

**MINUTES – HARB Regular Meeting
November 2, 2020**

MINUTES

**HARRISBURG ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
November 2, 2020
VIRTUAL MEETING ON ZOOM PLATFORM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trina Gribble, Chair
Jeremiah Chamberlin, Vice Chair
Anne Montgomery, Assistant Codes Administrator
Kali Tennis

MEMBERS ABSENT: Camille Bennett
April Rucker

STAFF PRESENT: Frank Grumbine, Historic Preservation Specialist and Archivist
Tiffanie Baldock, City Solicitor
Isaac Gaylord, Deputy City Solicitor

OTHERS PRESENT:

CALL TO ORDER: 6:10 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Chamberlin moved, and Mrs. Gribble seconded the motion to Table the October 5th minutes. The Board approved the motion to Approve the minutes from the August meeting by majority vote with Ms. Tennis abstaining (3-0).

OLD BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. 1116 Green Street, filed by Bronwyn Edwards, to replace large double hung window on first floor with a Fibrex picture window.**

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be Approved with the following condition(s):

1. The Applicant will not alter or damage the brownstone sill or lintel.

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The case was represented by Bronwyn Edwards, 1116 Green Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102 (aka “the Applicant”).

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicant had anything to add to the proposal. The Applicant had nothing to add.

Mrs. Montgomery and Mr. Chamberlin stated that they did not have any major issues with the proposal. Mrs. Gribble stated that she had concern about the idea that there is difficulty filling the opening and stated that there are windows available to match the existing window. Mr. Chamberlin stated that he agrees that the window can be replaced in-kind but does not have an issue with the use of a picture window in this application.

The Applicant stated that the in-kind replacement of the window would significantly increase the cost of an already expensive project.

Mrs. Tennis asked for the energy efficiency value of the window. The Applicant stated that she was unsure. Mrs. Tennis stated that it is important to understand the issues that homeowners face when dealing with window replacements.

Mrs. Gribble opened the discussion for public comment. There were no comments.

Mrs. Montgomery moved; Mr. Chamberlin seconded the motion to Approve with Conditions. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (4-0).

2. 549 South Front Street, filed by Joshua Benjestorf, to install two new window openings, new siding, install HVAC system on roof, and replace garage doors on rear garage.

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be approved with the following condition(s):

1. The Applicant must receive approval from the Zoning Hearing Board.
2. The newly installed windows and window openings visible from the public right of way must be composed of wood or wood composite, be painted, and be matching.
3. The roof mounted HVAC system must not be visible from a public right of way.
4. The new siding shall be composed of wood or cementitious fiberboard lapboard and be painted.
5. The new garage doors shall be paneled wood doors and be painted.

The case was represented by Joshua Benjestorf, 549 South Front Street, Harrisburg, PA 17104 (aka “the Applicant”).

Mrs. Gribble asked whether the conditions by the Planning Bureau are acceptable to the Applicant. The Applicant responded that they were acceptable.

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Mr. Chamberlin asked what type of windows would be installed on the façade of the building. The Applicant stated that there would be two double-hung wood windows with a white exterior and colonial grilles. Mrs. Gribble asked what the size of the windows would be. The Applicant stated that they are 37.6 x 56.8 inches and are vertically situated. The Applicant stated that his neighbor has a similar type of window and wanted to match the aesthetic. Mr. Chamberlin asked the applicant about the profile of the proposed wood siding. The Applicant stated that the new siding would be composed of wood.

Mrs. Baldock asked Mr. Grumbine what type of Zoning Relief is required for the project. Mr. Grumbine stated that the applicant already submitted an application regarding zoning relief for the proposed new use of the building. The Applicant stated that the zoning relief is for a change of use.

Mr. Chamberlin asked if the applicant is agreeable to the condition that the HVAC unit is not visible from a public right of way. The Applicant stated that the condition is fine and the unit will not be visible from a public right of way. Mr. Chamberlin stated that he feels the project is appropriate and is in line with HARB's approvable materials.

