

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN COMMISSION

MEETING OF

May 12, 2016

Members Present

Courtney Nicholas
George Davis
Sheri Chaney
John Ranson
R.J. Lackey
Peyton Keesee

Members Absent

Justin Ferrell

Staff

Ken Gillie
Anna Levi
Tracie Lancaster

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

- 1. A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 531 Main Street to replace the second floor windows to match those on the first floor. The existing first floor windows were approved by the River District Commission on June 11, 2015. The request also includes removal of a window from the rear of the building so that a removable air conditioning unit can be installed on the top floor.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request Bob Newnam. Mr. Newnam stated we remodeled the top half of this building at 531 Main for Shelly Blackwell. It needed a lot of work and we did a lot of work to it, electrical, plumbing and that sort of thing. The windows that you all approved on the main area when you walk in, it was a picture that she took in London at an antique shop down there if you look at it you see that it being black it was kind of striking. She didn't think about doing the ones up above, they are a lot less efficient. She wants to replace those and do the same thing that she done before. I want to apologize that I wasn't here last week I had to go out of town. I didn't know what kind of questions you would ask so I didn't know who I could send up here. The windows are custom made by West Windows in Martinsville. I have some pictures I see you already have some. The building is about 18-20 feet wide and 120 feet long. The heating system that was put in there wasn't really adequate to do the back portion. I think the previous tenant probably couldn't afford it or something. She has got a little office back there with a couple of people and a little break area with a bathroom. It's not sufficient heating and cooling back there. So that's why we are requesting to be able to put a

through the wall heat pump in to heat and cool that section in the back of the building. If you like I can hand out these pictures.

Mr. Keesee stated this says you are going to stick it through the window but you are saying through the wall unit? Am I mistaking what you said?

Mr. Newnam stated that exactly what I said and that's what it is.

Mr. Keesee stated I thought you said you were going to take a window out and put it somewhere else so you could put a window unit in.

Mr. Newnam stated maybe I misquoted.

Mr. Gillie stated if you would like to see I believe you can see out this window.

Mr. Newman stated if you look over at the turquoise looking building it pretty easy to see, there are two windows right there. Do you see the stairs and the door coming out in the basement? There is a set of stairs that goes up and comes out right at the window. The only place available is right there to the left and we stuck the through the wall heat pump right there.

Mr. Gillie stated the silver thing in the upper left corner.

Mr. Newnam stated the window that we took out was an identical window to the one on the right. It's a through the wall sleeve that goes through the window.

Mrs. Chaney stated the unit has been installed and the window has been closed up?

Mr. Lackey stated so we are asking forgiveness again.

Mr. Newnam stated I don't know about forgiveness but we want you to approve it.

Mrs. Nicholas stated what you are asking is different than what is listed here.

Mr. Newnam stated no it's exactly the same. We were talking about the back windows we talked about the front ones first; where it is these three windows that you have in the photograph.

Mrs. Nicholas stated right. There is two parts to this the second request is for removable from the rear of the building so that a removable air conditioner unit can be installed. That doesn't seem to be what you are saying.

Mr. Newnam stated okay there is very little difference between an air conditioner and a through the wall sleeve in terms of what it looks like, but it is basically the same thing. But what this does it allows them to have heat as well as cooling. What they had was inadequate there. We changed over the electrical system to be able to handle whatever

else she might encounter that's the simplest way to do it on this building. Because you don't have any options unless you go out obviously you don't want it out the front and the roof is not very efficient either.

Mrs. Nicholas stated does staff still recommend approval because based on your recommendation you say that window air conditioning units are considered routine maintenance and don't require a Certificate of Appropriateness. However in this case the bottom window pane has to be removed which has happened rather than being pushed up and it looks like the top pane was covered over.

Mr. Newnam stated actually that's a metal window that was sit in there a crank out window that wouldn't close very well anyway. So we took the entire metal out because the head for that window was already there and was exactly the same size as the original window to the right. So it just fit right in there, 45 inches it came with a couple of inches for fitting except at the top where you normally have pressure that's the first thing they tell you on those sleeves. Put a good funnel in there to support it so you are not pulling weight down on it.

Mr. Davis stated well as far as the Commission is concerned we would be voting on two separate items? We could approve one and not the other.

Mr. Newnam stated I think it would be simple to do that if you would like.

Mrs. Nicholas stated do we have to move to separate?

Mr. Whitfield stated no you can just make a motion to whatever action you want to take on one. So you can do one motion or two motions.

Mr. Davis stated since we are on the subject of the air conditioning unit let's go ahead and proceed with that. Then we will get to the front windows. Which I know last time we had a lot of questions about.

