

**MINUTES – HARB Regular Meeting
September 14, 2020**

MINUTES

**HARRISBURG ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
September 14, 2020
VIRTUAL MEETING ON ZOOM PLATFORM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trina Gribble, Chair
Jeremiah Chamberlin, Vice Chair
April Rucker
Camille Bennett (Arrived 7:07PM)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Anne Montgomery, Assistant Codes Administrator

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

CALL TO ORDER: 6:07 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mrs. Rucker moved, and Mr. Chamberlin seconded the motion to Table the August 3rd minutes. The Board approved the motion to Table the minutes from the August meeting by unanimous vote (4-0).

OLD BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. 131 State Street, filed by WCI Partners LP, to install concrete ADA ramp, metal railing, and steel doors on west side of building and to remove fire escape extension.**

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

1. The Applicant will work with the Codes Bureau to confirm all alterations are code compliant.

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2. The Applicant will install painted wood doors and frame rather than the proposed steel doors and frame.

The case was represented by David Butcher, 1900 North 2nd Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102 (aka “the Applicant”).

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicant had anything to add to the proposal. The Applicant stated that due to the commercial use of the proposed door a wood door would not be appropriate. The Applicant asked if a composite door would be acceptable. Mr. Chamberlin stated that he believes the Board has approved composite doors in the past. Mrs. Rucker stated that the Board has approved of composite doors. Mr. Chamberlin stated that composite doors have impregnated wood fibers and are paintable and stated that a composite door would be appropriate. The Applicant stated that he can send the proposed door to the Planning Bureau for review. Mr. Chamberlin stated that the door should be reviewed by the Planning Bureau before installation.

Discussion about non-historic screening and removal of the fire escape ensued. Mrs. Gribble confirmed the proposed material of the ADA ramp and railing with the Applicant. The Applicant stated that the new ramp would be used for deliveries and ADA access.

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Condition regarding the door should be revised. Mr. Chamberlin stated that the condition should read that the door should be a composite door which will be approved by the Planning Bureau.

Mr. Chamberlin moved; Mrs. Rucker seconded the motion to Approve with modified Conditions. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (3-0).

2. 925 North 3rd Street, filed by WCI Partners LP, to install a composite fence, new door opening and concrete landing ramp on southern façade.

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

1. The proposed fence will be composed wood and shall be painted or stained.
2. The new door will be composed of wood and will be painted.
3. The proposed railing and concrete ramp shall be simple yet compatible with the historic building.

The case was represented by David Butcher, 1900 North 2nd Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102 (aka “the Applicant”).

Mr. Grumbine stated that the Applicant had a couple additions and redactions from the original application and asked him to elaborate on these changes. The Applicant stated that the new door will be inset into the wall which would access the cooler of the brewery and that it would likely not be visible from a public right of way. The Applicant stated that since the door will require insulating properties, a wood door would not be appropriate for the heavy use of the door. The

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Applicant stated that they no longer require the use of the proposed concrete dock, which was initially on the application. The Applicant further elaborated on the fact that the new space requires a large air handling unit which cannot be installed on the interior or the roof due to the required air handling capacity that is needed. The Applicant stated that the new unit would need to be installed at ground level on the southern side of the parcel in the parking lot area which would then be screened on the front by the same type of fencing on the application.

The Applicant also stated that he would like to add a mural to the application which would be painted on the northern wall of the building at the rear of the parcel in the courtyard. The Applicant stated that only half of the mural would be visible from a public right of way and that the paint would be breathable. The Applicant stated that this would not include any type of advertising and would include a nature scene and is working with Sprocket Mural Works on the project.

Mrs. Gribble asked about the limitation of the mural. The Applicant stated that the mural would be in the rear courtyard area which would be the north wall of the three-story building. The Applicant stated that there is minimal activity on that street other than PLCB employees.

Mrs. Gribble asked for discussion regarding the revisions on the Application. Mr. Chamberlin stated that if the door is not visible then it is not HARB's purview. Mr. Chamberlin asked about how the previously approved fence relates to the newly proposed fence. The Applicant stated that the new fence would be perpendicular to the previously approved fence and would be in the parking lot. Mr. Chamberlin stated that if he were to approve the fence then the condition would read that the new fence would be in-kind with the previously approved fence. The Applicant stated that if the air handler is approved then the door would not be visible given the unit would be to the left of the proposed door and perpendicular to the building.

Mrs. Gribble asked about the height of the screening fence. The Applicant stated that the fence will be six feet tall. Mrs. Gribble stated that she is not sure the proposed screening would adequately screen the air handler.

Mr. Grumbine stated that since the air handler is a large addition to the application and that there is not enough information on this aspect of the work, the HARB does not have to vote on this alteration. Mr. Grumbine further elaborated that the Applicant should submit a new application for the work since it would have a large impact on the project and the historic district. Mr. Gaylord asked Mr. Grumbine if the Applicant gave him sufficient notice of the changes to the application. Mr. Grumbine stated that he has received a notice of the change to the project but did not receive adequate documentation usually required of Applicants, especially for such a large alteration in the historic district.

