was going to trim the other street trees as the tree in front of Mr. Johnson's building had been significantly trimmed. Ms. Carey said they would not be as it was not in the budget. Ms. Godfrey asked whether the ARB was going to judge the Parking Meter Decorating contest. Ms. Carey asked if they would and it was determined they would begin at approximately 12:00 noon on December 3, 2015. Ms. Dunkle asked about the street tree decorating. Ms. Carey said they will be lighting the trunks only.

Other

Ms. Dunkle said there was one additional sign review to discuss.

Sign Review

Kim Patterson, Applicant, is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness in order to install a 36" high x 24" projecting sign at her business, Re-Love It, located at 20 East Main Street, identified as Tax Map Parcel number 14A2-((A))-72 zoned C General Commercial.

Ms. Dunkle distributed a drawing of the proposed sign she had received from Ms. Patterson. Ms. Dunkle said it would be made of painted wood with vinyl lettering. She said the bracket is pictured with one of the images submitted. There being no further discussion, Mr. Williamson made the motion to approve the sign as submitted, seconded by Ms. McFillen the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

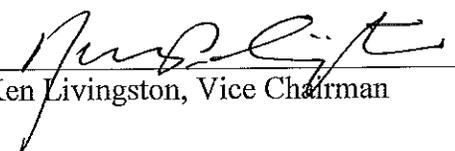
Ms. Godfrey said that Mr. Johnson's building at 16 West Main Street did not appear to be in compliance to what was approved. Ms. Dunkle said she would review the previous minutes and discuss the concerns Mr. Johnson.

Ms. Godfrey asked what the status of the Battletown Inn was. Ms. Dunkle said she had not heard anything. Ms. Godfrey voiced concern about the site and the building as ivy is starting to grow over the windows. There was a general discussion about the building. Board members directed staff to write to the property owners to let them know of their concerns.

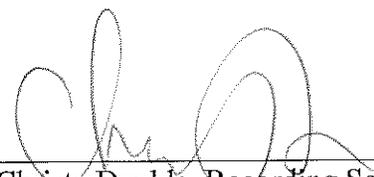
It was decided that the ARB would meet at 11:00am at December 3, 2014 in order to begin the Parking Meter Judging for Berryville Main Street immediately after the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Ms. McFillen moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Williamson, the meeting adjourned at 1:25p.m.



Ken Livingston, Vice Chairman



Christy Dunkle, Recording Secretary