

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD OF THE TOWN OF STRASBURG HELD ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 2016 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE TOWN HALL.**

ARB Members present: Board Members Keefe, Massey, Poling, Rathore, and Wheeler.  
Absent: Board Member Kimmons and Lefkowitz.

Staff: Planning and Zoning Administrator Pearson, Economic Development & Marketing Manager Bixler, and Clerk of Council Keller

**Chairperson Rathore** called the meeting to order.

**Action Items:**

**1. Approval of Minutes: July 28, 2016**

**The minutes of the July 28, 2016 were approved unanimously with minor corrections on a motion by Board Member Poling and a second by Board Member Wheeler.**

**2. 318 East King Street: Major Modification**

**Chairperson Rathore** read the staff report which explained what was being proposed and that the major modification was for signage on the business. A temporary gazebo has already been added to the property and because it could obstruct the view of the structure, it will be reviewed, also.

**P&Z Administrator Pearson** said he would like the temporary gazebo to not be included in the Certificate of Appropriateness. The structure has already been moved from the area it was first placed.

**Chairperson Rathore** said he has a concern with the gazebo as it is a good place for children to play and he wonders about the safety measures the applicant plans to use. The applicant said it has pillars around it and they are thinking of moving it in front of the other side of the building.

**Board Member Massey** asked how temporary is temporary and if this was going to be taken down and if there are any required permits for this. **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said he will need to check into this more. The applicant said he plans to put up a second one and so **Board Member Massey** wonders if this would then become more of an architectural issue.

**Board Member Massey** said he did not like the smoker in the flower bed and said he finds it aesthetically annoying. He also asked about regulations on outdoor cooking.

**Chairperson Rathore** said the fire marshal will say it has to be a certain number of feet away from a structure. **Board Member Massey** said the smoker is close to the intersection and this should be considered.

**P&Z Administrator Pearson** said the smoker would be referred to the Health Department and the gazebo would be referred to the Shenandoah County Building and Zoning Department. The applicant said the gazebo was to make it more comfortable for customers. The applicant said he is not sure what he will be doing in the future with the area where the smoker is now. He might plant flowers and he thinks he has improved the building since taking over the building. Curb appeal is the way to attract customers. It was said

this is just some informal discussion on this item. Other discussion followed on things he would like to do with the building and how the applicant wants to give back to the community.

**Board Member Keefe** asked if the “For Rent” sign would be taken down and the applicant plans to do so. The applicant said he is renting the entire building. **Board Member Massey** asked about the second floor and the applicant said it could not be used for habitation.

Discussion was held on previous uses of the building and the types of sauces he was going to offer.

**Board Member Keefe** said he really wants the “For Rent” to come down. **Board Member Wheeler** thinks the proposed sign is fine, especially considering the building and the windows the applicant is working with. **Chairperson Rathore** asked about the lettering and **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said the letters are not to scale. The applicant said if it does not look like right, he will change it. The letters will be white with blue outline.

**Chairperson Rathore** said he thinks it is right to leave the gazebo off of the Certificate of Appropriateness, but since the gazebos are temporary, he would like to have this reviewed again next year and also when and if a second gazebo is put up.

**After more discussion on the business, the recommendation of the ARB was to recommend approval of the signs as presented and to leave the gazebo off of the Certificate of Appropriateness.**

### **3. 240 & 229 East King Street: Major Modification**

**Chairperson Rathore** read from the staff report and said the work has already been done, but the requirements say the ARB has to review this.

**Board Member Wheeler** asked what could be done so this doesn’t happen in the future. She asked if the permitting process would stop this. **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said he barely caught this and said the person said he didn’t know about the regulations, but that this person has owned property in town for a long period of time. **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said he tries to work with the realtors to educate individual purchasing in the Historic District. **Board Member Wheeler** again asked what could be done to prevent this. **Board Member Massey** asked how a building permit was obtained and **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said he isn’t sure if a building permit is needed for this.

**Board Member Massey** said the log cabin came before the ARB several years ago so the owner knows the rules of the town. **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said the sign was also brought before the ARB. **Board Member Wheeler** said she thinks the work on the front should be taken down and **P&Z Administrator Pearson** doesn’t think we can do this.

**Board Member Massey** said he thinks this should disqualify him for the façade improvement grant. **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said anything the ARB discusses can

be shared with the Department of Historic Resources. This will not technically disqualify him for this.

**Board Member Massey** said the historical integrity of the building has been lost so he thinks the eligibility for a grant for historic preservation is also lost. **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said the façade improvement grant is not a historic grant and he further explained the funding of this. **Board Member Wheeler** asked if the applicant was going to try to use the work he has done as the match and **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said he was. **Board Member Massey** thinks matches must meet DHR standards and this would not; **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said he will check on this provision as he doesn't remember this. **Town Manager Spitzer** said Department of Housing and Community Development is who says what the matching funds can be used for; DHR is only a reviewer.