Mr. Chamberlin stated that the air handler would be on the secondary elevation with screening which would be preferable. The Applicant stated that the unit would likely be adequately screened but cannot confirm the exact dimensions of the unit. Mrs. Gribble stated that a condition could be included to ensure the screening of the unit is appropriate. Mrs. Gribble also stated that the screening should run around the entirety of the unit rather than just north to south. Mrs. Gribble stated that this is tough due to the lack of a site plan or a known size of the unit.

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Mr. Gaylord stated that it is required that Mr. Grumbine has enough information regarding the installation of the air handling unit given that there was no public notice of this part of the application and that it would be more appropriate that a new application be submitted. Mr. Grumbine stated that he concurred with Mr. Gaylord and that he did not have enough information to properly review the change to the application. Mr. Grumbine further stated that the proposed change to the application is a drastic alteration in the historic district and it does not allow for the public to voice their opinion on a change that was not made public. Mr. Gaylord stated that that changes are essentially a new application.

The Applicant asked if the Board would consider the addition of the mural. Mr. Gaylord stated that HARB is able to hold special sessions or to move the mural issue to the next HARB meeting. Mr. Grumbine stated that the October HARB agenda has been set and the deadline has past. Mr. Chamberlin suggested that the HARB give the Planning Bureau the authority to administratively approve murals, but does not like the idea of allowing the idea of any wall being painted in the historic districts.

Mrs. Rucker stated that she likes the mural. Mr. Gaylord stated that this may be a Sunshine Act issue. Mr. Chamberlin stated that this property was publicly posted that it was being reviewed. Mr. Gaylord stated that the public postings practically satisfies Sunshine Act requirements.

Mr. Chamberlin stated that the second and third floors of the wall of the mural would be visible from a public right of way. The Applicant stated that he would be happy to reapply for the installation of the air handler and screening.

Mrs. Rucker stated that she is OK with approving the mural. Mrs. Gribble asked the proposed conditions to be read. Mr. Grumbine read the proposed conditions.

Discussion ensued about the materiality of the new door on the side of the building. The Applicant stated that it would be shortsighted to have any other material other than steel for the door due to the heavy commercial use of the door. Mrs. Gribble stated that it is difficult to justify the approval of a steel door in an historic district.

The Applicant suggested tabling the material of the door, screening, air handler and that the HARB can vote on the original fence and the mural.

Mrs. Gribble stated that the first condition should be revised to have the new fence be in-kind with the previously approved fence. Mrs. Gribble said that the door issue would be tabled for the new application and that the HARB will be voting on the addition of the mural. Mrs. Gribble stated that conditions two and three will be removed.

Mr. Chamberlin moved; Mrs. Rucker seconded the motion to Approve with modified condition(s). The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (3-0).

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3. 321 North Front Street, filed by Derek Dilks, to construct a rear addition clad in metal panels with aluminum clad windows and to construct two porches with composite decking and metal railing.

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

1. The proposed addition will destroy character defining features including the historic rear addition and projecting pent roofs, which have acquired significance. The Secretary of Interior Standards state that “Attaching a new addition in a manner that obscures, damages, or destroys character-defining features of the historic building” is not recommended.
2. The proposed material for the addition is not compatible with the building or the surrounding built environment as it is significantly different than that of existing historic building materials. Although intentional differentiation is necessary and the use of contemporary materials is appropriate for new additions; extreme contrast in materials draws attention to the new addition rather than the historic building. New additions must be subordinate to the historic building. The Secretary of Interior Standards state that “Designing a new addition that is significantly different and, thus, incompatible with the historic building” is not recommended. Conversely, the scale and fenestration pattern of the addition and the proposed porches are appropriate.
3. The Harrisburg Historic District Design Guidelines state “...using the historic material of the main section of the building and having the addition reveal its era through other architectural aspects is recommended.”
4. As is, the proposed addition would have an adverse effect on the significance and integrity on the historic building. If HARB approves of the addition, the Board should consider alternative exterior materials which would be more compatible with the historic structure and its environment.

The case was represented by Derek Dilks, 1701 North Front Street Harrisburg, PA 17102 and Chris Dawson 300 North 2nd Street Suite 701 Harrisburg PA 17102 (aka “the Applicants”).

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicants had anything to add to the proposal. The Applicants stated that they had spoken with Mr. Grumbine regarding the project prior to the meeting and that despite the recommendation of denial Mr. Grumbine suggested that the applicants keep the application on the agenda. The Applicant stated that the addition is on a non-primary façade and feels that the addition is subordinate to the original building. The Applicant stated that the addition is certainly differentiated from the original building and that he is open to other exterior materials or design changes from the Board. The Applicant further explained that the addition is necessary for the new use of the building and that the old rear addition has been severely altered from its original state. The Applicant also stated that he has updated renderings with a different metal exterior if he is able to share his screen with the Board.

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The Applicant shares the renderings with the Board. The Applicant states that the addition is only visible from River Street which is a secondary ally. The Applicant described the proposed addition and porches. The Applicant states that originally there had been porches on the building and the rendering shows the new porches where the originals were once installed. The Applicant says that he has not performed a new addition in Harrisburg's historic districts and that the entirety of the historic building will be retained and preserved.

The Applicant stated that his design of the new addition is intentional differentiation and did not want the addition to blend in and wanted the design to be contrasted. Mr. Chamberlin asked about the color of the exterior. The Applicant stated that the material is proposed to be matte black. Mrs. Gribble asked if the proposed addition extends out only a couple feet from the existing addition. The Applicant confirmed this is correct. The Applicant explained that there used to be porches and columns at the location where he is proposing to install new porches. The Applicant further explained that the addition is only visible from a secondary road.

Mrs. Gribble stated that the rooflines of the existing rear of the building are very distinctive and asked why the Applicant went with a flat roof. The Applicant stated that the roof type could be changed if necessary. Mrs. Gribble stated that the discussion is based upon the exterior materiality and shape of the new addition as well as the new porches. Mr. Chamberlin stated that he believes that the new porches would not be visible from a public right of way. The Applicant stated that the new railings for the porches would be simple and delicate and that the decking would be of a composite material.

The Applicant asked whether the scale of the addition is an issue. Mr. Grumbine stated that the proportions and scaling of the addition is appropriate and that the primary concern is of the exterior materials. The Applicant stated that the initial proposal was corrugated metal panels and would change it to vertical metal panels. The Applicant also proposed a burned wood exterior which is traditional Japanese architecture and that he would hate to use cementitious fiberboard on the addition. Mr. Chamberlin stated that metal paneling would be more appropriate than burned wood.

Mrs. Gribble stated that additions should be clearly different than the historic building. The Applicant stated that the project is a federal historic preservation tax credit and also needs approval from the PA State Historic Preservation Office. Mrs. Gribble asked for input from the Board. Mrs. Bennett stated that she feels the addition is appropriate. Mrs. Rucker stated that she thinks the addition is appropriate as well. Mrs. Bennett stated that River Street is not well traveled and few people will see it. Mr. Chamberlin stated that he appreciates the new rendering of the addition shown during the meeting compared to that which was in the application. Mrs. Bennett asked if there will be any window replacement. The Applicant stated that all windows will be retained or repaired in-kind.

Mr. Grumbine stated that he concurred with the Applicant in stating that there is an element of subjectivity in reviewing new additions in historic districts and that he works to be objective as possible in reviewing such cases. Mr. Chamberlin stated that he likes the massing and would vote on the massing of the addition if individual details are under question. Mrs. Gribble stated that they should make a motion on the metal cladding. Mr. Chamberlin said he likes the material in the rendering whereas the corrugated material in the application is not appropriate. Mrs. Gribble stated

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that it seems like they have a general consensus. Mrs. Gribble also stated that there is a collage of additions on the rear of the property and is not sure how the addition impacts the integrity of the building and whether or not the addition detracts from the building. Mrs. Gribble stated that she feels that the size, shape, and rhythm of the addition is appropriate. Mrs. Gribble also agreed with Mr. Chamberlin that she feels the new exterior material in the rendering is more appropriate than the material that was included in the original application. Mrs. Gribble stated that there should be new conditions regarding the exterior material. The Applicant stated that the exterior panel exposure width on the rendering was twelve inches. Mrs. Gribble stated she does not want to rule on exposure and that she wants the exterior to be a flat panel system.

Mrs. Gribble stated that the new condition should be that the exterior materials are composed of a flat metal panel system with seams and rhythm as proposed during meeting.

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

OTHER BUSINESS:

1 HARB Vacancies

Mr. Gaylord stated that one individual has been appointed by the Mayor and needs to be reviewed and voted on by City Council. Mrs. Gribble stated that she has reached out to find individuals interested in filling the other vacant seat and will continue to do so.

2 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 outlined a preliminary public participation strategy as part of the new design guidelines and stated that it will likely be similar to the Comprehensive Plan webinar series which reviewed sections of the document on Zoom for several different nights.

Mrs. Gribble stated that it would be great to engage the public in person at good examples of historic preservation in each district if possible. Mr. Chamberlin stated that he would love to host an independent work session independent from the HARB meeting to discuss the guidelines given how late the HARB meetings run. Mr. Gaylord stated that if more than two Board members meet then the meeting would have to be publicized. Mrs. Gribble stated that once Mr. Grumbine is comfortable with the draft guidelines then the HARB and the City can proceed with the process of setting up an independent work session. Mr. Gaylord stated that seven days is required for public notice of the work session.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:03 PM

Mrs. Bennett moved, and Mrs. Rucker seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion was adopted by unanimous vote (4-0) and the meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.