

A meeting of the Historic District Review Board was held on **May 8, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.** in the City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Chuck Symes, board members Bill Allison, John Dickerson, Quinn Peitz, and Katherine Pringle, and Ken Meola, city staff.

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 Symes called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Mr. Peitz made a motion, second by Mr. Allison, to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2019 HDRB meeting. Mr. Allison said he was referred to on page that has him as “Bill Harris.” **The motion to approve the minutes as amended passed unanimously.**

REVIEW OF FULL BOARD PROJECTS

304 SCOTT STREET, PIN R121 004 000 1013 0000

Alterations & additions

Applicant: Beaufort Inn, LLC (19-07 HRB.1)

The applicant is requesting approval to change the location of the porch stairs.

Courtney Worrell said she and **Jonathan Sullivan** had met with Historic Beaufort Foundation (HBF) about the organization’s request to move the steps to the center, and they and the client are fine with that.

There was no public comment. **Mr. Dickerson made a motion for approval with the stairs centered. Ms. Pringle seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

407 WEST STREET, PIN R120 004 000 0802 0000

Change-After-Certification

Applicant: Beekman Webb (19-08 HRB.1)

The applicant is requesting approval for changes to the exterior including returning the sunroom to a screen porch.

Beekman Webb said the main changes are opening what has become a sunroom into a screened porch; replacing a door that used to be a window on the West Street side porch back into a window; putting a larger 6-over-6 window into the bedroom, which is an addition and “doesn’t meet egress”; moving the concrete block stair on the side, which would be made out of wood and be across from the door, which is “close to being centered.”

Heather Seifert, Historic Beaufort Foundation, said the organization doesn’t support the

application. They prefer a simple covered porch typical of its period, versus the proposed double. She read the Milner guidelines relevant to the applicant's request.

Ms. Seifert said they commend the applicant for replacing the concrete block steps with wood. The double-sided staircase, though, is not appropriate for the style of the home. All existing windows should be retained, she said, not replaced with "snap-in mutttons" and if they must be replaced, they should be operable double-hung windows. In new construction, true mutttons should be used for wood windows, Ms. Seifert said.

Jay Weidner said he thinks it is "very essential" that the original front façade of the house, which is the side that faces south and is in the glassed-in sun porch, should remain intact as it was originally built. Mr. Meola showed a photo from the 1997 survey. Mr. Weidner showed a picture taken during the Civil War, which he said shows the original front of the house. Most houses of the period were built this way.

Ansley Manuel, the project's architect, said this is the second time her client has been to HBF and has received none of these comments, which are waylaying the project. They think everything is fine until they come to HDRB and hear these comments. The project was approved, she said, except for changing the kitchen door to a window. She and Mr. Webb went back to the house and found out that "in the original state, it was a window," and she has a photo of a sill there to prove that.

Ms. Manuel said the integrity of the original open porch will never be interpreted as the front because there is a building right next to it. In its current state, it's an enclosed porch, which became a Carolina room and indoor plumbing when it was enclosed. They want to bring the enclosed sunroom into being a side screen porch, she said.

Mr. Webb said he feels it's better to open the porch to a screen porch than to leave it as a glassed-in screen porch, which is "closer to what it original was." They are not going to take out the bathroom. There has been an addition, and the area where they want to make the egress window is also an addition, he said.

Chairman Symes asked if there was a window where the doors are. Mr. Webb said there were two early doors on that side: one at the now-bathroom area and a Dutch door that goes into what will be the kitchen. It's an original board and batten door that was cut into, he said. Ms. Manuel showed a photo of where they would put the doors, including recycling a window and moving it back to where there was a window before.

Ms. Manuel said the owners are "good stewards" and "have the money to do something with this house." There are things that can be done to restore the house, but there are also "things people want because they live in 2019."

Mr. Allison asked if they are proposing to use clad windows. Mr. Webb and Ms. Manuel said no. Ms. Manuel said the only new window they need to put in, they went to the

Beaufort County Building Department and the current windows don't meet egress, so they asked that one window would, so they are putting in on, and it will be the only new one. Mr. Webb said it would be a 6-over-6, true divided lites window.

Ms. Manuel said a lot of the porch is intact. The columns can still be seen. Mr. Webb said the original porch is "basically still there." The columns are wrapped, so they don't know if they are original or not.

Ms. Pringle said HBF "really has to be sticklers for the Milner report," but the HDRB can take things on a case-by-case basis, and she thinks the applicant's requests are appropriate. She knows the screening of the porch was a concern about setting a precedent. Screening is not a permanent thing and it could be reversed if someone at some point wants to have an open porch. She is okay with the French doors, especially since the pictures show that the original part of the house was cut away there anyway. Ms. Pringle also feels the stair request is appropriate.