Mr. Whitfield stated you are still on the Public Hearing though so you don't want to entertain a motion yet.

Mr. Davis stated correct.

Mr. Lackey stated I just want to be real clear in my head we are approving what has already been done?

Mr. Newnam stated that's right. It is my fault because I wasn't thinking that it could be seen from the street and then I realized that the back could be seen from the street. Most of the buildings that we work on it is where you can't see the back from the street. The way it is laid out here you can see the back from the street.

Mr. Davis stated Clarke, so in order to vote on them separately I would have to close the Public Hearing and then re-open it?

Mr. Whitfield stated you can do it that way or leave the Public Hearing open get all the discussion out and then close and then take a vote separately.

Mr. Davis stated okay.

Mr. Keesee stated what are you going to do?

Mr. Davis stated we are going to leave the Public Hearing open and go ahead and have the discussion for both items.

Mrs. Nicholas stated so it doesn't do air conditioning at all or is it just heat.

Mr. Newnam stated it does both. But there is not duct work at all it's just in the window.

Mr. Keesee stated like a motel unit.

Mr. Newnam stated that's exactly what it is.

Mrs. Nicholas stated I just wanted to be clear.

Mr. Ranson stated the windows haven't already been changed out right. You're actually asking permission for those right?

Mrs. Chaney stated the front windows haven't been changed out correct?

Mr. Newnam stated no nothing has been done to the front.

Mr. Ranson stated the new windows are they wooden windows?

Mr. Newnam stated I don't think they are. But they are black and you know vinyl doesn't normally go black.

Mr. Ranson stated black isn't a material it's a color. So what's the material of the windows?

Mr. Newnam stated I believe its metal. The grill that you actually see there is between the two pieces of glass. They are big so it looks very bold.

Mr. Ranson stated so they will be metal will the pattern be the same as those windows or will it be different?

Mr. Newnam stated we can do it anyway you want to do it. Shelly wanted to leave them like they were with the same grill pattern.

Mr. Keesee stated she wants them to match.

Mrs. Nicholas stated I have trouble visualizing this. This is them as they are now correct or as they will be?

Mr. Newnam stated she had the bottom ones approved originally but we didn't do anything to these. Her request is to have the upper windows match the lower windows in terms of construction but in terms of grill pattern we can use the same pattern.

Ms. Levi stated this is as is.

Mrs. Nicholas stated so would that mean that we are moving to one large rectangle.

Mr. Newnam stated there would be three separate windows and the openings would be identical to what we have now.

Mr. Ranson stated would the new windows have a curved top or be flat like this?

Mr. Newnam stated we would leave it flat just like it shows there. So that would stay the same. I'm assuming we painted all of that anyway so all we would need to do is replace actually the glass.

Mr. Ranson stated so the flat piece above would stay?

Mr. Newnam stated it would just like it is.

Mrs. Nicholas stated so you are just trying to change the glass itself to match this glass.

Mr. Newnam stated that's correct.

Mrs. Chaney stated will it still be a functioning open double hung window or a single pane?

Mr. Newnam stated we could do it anyway we want to do it. They are pretty high if I would have a preference for her I think I would go single hung. So the upper sash stays fixed because you would never in the world go up there and tries to open and close it. She may one day open one of them but I can't imagine her doing that. There is no stairs to get up there you have to get a ladder to get up to the second floor; when you open the door to her place its clear all the way up for two floors.

Mrs. Nicholas stated okay.

Mr. Newnam stated when it was originally built it was a second floor up there but it doesn't exist anymore.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Keesee made a motion to approve the air conditioning unit. Mrs. Chaney seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-1 vote.

Mr. Lackey stated the regulations say that these types of things should be repaired not replaced. Are we overstepping our bounds for allowing replacement when repair could be acceptable?

Mr. Gillie stated it's your determination on whether a repair is acceptable or not. So no you are not overstepping your bounds. You can ask that question can it be repaired and then you can make that determination.

Mr. Keesee stated one reason he wants to do it is for energy, you can't repair them and be energy efficient. That's all I am saying.

Mr. Lackey stated I do understand that. It's one of these constant problems of the Historical buildings and energy efficient where do you draw that line?

Mrs. Nicholas stated John you know this a little bit better than I do. Would there be a tremendous amount of difference in going from a double pane to a single pane?

Mr. Ranson stated no I don't think as you walk by there that you would be able to tell the difference.

Mr. Lackey stated Peyton, on your point the regulations are written to repair knowing full well that they might not be as energy efficient on every building.

Mr. Keesee stated no way and in the winter time they don't sweat. They are not going to sweat when you put thermal in there. That's a big deal to me.