Mrs. Gribble opened the discussion for public comment. There were no comments.

Mr. Chamberlin moved; Mrs. Montgomery seconded the motion to Approve with condition(s). The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (4-0).

3. 925 North 3rd Street, filed by WCI Partners, to install a six-foot composite fence along 3rd Street and to install exterior signage.

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be approved with the following condition(s):

1. The proposed fence shall match the previously approved fence in-kind and be painted or stained.
2. The new signage must be anchored into mortar joints and not damage historic brick.
3. The new air handler or other mechanical equipment must not be visible from a public right of way.

The case was represented by David Butcher, 1900 North 2nd Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102 and Theo Armstrong, 3143 Brookfield Road, Harrisburg PA, 17109 (aka "the Applicant").

Mrs. Montgomery asked if the Applicants agree with the conditions. The Applicants stated that they agree with the conditions but have a concern about screening all aspects of the mechanical equipment. The Applicant stated that if individuals tried they would be able to see some part of the mechanical equipment, primarily the ductwork. Mrs. Gribble asked if this was the unit that had issues to be mounted on the roof. The Applicant stated that the size and weight of the air handler has to be mounted on a concrete pad and could not possibly be mounted on the roof.

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Mr. Chamberlin asked if the proposed signage is within the Zoning Code's requirements. The Applicant stated that the size is within zoning requirements but they still would need a variance to allow installation of signage on two separate facades.

The Applicant stated that the bulk of the mechanical equipment would not be visible and would be screened by the proposed fence. Mrs. Gribble asked about the location of the fence. The Applicant stated that the fence would run along the property line and the HVAC equipment would sit about 12 feet behind the fence. The Applicant stated that above the air handler there would be duct work that goes into the ceiling on the side of the building.

Mr. Chamberlin asked what is screening the HVAC equipment from James Street. The applicant stated that there will be a fence on the back as well that was previously approved by HARB. Mrs. Gribble asked about the material of the proposed fence. The Applicant stated that the material is a wood composite.

Mrs. Gribble opened the discussion for public comment. There were no comments.

The Applicant wanted to discuss the condition regarding the visibility of the HVAC equipment. The Applicant stated that the bulk of the equipment will be screened by the fence but some of the ductwork may be visible.

Mr. Chamberlin asked if the condition can be amended. Mr. Chamberlin stated that the condition should state that secondary accessories of the mechanical equipment may be visible. The Applicant stated that he fears that some of the equipment may be minimally visible and does not want to agree to a blanket condition regarding visibility. The Applicant stated that based on sightlines some of the equipment will likely be minimally visible from some angles.

Ms. Tennis asked what the difference would be between the equipment and the fence. The Applicant stated that it depends on an individual's sightline and from where they are viewing it. The Applicant stated that they are making every effort to make the equipment less visible and want to be good neighbors. The Applicant stated that an overarching condition may cause issues for their large investment on the property.

Mrs. Montgomery asked the Board if they are amendable approving to screen the bulk of the equipment. Mr. Chamberlin agreed and stated that the bulk of the air handler should be screened where some accessories may be somewhat visible.

Ms. Tennis asked if the difference is minimal then just simply increase the height of the fence. The Applicant stated that it depends on the sightline of the viewer and it would be visible from further away and increasing the height of the fence may not make a big enough difference. Mrs. Gribble stated that the Applicant could get a variance for a larger fence. Mr. Chamberlin stated that he prefers a smaller fence than an overbearing fence.

Mrs. Gribble stated that the condition should be modified to state the proposed fence on third street will conceal the majority of the portions of the mechanical equipment.

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Mr. Chamberlin moved with modified conditions; Mrs. Gribble seconded the motion to Approve with modified condition(s). The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (4-0).

4. 1613 North 2nd Street, filed by Wesley Pence, to remove slate on mansard roof to install synthetic slate.