Mr. Peitz and Mr. Dickerson agreed with Ms. Pringle. Mr. Allison said he does, too, and the screen is independent of the columns. Though it's screened, getting rid of the makes it a little closer to the original. The stairs will "be replaced in ten years anyway," he said.

Chairman Symes said he also agrees with what the board has said, and he's happy that the door has been shown to have been a window before. **Ms. Pringle made a motion to approve as submitted. Mr. Peitz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

715 NEW STREET, PIN R120 004 000 0554 0000

Alterations & additions

Applicant: Johan Niemand (19-09 HRB.1)

The applicant is requesting approval for a detached cottage.

Chairman Symes said this is to modify an existing shed

David Murray said he would be representing the project for Mr. Niemand. There is an existing screen porch and garden shed on the property; the request is to enlarge it and raise it to the minimum 14' elevation, he said. It would accommodate a sleeping room. The garden storage portion would remain at grade, as would the existing screen porch. The character of the building would be in keeping with the main house, Mr. Murray said.

Mr. Peitz asked about the roof. Mr. Murray said it would be metal and match the main structure.

Mr. Murray said the existing house is at about 13', and the new heated space would be 14'. Chairman Symes asked if some of the building would be demolished. Mr. Murray said some of it would be; the screen porch would remain as-is. The south and east walls

would be kept for the existing garden shed, so those walls wouldn't be demolished. Anything shaded on the plan would be new construction, he said.

Mr. Peitz asked about shutters, and Mr. Murray said they're not shown on the elevations. Mr. Peitz said the design is "fairly simplistic," but so is the house, and the staff report said the primary building should be mimicked. Mr. Peitz suggested that shutters be put on the windows on the cottage. Mr. Murray said shutters wouldn't fit on one window, but the "main could take it," at least on the parts of the façade are not at the main entry. Mr. Peitz said he's okay with that if they're on the main windows, "to imitate the architecture of the primary building."

Mr. Meola said the design that was provided for review looks like it has hardie lap siding, but the main structure has wood siding. Mr. Peitz said, "Concrete fiber siding is really the way to go in the twenty-first century." HDRB approved hardie plank for parts of an addition on a very old building, he thinks. Concrete fiber siding would be identical to that on the main structure, Mr. Peitz said.

Mr. Murray said the hardie plank and the old lap siding match better, he feels. Mr. Peitz thinks they should move to what is more durable and more similar than something that's less durable.

Ms. Seifert said HBF appreciates applicants coming to the organization. HBF adheres to the Milner guidelines, which are available to anyone to follow, as HBF does. HBF doesn't support this application. She cited the Milner guidelines relevant to this application. The conversation about new windows, if they are used, should be double-hung with true divided lites.

Ms. Seifert said they couldn't answer a question about the rear setback, which looks like it's a foot from the property line.

Mr. Meola said they had the same question. He cited the Beaufort Code 11.4.3, "expansion of a structure." If a proposed addition encroaches into the same setback that a previous addition encroached, it can encroach at the same amount. Mr. Murray said the addition will "work its way further from the setback than the current addition."

Chairman Symes asked if the zoning is different for a porch. Mr. Meola said the current structure is non-conforming and if they rebuild it, it can be rebuilt to the way it exists today.

Mr. Peitz asked why HBF is opposed to the application. Ms. Seifert said they feels the plan appears to be "cottage-like, [circa] 1920s," which doesn't seem compatible with the existing structure. It should represent the year it was built and not "suggest another period." She told Mr. Allison it "should look like 2019," according to the Secretary of the Interior standards. Mr. Peitz asked if that applies to materials, as well. She read from the

Milner guidelines about siding.

Mr. Peitz feels there is “a conflict.” Mr. Dickerson said there’s not because hardie plank “isn’t expressly ruled out.” The original building is 1887, the suggestion of the 1920s era in the shed, and the renovation of the back side, which “maybe we have . . . arrived at a new, 2019 version.”

Chairman Symes said new construction in The Point uses hardie board. Mr. Dickerson said the Grace House re-did a porch, and HDRB approved the use of hardie board and clad windows, because this construction was new and “presented as new.” So, he thinks there is precedent for what the applicant is requesting, “as long as it “stays within the milieu of time that we’ve been working with.”

Mr. Dickerson said the primary house has existing shutters, some of which are missing; it would be nice to replace and renovate those, but that’s not part of this application. Part of the proposed shed could take shutters, he feels.