**Board Member Keefe** asked about putting snap-in grids to help make it look like it looked previously. He doesn't think it would be a cost issue for him. **Board Member Wheeler** said it would be the same, but it would look more like the original. This should be done at least on the front and the side porch window. **Board Member Keefe** isn't sure you could do the snap-in for the two smaller windows at the top. **Board Member Poling** agrees it would look better. This would be exclusive to 240 E. King Street.

**Chairperson Rathore** doesn't think the sign at the log cabin matches the building at all, but he doesn't see this on the application. **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said this has already been reviewed. **Chairperson Rathore** said he doesn't think the windows represent the community well. The windows do not match the true architecture of the building.

**P&Z Administrator Pearson** said his recommendation would be to do the snap-in as part of the façade improvement for the log cabin.

**Board Member Massey** said this does not meet the town's regulations and is inappropriate to the buildings. He thinks it should be noted that it was done inappropriately.

**Board Member Poling** said he has already done the work so if we go back and ask him to change it, he will say it is an undue hardship. It was said we should still make comments regarding this and **Board Member Massey** said the comments should include that the work was done inappropriately and does not meet the town's regulations. **Board Member Poling** asked if there was a building permit needed from the town when they want to do work such as this.

**P&Z Administrator Pearson** said a zoning permit is required in some cases, but in this particular instance, he should have completed the permit that starts the review with the ARB. This was not done and it was asked if a fine could be levied and Council would need to set that. **Board Member Wheeler** said at this point, we can't really do anything. **P&Z Administrator Pearson** said his recommendation would be to say the work was not done to the historic district standards and that this should be noted upon review of the Façade Improvement Grant application.

**Board Member Wheeler** said this needs to be taken outside this room that this is not the way it should be done. She suggested making a statement to the newspaper because if nothing happens, people are going to think what he did was fine and that they can do it, too. **Board Member Massey** said people are ignoring the regulations. He thinks there needs to be a better level of enforcement, but he isn't sure how this could be done. Ways of spreading the word were discussed. **Board Member Wheeler** suggested doing a poster campaign in the historic district. **Board Member Massey** thinks people purposely ignore the regulations as they know they can get away with it.

**Council Member Bishop** asked if there would be a way to let the contractors know about the regulations.

**Chairperson Rathore** suggested getting a packet together and going around on a Saturday morning and handing out to residents and businesses. **Board Member Wheeler** said it doesn't need to be elaborate, but just informational. This will be done by the Board. Some could be mailed since the owner might not live in town. It was suggested giving a placard to those who follow the rules and it could be displayed for the public to see.

**P&Z Administrator Pearson** said he will pass on the recommendations of not approving the work that was done at 240 E. King Street and 229 E. King Street. This will be noted with the Façade Improvement Grant application.

#### ***4. Façade Improvement Grant Application: 168 West King Street***

Board Members, at the previous meeting, were very concerned with the amount the awning was going to extend over the sidewalk. **Board Member Wheeler, Chairperson Rathore, and Board Member Keefe** liked the proposed awning.

**Board Member Massey** said he did some measurements and the awning will project into the tree and he thinks that is too far. He said it will have to be retractable.

**Chairperson Rathore** said just because the awning is six feet, it doesn't mean it will come out six feet.

**Board Member Massey** said architecturally, he doesn't think it will look right. If the business is closed, it should be retracted.

**Chairperson Rathore** said the owner has worked well with the Board. He thinks we should present these recommendations to the owner.

**Board Member Poling** made the recommendation to approach the owner and ask that the awning be limited to four feet. This will not overwhelm the entrance porch to the Victorian house. The porch only extends three feet.

#### ***5. Façade Improvement Grant Application: 150 East King Street***

**Board Member Wheeler** said this is the building that has a new mural and the only comment made earlier by the owner was that he didn't want the mural to be disturbed.

**P&Z Administrator Pearson** read the "Key Notes" as the Board compared it to the pictures presented.

**Board Member Massey** suggested having the six-over-six window snap-in inserts.

**Board Member Wheeler** asked if there would be anything that could be done to make the

three store fronts be more compatible. **Chairperson Rathore** said the different fronts give character. It was noted the paint will all be the same. It was noted that the downspout needs to be taken care of. The Board would like clarification of what is happening to the awning.

**Council Member Bishop** said the drainpipe should be incorporated into the streetscape.

**Discussion Items:**

***1. Hupp's Hill Historic District Designation***

**Board Member Massey** said this was discussed several years ago. The Board wanted to make it a Strasburg Historic District Designation. A thorough report has been done. He thinks it would be nice to revisit this and see if it could be declared another site.

**Chairperson Rathore** said this area was an Indian Reservation.

**Board Member Massey** believes the ARB can make the recommendation to Council.

**P&Z Administrator Pearson** will look into this as far as how to proceed.

**Council Member Bishop** said she would be hesitant due to not knowing the exact boundaries, etc. **Board Member Massey** said this is all a non-profit ownership.

**P&Z Administrator Pearson** will bring the study and the plans for Dunmore development to the next meeting.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.