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be approved with the following condition(s):

1. The shingle patterns of the original roof must be replicated as follows: the turret and dormer must have scalloped shingles; the mansard roof must have rectangular shingles with the central eight courses as beveled or octagonal shingles.

2. The finial atop of the southern turret must be preserved and retained and shall not be removed.

The case was represented by Wesley Pence, 151 North Washington Street, Greencastle PA, 17225 (aka “the Applicant”).

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicant had anything to add the proposal. The Applicant had nothing to add. Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicant had any issues with the proposed conditions. The Applicant had no issues with the conditions. Mrs. Gribble asked what type of product is being used. The Applicant stated that the synthetic slate is Inspire made by Boral. Mrs. Gribble asked what the product is made from. The Applicant stated that he is not sure. Mr. Grumbine stated that he believes that it may be made out of recycled rubber. Mr. Charles Alexander, the architect for the Library project, stated that the Boral synthetic slate is made from fly ash a byproduct of coal burning.

Mr. Chamberlin stated that he does not see any issues with the proposal as long as the original patterns are replicated. Mrs. Montgomery agreed.

Mrs. Gribble opened the discussion for public comment. There were no comments.

The Applicant stated that on the back section there are existing asphalt shingles on the rear of the third floor. Mrs. Gribble stated that she would prefer that the replica slate would be installed there. Mr. Chamberlin stated that if that area is not visible from a public right of way then it is not subject to HARB. Mr. Grumbine said that he would recommend that the asphalt be replaced for the new synthetic slate if possible and all areas that are visible from a public right of way.

Mr. Chamberlin asked if the HARB could delegate the decision to the Planning Bureau. Mrs. Baldock stated that HARB could delegate decisions to Mr. Grumbine if approved. Mr. Chamberlin stated that it would be best to move forward to approve synthetic slate for the entire project.

Mr. Chamberlin stated that the third condition should read that all visible roofing replacement will have the proposed synthetic slate installed.

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Mrs. Montgomery moved with modified conditions; Mr. Chamberlin seconded the motion to Approve with modified condition(s). The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (4-0).

5. 1718 North 2nd Street, filed by Duane Morrison, to remove metal roof on rear addition to install synthetic slate and to remove historic chimney.

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be approved with the following condition(s):

1. The historic chimney shall be retained and preserved.

The case was represented by Duane Morrison, 501 South 19th Street, Camp Hill PA 17101 (aka “the Applicant”).

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicant had anything to add to the proposal. The Applicant had nothing to add. Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicant had any issues with the conditions. The Applicant stated that he would have to discuss the chimney issue with the building owner. The Applicant stated that the chimney is no longer in use and is leaking which is why they wanted to remove it.

Mrs. Gribble asked if the low pitch of the roof will work with the proposed material. The Applicant stated that the pitch of the roof will work for the proposed material with ice shield. Mr. Chamberlin stated that if the building owner retains the chimney and the proposed material works for the roof then he has no issues with the proposal.

Mrs. Gribble stated that the chimney does appear to have issues. The Applicant stated that it will need to be addressed at some point in the future along with the primary roof, but it is up to the building owner.

Ms. Tennis stated that based on the appearance of the chimney she feels that it is too deteriorated to save. The Applicant stated that the existing stucco can be removed and reworked with a substitute material to retain the original appearance. Ms. Tennis stated that she is fine with removing the chimney. The Applicant stated that the chimney is visible from a public right of way. Mr. Chamberlin stated that the issue is that the HARB needs to retain the architectural value of the chimney and its historic function as a chimney.

The Applicant stated that the chimney will likely be never used again as it would require significant work to be functional. Ms. Tennis stated that the chimney may not have any structural integrity and is severely deteriorated making it difficult to repair the chimney. Mr. Chamberlin stated that the Board does not have a great deal of information about the chimney to make any decisions. The Applicant stated that he would be fine with holding off on the chimney as the priority is to repair the roof.