Mr. Allison said there is already a building on the site of a different time and style. The proposed building has “gables and sheds and porches,” and he feels it’s “ludicrous” to call it “a 1920s design.” Given the location, the attention to place it next to the current porch, he thinks the request is appropriate, and he doesn’t feel shutters are necessary. Mr. Allison said the issue with the standards is that the addition has to be “of its time,” and he thinks it should be compatible with the Historic District, which he thinks this is.

Mr. Allison said in regard to hardie plank, there is the “fake wood grain” should never be used, but the smooth finish is okay. He prefers the “artisan” hardie plank, which is thicker, but Mr. Peitz said it is much more expensive. Anywhere hardie plank is used, Mr. Allison said, he would not use “larger than a 6” reveal.”

Mr. Peitz said he supports the shutters, but this whole project is screened from adjacent properties and from the right-of-way, but someone might tear that down. He supports the shutters because it would “tie it to the main building visually.”

Ms. Pringle said she agrees with Mr. Allison. If concrete fiber or hardie product is used, she agrees about the less than 6” reveal. If the windows are not going to be double-hung with true divided lites, she’d like to see a window that doesn’t look like an inexpensive vinyl window. Mr. Murray said he doesn’t have details on him, but the window has a sill. Mr. Dickerson pointed out the drawing and said the window will not be “slammed in there.”

Ms. Pringle said she doesn’t think the shutters are necessary. Mr. Peitz said there’s a precedent down the street from this property.

Chairman Symes said he is okay with the hardie plank as long as it is plain, per the code, not textured. On the shutters, he can see putting them on to tie it into the main house,

but this is a simple structure, so he doesn't "really care about the shutters being on it."

Mr. Weidner said an outbuilding on a simple original house "ought to be more simple still." He cited an example. He thinks this proposed project has "far too much architectural action" compared to the "plain" main building, which has been added onto a number of times.

Mr. Weidner said HDRB for many years said that hardie plank shouldn't be used on an addition to a historic building. It won't age, and over time "it's going to look weird," but this isn't an issue on an outbuilding. He said this freestanding building/shed is not historic.

Mr. Dickerson made a motion for approval of the application as submitted. Mr. Allison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Moved house

Mr. Allison said there is a house on the southwest corner of Congress and Newcastle Streets that used to sit on the corner of Craven and Charles Streets. HDRB approved moving it "pending approval of a design," he said, and the first plan was for a 2-story house with 2-story porches. That didn't happen, and the house is now 5' off the ground, no porches have been added, and construction trailers are on the site, Mr. Allison said. This is near his office, and he finds it to be an eyesore; he's surprised the city's building department hasn't done anything about it.

Chairman Symes asked if HDRB had approved a single-story plan. Mr. Allison said the owner had an imperative to move the building in a short period of time, and HDRB gave him permission to do that. Mr. Dickerson said he remembers a 2-story design and a discussion of a 1-story design. He said he had brought up the building several meetings ago, and now it is on a "partial block foundation." He and Mr. Allison agreed that it is "not finished."

Mr. Dickerson said there are two issues: "How to enforce what we've got," which Mr. Meola can address, and "what do we do moving forward." He suggested they should discuss "completion bonds" with the city attorney on cases like this. Mr. Allison said there was not an imperative to move the building immediately, and he feels the board got "pushed into approving something" in a hurry, without plans for the house.

Mr. Meola said he's not familiar with what the HDRB approved, but he'd research it. From a building code perspective, the owner has a permit, and it will be ongoing until it's complete, if he's "getting regular inspections every six months." Building codes reached out to the owner, but he doesn't know what the answer was to that. He will research this and report at the next HDRB meeting.

Mr. Dickerson said there's a loophole, in which "a minor addition keeps the permit

open.” Mr. Meola said there may be a loophole in the building code itself, which is the state’s building code. He said he can’t tell the board what the permit is for, but he will research it. Mr. Dickerson said they need to address codes, permits, etc. and then to get a performance bond to complete work that was approved if it’s not completed or is completed incorrectly.

End of terms

Chairman Symes said his and Mr. Peitz’s terms are up after the June HDRB meeting, so the city needs to replace them. Mr. Peitz said he doesn’t want to leave the board with 3 members because the “burden on [them] would be enormous,” but he doesn’t want to continue serving, though he encouraged Chairman Symes to “serve until you’re replaced.”