Mr. Lackey stated I just struggle with it.

Mr. Keesee stated I understand what you are saying but I'm just saying we have to draw the line somewhere. We want to get something that looks nice and so they don't have to work on them anymore. Is that right Bob?

Mr. Newnam stated yes that's correct.

Mr. Gillie stated the purpose of the regulations was to give you those options the first preference is to repair it. If they can't repair it for some reason efficiency is one of them then that's up to you to make the determination. You could say no and order them to repair them if that is your purview.

Mr. Lackey stated the struggle I have is saying they cannot be repaired they can be repaired they just can never be fixed to a modern energy efficiency.

Mr. Ranson stated you can repair them and put interior storms on them you couldn't tell from the inside that they were there.

Mr. Keesee stated you can do that but you will have spider webs and everything else in there. But I'm not disagreeing.

Mrs. Chaney stated I understand that we need to look at our buildings in a historical aspect but we are not strictly the Historical District. I'm all for preserving a building; but I'm also for if we can preserve the looks and still make it energy efficient. To make it better for the business owner I would rather make it more energy efficient. Those could probably be repaired all day long and put back up there but I wouldn't do it.

Mr. Ranson made a motion to approve the request to replace the front windows so that the pattern is the same as the existing windows and single hung windows. Mrs. Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

- 2. A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 707 Wilson St. to install an enclosed four bay, freestanding garage. The garage will be a 46' x 26' metal garage that will match the existing structures*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Jimmy New, the applicant. Mr. New stated Fisher and Watkins like any good business has grown and expanded and they have been there on Wilson Street since 1979. The business is growing and they have new needs some of the fleet at this time the service cars and vans are being kept off site. So he needs to bring them there to his building which is behind the main building. He has two garages there that are freestanding. These are the same blue the same white the same shape and they would be at the back of the lot. There is a green space between the other buildings and Dame Street and they own all of that land right there. This is their home this is where they need to stay.

Mr. Keesee stated did I hear you correctly they have already got buildings. I don't see any pictures of the other buildings. Are the new buildings going to look like the old buildings?

Mr. New stated correct it's two freestanding garages.

Mr. Keesee stated we have just got a picture of your unit.

Mr. New stated I'm sorry. They are two, one bay freestanding blue metal garages there now.

Mr. Keesee stated so this will be on the end of those buildings?

Mr. New stated to the side.

Mr. Keesee stated that's I'm saying.

Mr. New stated it's already asphalt there we have to put a footing in to meet City requirements and then it will be constructed there right next to it. It still leaves them adequate parking spaces for services. It would bring their service vehicles back to their site.

Mr. Keesee stated if you ride by you can't even see these buildings can you?

Mr. New stated there's nothing that draws your eye to them.

Mr. Davis stated you can see them.

Mr. New stated you can't see them from Wilson Street. You have the old PJ glass beside it and there storage warehouses and a vacant lot next to it with trees.

Mr. Keesee stated this color does it match the color of the existing storage buildings?

Mr. New stated yes the other are a faded blue trimmed in white, four white garage doors with side doors on it that you just walk in and walk out. No electrical service so there will be no wires going to it at this time. Asphalt is already in place all over the parking lot.

Mr. Davis stated until I drove down beside the building I never even noticed the two buildings that are already back there.

Mr. New stated I'm willing to answer any questions you all may have or Mr. Watkins is here if you have questions for him.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Keesee made a motion to approve the request as submitted. Mrs. Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

3. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at the Main St Plaza restroom to do landscaping, to install one trash receptacle, one bench, and two trellises on each side of the building with goose neck lighting over each trellis.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Mike Burton, Project Manager with Public Works. Mr. Burton stated as Mr. Davis said we are looking to add landscaping to the restrooms. The landscaping was a part of LPDA's original design. Restrooms were a part of the plaza project originally so the landscaping design that LPDA will be the one we do. We would like to put two trellis on each side underneath each gooseneck lighting. The plant

of the trellis is an evergreen clematis; which was given to use by the horticulturist for planting there. The directional lighting will be the gooseneck light that will shine back onto the wall to accent the trellis. We are going to have a trash receptacle off to the corner. If you are looking at the entrance it will be at the left corner of the restroom and we would like to add a bench on the pavers at the entrance. There is a lamppost there so right in the area of the lamppost is where the bench will go.

Mrs. Nicholas stated the kind of plant that you are putting on the trellis is there any way that could come off the trellis in such a way that it could connect to the building and then eat at the building. It is a problem and ivy can do that.