Mrs. Gribble opened the discussion for public comment. There were no comments.

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Mrs. Gribble moved with conditions; Mr. Chamberlin seconded the motion to Approve with condition(s). The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (4-0).

6. 1801 North Front Street, filed by Daniel Mione, to remove steel tube railing within an existing concrete block wall to fill the void with additional concrete block.

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be Denied for the following reason(s):

1. The Secretary of Interior’s Standards state “Removing or substantially changing metal features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished” is not recommended.
2. The original railing was a highly visible character defining feature of the building and its removal has an adverse effect on the historical integrity of the structure.
3. The Harrisburg Historic District Design Guidelines state “Identifying, retaining, and preserving historic architectural metal features and their finishes and colors is recommended.”

The case was represented by Daniel Mione, 6012 Catherine Street, Harrisburg, PA 17112 (aka “the Applicant”).

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicant had anything to add to the application. The Applicant stated that the masonry wall was beginning to collapse and the tube railing was posing a safety concern. The Applicant further stated that the decision was made to remove the tube railing to replace with cement block.

Mrs. Tennis stated that it is apparent that the CMU block needed repair. The Applicant stated that the freeze and thaw of the wall with the tube railing may have caused the wall to fail. The Applicant further stated that it was a failure on his behalf to assume that the railing could be removed and repaired with additional block.

Mr. Chamberlin asked if the original railing has been discarded. The Applicant stated that they still have possession of the railing. Mrs. Gribble stated that she feels that the railing is a strong architectural feature of the building as it is harmonious with the building entry and that its removal has a negative impact on the façade. Mrs. Gribble stated that the two options consist of reinstallation of the pipe rail or approve with the block as installed.

Mr. Chamberlin stated that if this project was presented to him otherwise he would definitively agree that the original tube railing should stay. Mrs. Montgomery agreed and stated that the entire appearance of the entrance has been compromised with the removal of the tube railing.

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Board were to deny the case what recourse would the Applicant have left. Mr. Grumbine stated that the Applicant would either reinstall the original tube railing as it was prior to the work or he can appeal the decision to City Council. Mrs. Gribble stated that the applicant could also have an alternative option to install something else.

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Mr. Chamberlin stated that he does not like the idea of approving something that changes the character of the building and that approving of such work sets a wrong precedent. Ms. Tennis agreed and stated that she would also agree with denial of the work.

Mrs. Gribble opened the discussion for public comment. There were no comments.

Mr. Alexander, architect for the Library project, stated that he is aware that the building has been modified in the past and knows the building well. Mrs. Gribble said the Board has to act on the information they have at the moment.

Mrs. Gribble moved to Deny; Mr. Chamberlin seconded the motion to Deny the application. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (4-0).

7. 256 Herr Street, filed by Nathan Hench and Ronald Wetzel, to remove existing impervious paving and cast-iron fence to install a new six-foot aluminum fence and brick pillar system with a half-moon driveway and gates.

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be approved with the following condition(s):

1. The existing cast iron fence shall be retained and preserved.
2. The proposed fence, masonry pillars, and brick wall shall not exceed a maximum of four feet in height. If HARB approves of the proposed six-foot fence the applicants must receive approval from the Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board.
3. The Applicant shall coordinate with the City Engineer's office to reconstruct sidewalk configurations for new use and ADA compliance.

The case was represented by Nathan Hench and Ronald Wetzel, 256 Herr Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102, Don Delp of RestoreNmore and Brad Groff of River Valley Landscaping (aka "the Applicants").

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicants had anything to add to the application. The Applicants stated that they would prefer a six-foot fence for security purposes and that the existing fence is in disrepair. The Applicants stated that the new fence would be composed of aluminum to attempt to replicate the original cast iron fence and use brick and cast concrete caps for the pillars.

Mr. Chamberlin asked why a six-foot fence would not be allowed. Mr. Grumbine stated that a six-foot fence for a front yard in an RM district requires zoning relief.

Mr. Chamberlin asked if there will be a brick masonry wall on the Green Street sidewalk. The Applicants stated that there is a proposed portion of a brick wall with fence on either side of it and the purpose of the wall is to install a water feature on the other side. The Applicant stated that they interpret Herr Street as the front of the property and Green Street the side of the property. The Applicants also stated that they plan on installing real gas lamps on top of the masonry pillars and want them to be higher than four feet.

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Mr. Chamberlin asked about the design of the fence on Herr Street. The Applicants stated that there will be two brick pillars flanking the entrance gate and the rest would be aluminum fencing on Herr Street.

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicants plan on replacing the existing cast iron fencing. The Applicants stated that they have a resource to market the historic cast iron fence as a complete package and plan on salvaging the fence in its entirety. Mrs. Gribble asked about the size of the pickets of the fencing. The Applicants stated that they can achieve around 5/8^{ths} of an inch in diameter and plan on replicating the historic cast iron fence detailing including the acorns, stars, and rosettes. Ms. Tennis confirmed that the applicants will be removing the existing fence and replacing it with a new system. Ms. Tennis stated that she feels comfortable with the proposal and would approve.

Mrs. Gribble opened the discussion for public comment. There were no comments.

Mrs. Gribble stated that it sounds like the Board would like to eliminate the first condition proposed by the Planning Bureau. Mrs. Gribble proposed changing the second condition to HARB approves of either 4- or 6-foot fence as long as the fence replicates the existing historic fence or if the proposed fence is 6 foot then the Applicants shall receive zoning relief. Mrs. Gribble read the final condition regarding the sidewalks. Mr. Grumbine stated that the condition was written due to the existing large curb cut on Green Street and that it is applied to any case that may impact changes to the sidewalk. The Applicants stated the curb cuts do not interfere with the sidewalks. The Applicant stated that they are removing the parking to install a small driveway and garden space.

Mrs. Gribble stated that she is in favor of either four or six foot pillars and feels either would be appropriate for the neighborhood. Mr. Chamberlin stated that he agrees with the modified conditions that were proposed by Mrs. Gribble. Mrs. Gribble stated that they should have the first condition to state that the cast iron fence shall be salvaged, the second states that HARB will accept either four or six foot fence where the six foot fence will require Zoning Hearing Board approval, and the third condition will remain as written.

Mr. Chamberlin moved to Approve with modified conditions; Ms. Tennis seconded the motion to Approve with modified conditions. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (4-0).

- 8. 27 North Front Street & 29 North Front Street, filed by Dauphin County Library System, to remove the non-original rear third floor and rear addition to construct a new addition to combine spaces, to cut open the first floor of the southern façade of the carriage house for parking, and to install a new door system on the first floor of Walnut Street.**

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be Approved with the following condition(s):

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1. The southern elevation of the carriage house shall be preserved and must not be altered to create a large opening for parking.
2. The Applicant shall not install the proposed slate exterior on the southern elevation of the historic structure. The original historic brick shall be preserved and rehabilitated.
3. The existing cast iron fence shall be retained and preserved
4. Character defining architectural features from demolition must be reused or donated for reuse.

The case was represented by Karen Cullings, 824 2nd Street, New Cumberland PA 17070 and Charles Alexander, 218 Thistle Road Catonsville, Maryland 21228 (aka “the Applicants”).

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicants had anything to add to the proposal. The Applicants had prepared a presentation regarding the project and gave a synopsis of the alterations and updates to the properties.

Ms. Tennis stated that she is in favor of the slate on top of the southern elevation of the rear ell on the historic building. Mrs. Gribble stated that she agrees. Mrs. Montgomery asked Mr. Grumbine about whether the third floor was a later addition. Mr. Grumbine stated that the third floor on the rear ell of the building was absolutely a later addition and is not original and dates from the late 19th to early 20th centuries.

The Applicants stated that the existing old addition creates a horrific architectural collision that slams into the shed dormer and the original roofline. Ms. Tennis stated that the proposed design is a big improvement. Ms. Tennis suggested the Board to discuss the modifications to the carriage house that relate to parking. The Applicants stated that parking is a huge issue for the library and that they spend a significant amount of money on parking and that the proposed modification would allow for more on-site parking for the library. The Applicants continued to say that allowing the alterations to the carriage house would be a substantial benefit to the functions of the library. The Applicants also stated that they would also be removing the cement block and pressure treated deck additions from the carriage house.

Mrs. Gribble asked about the rendering of the proposed opening on the carriage house. The Applicants stated that the rendering is not the best depiction of the proposed opening. The Applicants shared photos of the carriage house and explained how it has been altered over time. Ms. Tennis asked Mr. Grumbine to read the condition regarding the preservation of the carriage house. The Applicant stated that the existing opening only allows for a single space whereas the new opening would allow for several vehicles to park. Ms. Tennis stated that she would approve of the design as is. Mrs. Gribble stated that she struggles having a large void in the side of an historic carriage house while understanding the need for more parking.

Mrs. Gribble asked about the condition regarding the existing cast iron fence. Mr. Grumbine stated that there is an existing cast iron fence on the southern elevation of the library. The Applicants stated that the fence will likely not be impacted and it will remain. Mrs. Montgomery stated that she likes the design and is fine with having slate on the southern elevation of the rear. Mrs. Montgomery also stated that she feels that there should not be a large opening on the carriage house and should be preserved.

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Mrs. Gribble stated that an alternative design for the opening on the carriage house would be more appropriate. Mr. Chamberlin stated that a more intentional design for the opening would be preferable with a more compatible design. Ms. Tennis stated that carriage house doors would make the building very busy and does not agree. Mrs. Gribble states that there seems to be a general consensus regarding the project overall and that there are concerns about opening the side of the carriage house. Mrs. Gribble stated that she would like to see further development of the carriage house. The Applicants asked whether another carriage house proposal would need HARB approval or would only need approval by the Planning Bureau. Mr. Grumbine stated that he feels that it would have to be reviewed by HARB under a separate application. The Applicants stated that they would be fine with proceeding on with the bulk of the project and wait to submit another application for the carriage house.

Mrs. Gribble read the proposed conditions. Mrs. Gribble stated that the first condition can be retained and should be considered as a separate application. The Applicants asked for more clarification regarding the carriage house. Mr. Gaylord stated that it would be best that a new proposal to be submitted as a separate application. Mr. Chamberlin agreed and that a new application should be submitted for the carriage house proposal.

Ms. Tennis asked what the issue is with the carriage house alteration. Mr. Chamberlin and Mrs. Gribble stated that it looks unfinished and lacks the qualities required for the historic nature of the building.

Mrs. Gribble stated that the first condition should read that the work regarding the carriage house shall be submitted under a separate application in the future. Mrs. Gribble stated that the second condition will be removed and that the third and fourth conditions will remain.

Mrs. Gribble opened the discussion for public comment. There were no comments.

Mrs. Gribble moved to approve with modified conditions; Mrs. Montgomery seconded the motion to Approve with modified conditions. The motion was adopted with a majority vote with Ms. Tennis abstaining (3-0).

OTHER BUSINESS:

1 Discussion on historic district guidelines.

Mr. Grumbine described the progress he has made on the new historic district design guidelines. Mr. Grumbine stated that he is working on the last sections of the rehabilitation guidelines and has to finish the primary text of the document and stated that much work has yet to be done on the formatting and aesthetics of the new document. Mr. Grumbine stated that he will present a draft document to the HARB before the January 2021 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:10 PM

Mr. Chamberlin moved, and Ms. Tennis seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion was adopted by unanimous vote (4-0) and the meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.