Replacing Lauren Kelly

Chairman Symes said for every month that the city doesn’t replace Ms. Kelly, the board doesn’t have the “extraordinary support” they had when she was here. Mr. Allison and Mr. Peitz said this is especially the case in this project that they were just discussing. Mr. Dickerson said they could write a letter to the mayor and city council. Chairman Symes said he could review something if someone wrote it, but he’s busy. Mr. Dickerson said he’s leaving until June 10. Chairman Symes said he’d try to write something for Mr. Prichard and the city manager.

DISCUSSION: COLOR PALETS FOR PROJECTS AND SIGNS IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Mr. Meola said staff recognizes that with the amount of work in the Historic District, they are constantly being asked about acceptable colors to be used there. Staff thought they could make life easier for customers and staff. They have gotten color palettes that are acceptable in “most Historic Districts.” Charleston’s “historic collection has a wider berth of colors,” he said, while many of them don’t allow pinks, which already exist in Beaufort’s Historic District. Mr. Meola said the idea is that unless someone wants a color that’s not in the accepted pallet, they wouldn’t have to have the HDRB approve it.

Mr. Meola said this would be a means to give applicants a “range to start within,” and if they want something different, they’d bring it to the board.

Mr. Allison asked if the Northwest Quadrant guidelines were still being followed. Chairman Symes said there isn’t a color pallet in that. Mr. Allison said they wanted to ease any restriction on the colors that people painted their houses there. Coming to the board was a burden on the residents there. Now there has been a lot of gentrification, so some of those residents are no longer there, but he would still like that to be a part of the discussion.

Chairman Symes said he agrees. Houses in The Point are “kind of white,” but there are a few houses that are colors, including his. He thinks “the point of contention will be The Point,” and he is the president of The Point’s neighborhood association, so he will bring

it up.

Mr. Meola said outside of the Historic District, people can paint their house any color they want to. In the Historic District, if you're painting your house a like color, staff approved it, but it would come before the board if they wanted to change it. There was general discussion about this. Mr. Dickerson said Ms. Kelly approved colors. Mr. Meola said it was "an operating principal" in place about colors, but it's not in the code.

Mr. Peitz discussed the way Charleston's Board of Architectural Review dealt with colors.

Ms. Seifert said the Milner guidelines have several pages about paint colors that could be "a jumping off point." Mr. Allison said people used to have to apply to HDRB about painting their Historic District houses, and they specifically said that didn't apply in the Northwest Quadrant.

Mr. Dickerson suggested Mr. Meola work with Ms. Seifert on this, and they could invite Sherwin Williams and other vendors into the discussion. Mr. Allison said he would use HBF's palette, instead of adopting Charleston's pallet. There was general agreement with this, and Ms. Seifert said this has been discussed in the past.

Need support for big projects

Chairman Symes said **Dick Stewart** has a plan for "The Residence of Beaufort" to go in the area north of the Verdier House that will potentially come before HDRB in June. This will mean a lot of work for the members of the HDRB, Chairman Symes said, especially since Ms. Kelly is no longer here, so he wants the board and city staff to be aware of that.

Mr. Peitz asked about hiring a consultant to help the HDRB. Chairman Symes said that's been mentioned in the past. Mr. Allison was cite as an expert on the HDRB; he said he wouldn't mind if the city hired an independent consultant. Mr. Allison is an expert, Mr. Peitz said, but he thinks they need "an outside, independent" opinion like Ms. Kelly and **Joel Newman** were able to offer.

Mr. Dickerson said they have always tried to have professionals on the board to offer their opinions.

Ms. Seifert described where Mr. Stewart's project would be.

Mr. Dickerson asked if the HDRB could require a traffic study. Chairman Symes said this project is not officially in front of the board, so he feels they shouldn't discuss it now. He said he'd brought it up because he doesn't want the board to enter into big projects like this one without the proper support.

Mr. Peitz said the HDRB is at "a transition point" with staff and now with potential new

board members. He would hesitate to make any decisions on such projects unless the board were presented with appropriate studies (e.g., about traffic), relevant material from the Civic Master Plan and the Milner report, and “everything else that’s needed to make a decision of this magnitude.”

Mr. Allison said that in the past, when big projects were proposed downtown, applicants were required to submit models to show “mass and proportion.” Mr. Peitz said there were also “levels of approval” that applicants had to go through for projects. Chairman Symes said he thinks the board needs “all that supporting knowledge and expertise,” apart from what the board members are able to provide. He’s also concerned that when “something . . . comes before the board,” it has all the necessary information it needs to make decisions.

There being no further business to come before the board, **Chairman Symes made a motion, second by Mr. Allison, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously,** and the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.