Mr. Burton stated we designed it to be a freestanding trellis it won't be attached to the building. So there is a possibility that that would happen but the City grounds crew will maintain that and make sure it doesn't attached itself to the building. We are aware of that. There was discussion between mounting it to the building or having it freestanding. So eliminate that direct contact we decided to go with freestanding.

Mr. Keese stated I have a question for you but it's not about this do you have any clue when that indoor parking is going to be ready beside Golden Leaf?

Mr. Burton stated no sir.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Lackey made a motion to approve the request. Mrs. Chaney seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

Mrs. Nicholas stated is it because this one came in late that there is not a staff recommendation?

Mr. Gillie stated yes. You're going to have another one that is going to be like that.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The March 10, 2016 minutes were approved by a unanimous vote with a change on page nine right about approval of minutes, it stated Mr. Lackey and Mr. Ranson sustained it should be abstained.

Mr. Lackey stated do you have to do such detailed minutes?

Mr. Whitfield stated we will discuss that at some point. The answer is no.

Mr. Lackey stated because my joke about not speeding down Main Street is now a permanent record.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. *A request for a Variance has been filed at 549 High St to install fewer parking spaces than required by Code.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Gillie stated this is more information for you. Anytime this occurs in a district that is regulated by a body we try to present it to the body to let them know that this has been filed and also to see if the body has any questions comments or if you would like to take a position on it. You are not required to do anything. The building on High Street they are converting it to 23 apartment units and they have to have 39 spaces. They are slightly under that number. So they have asked for a variance to that. There's on street parking there is also some other surface lots that people could potentially park in. But since they don't have that number they are here in front of you so it was kind of information only. You don't have to take any action, we just like to let people know and see if you want to take action.

Mr. Keesee stated but you will take action?

Mr. Gillie stated the Board of Zoning Appeals will take action.

Mr. Ranson stated didn't we approve this project some time ago?

Mr. Gillie stated you did correct. It's probably going have to come back to you because they might have to do some additional modifications to the exterior of the building.

Ms. Levi stated yeah it was last May. I was reading back through the minutes from a year ago and you guys approved demolition of the left side of the building and there was conversation about it being an apartment so that was put out there but there wasn't any plans at that point. It was believed that they would come back after we had the plans and we have them so it will be back probably next month.

Mrs. Chaney stated they also went for Historical funding right?

Mr. Gillie stated right.

Mrs. Nicholas stated have they started work on the apartments?

Ms. Levi stated no. They have started the demolition but construction for the apartments hasn't started. They have been through City Planning Commission as well they are not having an commercial space on the ground floor so they had to get a Special Use Permit to have multi-family residential as a primary use. They will be going to City Council in June for that to be approved or not.

Mr. Keesee stated so you want our opinion?

Mr. Gillie stated you can choose to present an opinion or you can choose not to. We just presented this to you as other business to let you know what's happening in your district.

Mr. Keesee stated well where that sits I would think that if you didn't have enough spots it wouldn't be a problem.

Mrs. Chaney stated we already don't have enough parking downtown.

Mr. Gillie stated it's on the other side of the old community market up top.

Mrs. Chaney stated well if that car wash goes out of business there that would leave a lot open for parking if they purchased it.

Mr. Gillie stated so whether you choose to make a motion or not just move onto the next item or you can make a motion to support, denial or none of the above. It's up to you.

Mr. Keesee stated none of the above.

Mr. Gillie stated that's fine we will just present that we gave it to you guys and that was it.

Mr. Gillie stated we have someone from the floor that would like to discuss something I believe.

Mrs. Ann Moore said I am with the Meredith Gravely School of Dance and I own the Dance at 415 Main Street. I have a stroke of luck I showed up at Ken Gillie's office at 3:30 to ask questions about repairing the façade on our building and he said come to this meeting. I appreciate you all adding me to the agenda today. I have my application and pictures should I just pass it down? What we need to do we are having some water issues with water seeping into the upper level of our building and causing major damage. So one of the previous owners of the building started on the lower level they made columns with an EFIS material and it was never completed. I would like to finish that off and complete the lower level columns. Then Blair Construction has advised me on what to do to stop the water damage on the upper lower. They would recommend that we put the EFIS on the upper level; the level where the studio sign is and then the level above. We would like to put EFIS on that as far as the coloring it would stay the same. I'm sure it could change a shade or two but I would like for it to match the border. I anticipate that it will pretty much look the same. It should look exactly like the lower columns.

Mrs. Nicholas stated this is where you are now?

Mrs. Moore stated yes.

Mr. Keesee stated so Blair has advised you if you put EFIS on the top, middle and bottom that that will correct your water problems?

Mrs. Moore stated to the upper level it will. We still have water issues in our basement.

