

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
MEETING OF JANUARY 27, 2011**

Members Present

Robin Crews
Susan Stilwell
Jeffrey Carson
Cynthia Castle

Members Absent

Richard Morris
Fred Meder
Seth Land

Staff

Renee Blair
Clarke Whitfield
Emily Scolpini
Christy Taylor

City Attorney, Clarke Whitfield, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

I. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Whitfield called for nominations for chairman. Mrs. Stilwell made a motion to nominate Mr. Fred Meder as chairman of the Commission of Architectural Review. Mr. Whitfield closed the nominations. The motion to nominate Mr. Fred Meder as chairman was approved by a 4-0 vote.

Mr. Whitfield called for nominations for vice-chairman. Mrs. Castle made a motion to nominate Mr. Jeffrey Carson as vice-chair. Mr. Whitfield closed the nominations. The motion to elect Mr. Jeffrey Carson as vice-chairman was approved by a 4-0 vote.

Mr. Whitfield called for nominations for secretary. Mr. Carson made a motion to nominate Mrs. Susan Stilwell as secretary. Mr. Whitfield closed the nominations. The motion to elect Mrs. Susan Stilwell as secretary was approved by a 4-0 vote.

Vice Chairman, Mr. Jeffrey Carson now presided over the meeting.

II. ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

Item 1. Certificate of Appropriateness PLCAR20110000027, to restore accessory building and replace metal underpinning beneath front porch of residence with lattice.

Open the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of the request was Mr. Dan Latham and Mrs. Sarah Latham. Mrs. Latham stated we now officially own the alley and the little building, so we want to start work on the exterior of the building. We will re-roof first (1st), repair the foundation, work on the siding, and things like that. We want to re-roof. It is currently shingles. We would like to go back with shingles that match those on our house.

Mrs. Stilwell asked are they architectural?

Mrs. Latham responded they are architectural, and we just found out today that architectural may be the only kind that we can get to match the color.

Mr. Latham stated we would not necessarily want to do architectural, but just to match the color we may not have a choice.

Mrs. Latham stated on the siding and trim boards and things like that, we will replace what needs to be replaced; and go back to match the original kinds of contours and things that each of those have. The porch is in very bad condition. The porch roof is original, and of course that will get repaired. It has a big hole in it. That will get repaired and re-shingled as well. The deck of the porch was either cut down at one point or replaced entirely. We are not sure which. It is currently about four (4) inches shorter than it was

originally. We would like to rebuild that deck to the original width. The depth will be the same as it is now. It currently has plywood decking, and we want to go back with wood decking. It originally had four (4) columns. We think that the columns on there are original, but one (1) was removed. The others were re-positioned. You can see on the original porch roof the exact position. The original positions of the four by four (4x4) columns. We want to replace that fourth (4th) column and reposition the four (4) columns into their original positions. The other big change is the front door. At some point the YMCA cut about eighteen (18) inches off of the front wall to widen the doorway to fifty-four (54) inches, which is what it is currently. We would like to replace that approximate eighteen (18) inches of front wall, and we will get matching siding to fill that in; and then put in a period appropriate door, which would be a solid wood, probably a four (4) or five (5) panel door. We talked to Gary Grant about it, and he says that would have been the kind of door that would have been there originally. We think we have one (1) in our attic that will work just fine, and I know Susan has plenty if we run into trouble. Our contractor has said that the two (2) windows are in extremely bad shape. Once we get in there if a repair really is not feasible, we would like to replace with wood six (6) over six (6), which is what is there now.

Mr. Carson asked true divided lights, real mutton bars?

Mrs. Latham responded yes. We want to remove the grilles from over the windows. I think that is all of the work that we know absolutely.

Mr. Latham stated and replace the window sill.

Mrs. Latham stated I mean all of that trim work, because the window sills are missing.

Mrs. Stilwell stated this is all just repair really.

Mrs. Latham stated this is really all just repair.

Mr. Latham stated we are changing the size of the door and the porch.

Mrs. Latham stated the two (2) things that we said were optional; it sort of depends on money and time obviously. There were shutters on the windows at one time, because you can see where they were attached to the outside. We would like to get approval in case we choose to do that. They would be louvered wooden shutters. We have all reason to believe that is what would have been there originally. The most expensive thing probably would be rebuilding the chimney. There is still a fireplace inside, but the whole chimney collapsed at some point, and there are bricks that fell down into it. We had all of those saved. It is not enough to rebuild the chimney, but we have some other old brick on our property. There is an old picture of this house. There is a photo of the Perkinson house, and you can see the service quarters in the background. It looked like a fairly high chimney. We have not been able to go back and determine from that picture what the original height was. I talked to Renee earlier and kind of said "well, if we do rebuild the chimney, it would probably go anywhere from three (3) to six (6) feet over the roof line." That was a fairly tall chimney from the looks.

Mrs. Stilwell stated it was probably a little skinny chimney.

Mrs. Latham stated once we get in there and remove the siding we will be able to see. The siding evidently went over. It was not an exterior chimney, but rather kind of an interior one. That is what it looks like, because the old siding covers.

Mr. Latham stated who knows. They could have re-sided I guess.

Mrs. Latham stated they might have although that looks like original siding.

Mr. Latham stated I understand, but they could have resided the whole thing over. I do not know what is under there, so it could have been sided over original building materials. The whole thing may have been just cased in siding.

Mrs. Latham stated we are not exactly sure what we are dealing with there. If we did that it would not be a wood or coal burning stove or fireplace. It would really just be for aesthetics. That is why we are not sure cost wise that it is going to be something we are going to do. Since it does not exist right now, my understanding of the Ordinance is that we would not have to go back with it. I think that is everything.

Mr. Carson asked the shutters would be operational?

Mrs. Latham responded working louvers.

Mr. Carson stated no, I mean hinged.

Mrs. Latham stated oh, I do not see why not. We are also considering what we were going to do for visibility. Obviously we are not living out there.

Mr. Latham stated we want to take the metal bars off.

Mrs. Latham stated that was the wise solution. Put the metal bars, and we have even talked about putting interior shutters that we can close as a security measure. The exterior shutters might be more of a decorative thing; but sure I do not see any reason why we could not have them be operational.

Mr. Carson stated if you do get the louvered shutters, I would certainly urge that they match the size of the windows, so that when they are closed they actually meet.

Mrs. Latham stated yes, that would be the plan. We have old shutters that were originally on our house that were stuck up in the attic. They are much taller. We even kicked around the idea with Gary whether we could find somebody who could take those and cut them down to make them fit. I do not know whether that is possible or not. I am not sure whether the window is such a size that we would have to have custom made shutters. That is why that is kind of an option.

Mr. Latham stated if we can figure out how to do it at a reasonable price, we will.

Mrs. Latham stated we will do it. The canopy has been raised on the trees. Have you seen it? You can actually see the house in all of its broken down glory. There are no longer branches sitting on the roof.

Mr. Latham stated the squirrels are upset though.

Mrs. Latham stated yes, I think we got rid of their access to the attic of this house where they keep their nuts.

Mrs. Stilwell stated I know a surefire way to do that. I will talk to you later not on the record.

Mrs. Latham stated oh yes, the attic vent is the last thing. There is just a screen in there, and I think that screen has just been sitting in there for twenty (20) some years.

Mr. Carson asked is this in the gable?

Mrs. Latham responded yes, in the gable.

Mr. Latham stated I do not know whether there was a window or a decorative one.

Mrs. Latham stated I am pretty sure there would not be a window, because there is not any evidence that we found that there was a loft up there. It is just roofed over. There is a ceiling.

Mr. Latham stated that could have been closed.

Mrs. Latham stated right, but we would have to measure the size and what we want to get is a wood decorative attic vent, whatever would be the appropriate for a modest home like this. We would just consult with Gary Grant on that.

Mr. Carson stated well I would assume if you are doing louvered shutters eventually, that you would want a louvered vent.

Mrs. Latham stated yes, it would not have been a highly decorative one that you see on some of the big houses. The quality of this structure actually seems to be quite good. My understanding is that often when they built servant's quarters they would try to match it to kind of the look of the big house, but just a much more modest scale without all of the fancy doodads.

Mr. Carson asked do you know the date on this house?

Mrs. Latham responded we do not know for sure. One of the things we hope to do is a little archeology. We are going to talk to Sonja Ingram.

Mr. Latham stated sometime before 1897. That is the first (1st) map that we find it on, but there are no other maps.

Mrs. Latham stated the Sanborn maps did not do the residential districts until basically the end of the nineteenth (19th) century. It does not appear on the Beers map of 1877, but I do not think that all of the accessory buildings do. There are a few listed.

Mr. Carson stated you know where you might be able to find it are the insurance maps.

Mrs. Latham stated well that is the Sanborn, but they did not do residential. They just did commercial.

Mr. Latham stated the 1890's was the first (1st) time they started doing residential.

Mrs. Latham stated Sonja Ingram was trained as an archeologist. We want to talk with her, and maybe get some of the kids from the preservation clubs of the two (2) high schools and see what kind of archeology. We only have a seven (7) foot setback, so we cannot do much in terms of digging. As the roof comes off and things, any evidence that we might find you know the age of the nails and things like that might help us. It would be very cool to know if it could have been early enough to have been slave's quarters for the original house there. I think it was built in 1855.

Mr. Latham stated there are some handmade nails in there.

Mrs. Latham stated we will see what kind of investigation, and if we can make some kind of project out of it for the preservation clubs, which might be fun. We have got to figure out how to do all of that.

Mr. Carson stated I assume we have to rule on the small building before we get to the house itself.

Ms. Blair stated that is fine or you can put them all together.

Mr. Carson stated now you are proposing lattice.

Mr. Latham stated underneath our porch in the front.

Mrs. Latham stated there is something like trailer underpinning on there now. I do not know when that went in, but it is metal, it is silver, and it is ugly. We talked to Gary Grant about that too, and he said "yes, if it was not bricked in, they would have had lattice there."

Mrs. Stilwell stated square.

Mrs. Latham stated and probably painted. Square lattice you think?

Mr. Carson responded square.

Mrs. Latham stated ok, definitely the square. We would have to get that made. We saw some nice thick lattice at Lowe's, but that will not do it? He did not say that it would be square, but I like that look better. Do you know of any place that actually sells square lattice?

Mrs. Castle responded you make it.

Mr. Carson stated yes, you just make it. It is not really a big deal.

Mrs. Latham stated right, but Gary said it probably would have been painted a dark color, probably black.

Mr. Carson stated it could have been set in a frame, and the frame itself would have been the same color as the trim on your house.

Mrs. Latham stated this is all granite though.

Mrs. Stilwell stated the piers are granite. It might be a good idea to put it in a frame, so if you have to get under there.

Mr. Carson stated it could easily be taken out.

Mrs. Latham stated it is easier than crawling through the cellar. We have a young man that we hire to do horrible things. We are going to send him in through the cellar to clean out all of the crap that has been thrown in there, and then he will build the lattice. We want to clean up, and probably put gravel or something underneath there before we put the lattice in. Our poor fellow loves hard work.

Mr. Carson stated hopefully he will do that before the snakes and spiders decide to come back to life.

Mrs. Latham stated we may have to send him to work on that soon. He can either freeze or handle snakes and spiders.

Mrs. Crews asked did you find recommendations of staff on this proposal, and were you informed of those recommendations?

Mrs. Latham stated we just submitted what we wanted to do.

Mr. Latham stated we have not been informed of staff recommendations.

Mrs. Crews asked can staff make them aware of those?

Mr. Gillie responded sure.

Ms. Blair read staff's recommendation as stated in the staff report.

Ms. Blair stated I am sorry. You should have received that in the mail. I apologize.

Mr. Carson stated basically about the lattice is what we were just discussing.

Ms. Blair stated that would be up to the Board as well if you prefer a drawing, or if you feel that you completely understand the scope of the project as is.

Mr. Carson asked when you narrow the door, is there an existing frame there, an architrave around the door?

Mr. Latham responded you can see where the original cut was in the floor. It stopped at thirty-six (36) inches, and then it goes back about a quarter of an inch.

Mr. Carson stated I am talking about the casing.

Mrs. Latham stated no, they would have replaced that when they made it fifty-four (54) inches.

Mrs. Stilwell stated they made it into a storage shed.

Mr. Latham stated you can see the original footprint of the original door on the floor.

Mrs. Latham stated we consult with Gary Grant. We figure he is one of the best sources for that kind of information, for the frame on the door on the outside. He had told us based on a house like this; it may have been a very simple design on the columns. When you look at and I am sure they have a name, but the sort of fake columns.

Mrs. Stilwell stated the pilasters.

Mrs. Latham stated the pilasters are absolutely plain just four by four (4x4). He said those looked original.

Mr. Latham stated two by four (2x4).

Mrs. Latham stated they look absolutely original, and the posts are just four by four (4x4). I am guessing that it would have quite a plain design for the framing around the door. The framing around the window appears to be original. It is just plain board. That probably means that the front door frame was the same.

Mrs. Stilwell stated I would like to say that normally I would like a rendering of an elevation, but I would suggest that about ninety-five percent (95%) of what they are doing is repair. The only change that I really see and it is a change going back to what was original, going back with the original size door, which can be determined, and extending the porch four (4) inches. To me it would seem ridiculous to ask for a drawing to extend a porch four (4) inches. It is not like they are going all of the way back across the building.

Mr. Carson stated you would not see the difference in a drawing of just four (4) inches.

Mr. Whitfield stated they provided a list.

Mrs. Stilwell stated I know it. That is what we have been going through.

Mr. Carson stated that is what we have been going by. I have a catalog that is produced by an outfit that focuses only on shutters. I would be happy to provide that to you. They do teak and mahogany, cyprus, and all of that sort of stuff.

Mrs. Latham stated great.

Mrs. Stilwell stated rob a bank.

Mrs. Latham stated we will get all of the measurements taken.

Mr. Carson stated actually cyprus is cheap. It is cheaper than doing oak and pressure treated, but it is impervious to damp rot. That is something to be aware of.

Close the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Stilwell made a motion to approve the request as submitted with the conditions that if shutters are added, that they are operational; and the wooden lattice that would be added to the main house would be a square pattern panel painted or stained to compliment the front porch. The windows would be six over six, true divided lights, as they originally are if they must be replaced. Mrs. Crews seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Crews made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2010 meeting. Mrs. Stilwell seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by a 4-0 vote.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Stilwell stated you have 936 Main.

Ms. Blair stated 936 Main Street just recently received recommendation of approval from Planning Commission for a Bed & Breakfast. It will go before City Council on February 1, 2011.

Mr. Whitfield stated I think it was limited to four (4) rooms, and it must provide off-street parking.

Mrs. Stilwell stated that is not a problem for that. It has a driveway.

Ms. Blair stated it shares the property with Mr. Norton, which was one time of course the doctor's office. There is plenty of parking in the rear. They will need to stripe the parking to make it an official parking area.

Mrs. Crews asked Dr. Canavan's old office?

Ms. Blair responded Evans.

Mr. Carson stated Dr. Evans.

Mrs. Castle asked I know that she has a driveway and Norton's driveway exits on Grove Street. Does she also have access?

Ms. Blair responded yes, it is part of her deed.

Mrs. Stilwell stated when that was divided; I was on the Planning Commission. It was set up so cars must enter from Main and exit on Grove as I remember.

Ms. Blair stated yes.

Mrs. Stilwell stated and actually Bill Haynesworth's house has access to that exit. You cannot get to it because of a giant magnolia tree, but it is a deeded access to that exit.

Ms. Blair stated I think it stays locked the majority of the time. I know Ms. Whitehouse has had conversations with Mr. Norton about that. They have worked out some kind of agreement on that.

Mrs. Castle asked who owns the little gatehouse, little garage that is the stone?

Mrs. Stilwell responded is that with the house at 936? I think it does with the rock wall in the back.

Mrs. Castle stated yes, that little rock building.

Mrs. Stilwell stated I had, at one point, both of those properties for sale. That is what I remember.

Mr. Carson stated I do hope that they paint the house other than the pink that it is now.

Mrs. Stilwell stated it was not pink actually when they painted it. It has been that long ago.

Mr. Carson asked really?

Mrs. Stilwell responded it was a brick color that became an adobe color.

Mr. Carson asked was there a reason for painting it? Do you recall?

Mrs. Stilwell responded it was the vogue to paint your brick house in Danville.

Mr. Carson stated it would be nice to see the paint off, and there is a way of doing it without destroying the brick.

Ms. Blair stated I am not certain of her plans. I do not think she has quite gotten that far.

Mrs. Stilwell stated she has plenty of things to spend money on inside removing the dental office.

Ms. Blair stated yes, a lot of renovations. You also have before you the 2010 CAR report. It looks a little smaller this year than it has in years past, but still is a true nature capture of what took place last year as far as granting and denials. I think 162 Sutherlin has a new owner. That is fairly new information. We will try and contact the new owners. We have had some contact prior to purchase. We have not been able to make contact since, but we are working on that as well to try and get those windows back into place.

Mrs. Stilwell stated it has been down zoned.

Ms. Blair stated it is down to two (2) units as of right now. We also have the Ad hoc Committee, we really do not have a name. We need to come up with one.

Mrs. Stilwell stated Ad hoc says it all.

Ms. Blair stated they are looking at some areas in the Old Westend to try to target some of the homes that seem to be looking at neglect. We are going to have a tour next month.

Mrs. Stilwell stated no, I think we are going to meet the tenth (10th) and then tour the twenty-fifth (25th). We are trying to focus on Pine, Green, and Chestnut Street.

Mr. Carson stated I think as many of the Board should be in attendance as possible. Can you send me that information?

Ms. Blair stated I will send it to you.

Mr. Whitfield asked is Mark going to provide a bus?

Ms. Blair responded we have not discussed that, but we can.

Mrs. Stilwell stated we are not going far. We could just go in our cars probably and walk.

Mr. Carson stated and walk, yes please.

Mrs. Stilwell stated our Ad hoc is making a presentation to the work session at Council next Tuesday night. Sonja Ingram with the Preservation of Virginia is going to do a brief power point, and show some of the properties that we have lost. We have been to Lynchburg and met with them on their spot blight program, which has been amazingly successful. The City has worked out a deal where their building inspector works with the Housing & Redevelopment. What are they called?

Ms. Blair responded I think that is right.

Mrs. Stilwell stated Housing & Redevelopment Director, and they have been able to restore I think it is over seven million (\$7,000,000) dollars worth of property. Their success has been amazing. They hold out the threat of eminent domain. The City does not hold the threat. The Housing Authority threatens you have got to do this, and you have got to come up with a plan. They follow up and stay on the person, and if something is not done they proceed with eminent domain to purchase the property and actively market. I think maybe, I cannot remember the numbers. I think it was several hundred houses.

Ms. Blair stated it was one hundred and ten (110), because I think it was twelve (12) years they have been acting on it.

Mrs. Stilwell stated they have been actively working on it for twelve (12) years, and we would like to see if we could possibly come up with something where we could work on a similar type project on some of these houses that we really do not want to lose in the Old Westend.

Ms. Blair stated and this is a joint effort with Community Development, being Inspections, Zoning, and Housing; as well as Historical Society, Preservation League, Preservation Virginia, and CAR members. You are welcome to attend. It is a joint effort of all trying to come together for one cause.

Mr. Carson asked Clarke how would that work politically? Can you actually pick and choose houses out of the Historic District?

Mr. Whitfield responded sure.

Mrs. Stilwell stated Lynchburg does it under an enabling legislation for derelict structures. There is a final paragraph that is very vague. They have interpreted it to work for their program. We went up to visit with Ed McCann. It was very impressive, what they have been able to accomplish and the houses that they have been able to save. We have been assured by Mr. Rigney that if we can target a small area, he would try to work with us and prevent them from going into condemnation demolition order. Once they get in that, it is really hard to stop the train. We want to see what we can do.

Ms. Blair stated I think that is all I have.

Mrs. Castle asked do we have a new calendar for 2011?

Mrs. Stilwell responded yes, she gave them to us. It came by email.

Ms. Blair stated yes, I think I did both back in December. I will send you one.

Mr. Carson stated we have a gentleman in the audience. Sir, do you have anything you would like to say?

Mrs. Stilwell stated you have not met Jeff.

Mr. Whitfield responded that is Earl Reynolds, the new Community Development Director.

Mr. Carson stated oh, great. I am Jeff Carson, pleased to meet you.

Mrs. Castle stated I have not met you either. I am Cindy Castle.

Mr. Whitfield stated we are very happy to have Earl here. In case you did not know, Earl came to us from Roanoke, and also at one time was the City Manager for the City of Martinsville. He has a number of Master degrees that make him very well qualified and experience makes him very well qualified to do the job. We are very happy to have him.

Mrs. Stilwell stated he has met with Sonja Ingram. He has met with me personally. We have talked about some of the issues here that we face. I am very excited about the River District and the plans that are going on, and his aptitude and attitude about preservation.

Mr. Carson stated Mr. Reynolds I am glad to meet you, and I am glad that you are taking this attitude with our interests as well. I think it is fundamental to any City like Danville in that we have an Architectural Commission and that we have a Historic District. I certainly look forward to working with you.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

APPROVED