Mr. Keesee stated I'm just talking about what you were talking about.

Mrs. Moore stated yes I certainly hope it will.

Mr. Keesee stated so there bricks were leaking and the EFIS is going to fix it. Am I saying that right? I know you have a new roof.

Mrs. Moore stated it's my understanding the EFIS I do not think will cover the brick I don't want it to cover the brick. I think it's just it looks like cinderblock on the main level I think that is where the main problem is.

Mr. Keesee stated we don't have a picture of what it looks like now do we?

Mrs. Moore stated that's what it looks like now.

Mr. Keesee stated okay I apologize. I thought this was the after.

Mrs. Chaney stated you say all the light color area will have EFIS on it.

Mrs. Moore stated yes.

Mrs. Chaney stated what exactly is EFIS?

Mrs. Moore stated it's a cement type of material.

Mrs. Chaney stated almost like stucco sort of like a thin that is going to go across it.

Mrs. Moore stated yes.

Mrs. Chaney stated so they are suggesting putting it on all the light color area including down on the first level? Or just the second level?

Mrs. Moore stated well what is on that first level is already done but it is half way done. It's in need of repair and I don't think it was ever completed. So we want to complete that to improve the look of that and then continue on to the two upper levels to complete it and hopefully solve the water issues.

Mr. Lackey stated you are talking about columns? Are going up to? I got confused somewhere. Did you say you're going to put columns in?

Mrs. Moore stated no it should look exactly like it is now. I really don't want to make any changes I just want it to be complete and repaired. You can see across the top of the

porch we have wood that is rotten and all that needs to be repaired. Just to complete what is already there.

Mrs. Nicholas stated the wood would you just be replacing light with light?

Mrs. Moore stated yes.

Mr. Davis stated and that's going to be enough to stop the water?

Mrs. Moore stated I hope. I have a picture on my phone I didn't print it out of how the paint on the inside is buckling up of the interior walls.

Mr. Keesee stated just on the front wall?

Mrs. Moore stated well we have some issues on the back but they are just going to do a coating of some sort of sealant. So I don't know whether I need to have that approved as well? I think it is just going to be a clear sealant.

Mr. Keesee stated I wouldn't think you would.

Mrs. Moore stated we were talking about working on the back as well but the front is the most important at this point.

Mrs. Chaney stated the back is just strictly brick?

Mrs. Moore stated yes.

Mr. Keesee stated the bottom line is that it is going to look like it looks now the same color your just putting some stuff to try and waterproof it.

Mr. Davis stated she said it may look a little darker.

Mrs. Moore stated a little dark or a little lighter I want it to match the mortar of the brick so it could shades.

Mrs. Chaney stated it's not going to be purple.

Mrs. Moore stated no. I would like hot pink but.

Mr. Davis stated Clarke let me get this straight since Ann Moore has come to present this to us it seems like I remember from the past we have to take a vote to add it to the agenda.

Mr. Whitfield stated that's right.

Mrs. Nicholas made a motion to add this item to the agenda. Mrs. Lackey seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Davis stated now you are official added to the agenda.

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Nicholas stated are doing any repointing to the brick or anything like that?

Mrs. Moore stated not in the front no. I'm really not sure how to answer that for the back.

Mrs. Nicholas stated you can come back to us on the back.

Mrs. Moore stated if we were to do a clear coating on the back I would need to come back?

Mr. Keesee stated I don't think so.

Mr. Davis stated that would just be a simply repair.

Mrs. Nicholas stated if she were to put a clear coating on the back just to waterproof the back does she have to come back to us?

Mr. Gillie stated if it's a clear water waterproofing, no.

Mr. Whitfield stated no that's just a repair.

Mr. Gillie stated that's just route maintenance. She can repoint and others without coming to you that's permitted it's only if you are going to paint it or anything else. Putting a clear material on top wouldn't be considered painting.

Mr. Ranson stated it appears from this picture that these are large block right?

Mrs. Moore stated yes.

Mr. Ranson stated so is there going to be any effort to replicate the joint pattern?

Mrs. Moore stated I mean I can certainly ask the question of can they do that?

Mr. Ranson stated EFIS is exterior insulation and it using comes with insulation but I understand you're not putting insulation your just putting the finish part on? So I mean I know if it's with insulation you can do the joints but if you just put in the finish part I'm not sure.

Mrs. Chaney stated I think it looks better solid and not being able to see all the blocks.

Mr. Ranson stated you're wrong.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Lackey made a motion to add this item to the agenda. Mr. Keesee seconded the motion. The motion was approved by 6-0 vote.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

Approved By: