

**MINUTES OF THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD OF THE TOWN OF STRASBURG HELD ON THURSDAY, MAY 22, 2014 AT 5:00 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE TOWN HALL.**

ARB Members present: Chairperson Newman, and Members Marcy McCann, James Massey, and Symantha Zeimet.

Staff: Economic Development & Planning (ED&P) Murray and Clerk of Council Keller.

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

**Action Items:**

*1. Approval of Minutes: April 10, 2014*

**The minutes were approved unanimously as presented on a motion by Member Massey and second by Member McCann.**

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

**Chairperson Newman** said the applicant, **Ki Jung Kim**, was asking for the approval for the sign at 318 East King Street. The sign would read “Holy Moly Potato Donut” and would be on the southeast corner of North Massanutten and King Streets. He said that staff’s recommendation would be that the sign be placed within the border above the door and not on top of it. A picture showed where the sign would be placed. **Mr. Kim** said the sign would fit into the space.

**Member McCann** said she was surprised the sign would fit as she had gone by the business and thought it might be too large for the space. **ED&P Manager Murray** said she had the same concern, but thought that once you got the sign at the level of the border, it might fit.

**Chairperson Newman** moved to approve with the staff recommendation that the sign fit within the trim or border and if it doesn’t fit, the sign would be modified so that it does fit; second by Member Massey. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

**Mr. Kim** invited all to the business and said the main ingredient used in the donuts was potato or sweet potato. He listed the different types of donuts he would have. He would not be using artificial flavors and he hopes to be open by the end of the month. He said it had been a rough road with the review process.

*3. Application: Major Modification to 291 South Holliday Street*

**Chairperson Newman** disclosed for the record that **Mike Smith** is his wife’s cousin and if anyone had a problem with that, he would recuse himself from discussion. There were no objections.

**Chairperson Newman** said **Mr. Smith**, the applicant, had been before the ARB for the addition to the back of the house and now wanted approval for the removal and

reconstruction of a one story covered porch, the entire width of the house. He said he has reviewed the application, visited the house, and looked at the pictures and thinks the change will look nice. **Mr. Smith** gave some history of the porch (this portion of the conversation was hard to hear on the tape).

**Member Massey** said he had problems with removal of the porch and the replacement with a porch of a different design. He said the porch was built somewhere between 1923 and 1930 which was an ugly historic period, but he thinks it is all original, including the posts and masonry work. He thinks the porch looks right for the period it was built in and he thinks it would be wrong to remove this historic character feature from the historic property. **Mr. Massey** does not think there was a porch on the house before the 1920's and this is shown on the Sandborne maps and he showed a copy of the maps.

**Member McCann**, from her experience, agreed with **Member Massey**. The footprint of the map shows this porch has been on there for more than 80 years and you don't have to return a building to its original style because later changes have become a part of the streetscape. She feels the current porch is very nice even though it is small. She also had a problem with the proposed columns and railings on the new porch and thinks they are completely inappropriate for the style of house. She thinks taking the bushes out and adding a fence is nice, but the railings on the porch are not in keeping. The spindle columns are not appropriate and she thinks they are diminishing what they have.

**Mr. Smith** asked if the ARB doesn't like it, do they have to follow what they want and **Chairperson Newman** said they do not as the Board offers guidance. He said there are a number of homes in the Guidelines and all have porches all the way across the front and some have square and other round columns. There would be two different types of roofing material and this has been done by the ARB in the past even though the suggestion was to make both materials the same. He read from the Guidelines on porticos and porches. He said the ARB has to keep in mind the historic significance of that particular house as it pertains to the downtown area. The porch wasn't part of the original house so what is the historic significance?

**ED&P Manager Murray** asked for him to comment on the materials. **Chairperson Newman** said they want to take up the concrete and replace with a pressure treated floor and **Mr. Smith** was unsure if he would stain or paint the floor, but said he could concrete the floor.

**ED&P Manager Murray** reviewed the process that would need to be gone through. In this particular case, the ARB gives their recommendation and then **Mr. Smith** can think about the recommendations and he can come back to **ED&P Manager Murray** for the zoning permit.

**Member Massey** doesn't understand why if you tear off a porch and then rebuild a new porch, it is not considered new construction. **ED&P Manager Murray** read from the guidelines as to how this is being considered a major modification.

**Member McCann** feels this is a significant alteration. **Member Massey** pointed out what appears to be original to the porch. Further discussion followed on the porch and the type of materials used on this and the masonry construction and then wood versus vinyl. **Mr. Smith** said he doesn't think there are any houses in the area with wooden columns and feels they are all Trex type of material.

**Chairperson Newman** said that staff would like to have a recommendation on this, but he is unsure what the recommendation would be.

**Member McCann** asked if it is an aesthetic reason that they want to change the porch and **Mr. Smith** said he and his wife just don't like it and feels it looks like a concrete barrier.

**Leon Smith**, neighbor and no relation, said if you go on the porch, it is like a closed in space and the proposal would have more appeal. **Mr. Mike Smith** said he also thinks it would be safer for his children.

**Chairperson Newman** asked if this had to be acted upon and **ED&P Manager Murray** said if **Mr. Smith** was not planning to do this work immediately, the recommendation could be put off for a month. **Member McCann** suggested having another site visit. **Chairperson Newman** said he would like to table this for the time being so the Guidelines can be studied more as to the materials to be used.

**Chairperson Newman moved to table the proposal to the next meeting; second by Member Zeimet. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.**

*4. Application: New Residential Construction at 315 West Queen Street*

**Chairperson Newman** said this is the review and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to permit the construction of a new one and a half story residential structure at 315 West Queen Street. The site is approximately 11,708 square feet located on West Queen Street, west of the intersection with Sharpe Street on the south side.

**Ms. Erika Rauhala**, the applicant, said their son lives next door and they want to move to the area to be close to his family. She didn't realize there would be restrictions as the houses in the neighborhood are not that great.

**Member McCann** said the barn that was on the property was torn down without the approval of the ARB.

**Member Massey** said he has studied the design and reflects nicely of the area and is appropriate to the historic district. He likes that it will be closer to the street and said he thought the setbacks have an alternate provision due to the other houses in the area.

**Member McCann** likes that they are using the hardy plank. She is concerned with the railings and columns and hopes they are wood which they are. She commented on the double garage and a sample of the door was shown; it would be hard to get two single doors on this house due to the size of the house and lot. **Member McCann** would rather have

the one door as she thinks the two doors would be too cluttered. **Greg Gallagher**, Superintendent with America's Home Place, explained the shutters were removed as they made it look cluttered. He would like to have the octagon louvers on the ends to match the front. **Member Massey** thinks the rectangle would be better architecturally on the ends, but said the front ones are fine.

Questions were asked about the sidewalk and **ED&P Manager Murray** said she doesn't think she can require the homeowner to put in a sidewalk.

Samples of materials to be used on the house were shown.

A lengthy discussion was held on the windows. **Member Massey** said if you have an old house, you should replace with wooden windows. If it is new construction, you can allow the materials that are used in this day.

**Mr. Gallagher** said vinyl windows are always looked at closely and he read from the guidelines on the windows and how he interpreted it; **Chairperson Newman** gave his interpretation. **Mr. Gallagher** said there are a lot of products which are wooden, covered in vinyl and you would not know what is under. **Member Massey** said he thinks the intention of the author is that the wooden core would make for a better window and a higher quality. **Mr. Gallagher** said the window type they use is one of the higher grades and will stand the test of time.

**ED&P Manager Murray** said the staff reports reflects some of the items she had discussed with the applicant. Porch materials will need to be specified in either the application or the blueprints.

**Member Massey** said he would propose that in the motion that it would encourage the applicant use wooden windows. **Member McCann** asked about the doors and **Chairperson Newman** said the guidelines ask that you use composite materials that look like wood; there was further discussion of the garage door, including the materials and style.

**Mr. Gallagher** said they are already behind schedule as they didn't realize they were in the historic district and so they would like to have a decision on this at this meeting.

**Chairperson Newman** suggested that if the applicant would agree to the wooden windows, fiberglass wood grain door, and the Sonoma windows on the garage, then they could move forward.

**Ms. Rauhala** and **Mr. Gallagher** left to discuss and when they came back said they would change the front door and would change the garage door to have a row of windows at the top (Sonoma), but on the windows, they would like to have the vinyl windows with a contour grid instead of the flat grid.

**Chairperson Newman** said everybody likes vinyl windows, but he also likes the historic

aspect of Strasburg. More discussion followed on the type of windows and houses in the area with vinyl windows and those with wooden windows.

**Ms. Rauhala** thinks getting a new house would help the neighborhood and she is not even sure they will be able to afford to build the house with all the requirements being discussed.

**Member Massey** asked if they would be able to use the vinyl clad windows as they are acceptable.

**Mr. Gallagher** said they designed the house not knowing the requirements and they have spent a great deal of money to fit into the guidelines.

**Member Massey** said they are using high quality materials and he thinks from a practical matter, in a new building, the vinyl windows are not totally unacceptable as long as the design matches the historic period.

**Mr. Gallagher** said the wood windows would add quite an additional cost to the project. **Member Massey** asked if **Chairperson Newman** was most concerned with the windows in all the house or those visible from the street. **Chairperson Newman** said he does not think it would be allowed to mix and match the materials for the windows. The contour grids in windows were discussed.

**Chairperson Newman** moved to approve the vinyl windows with contour grid with second by **Member Massey**. With no further discussion, the vote was unanimous.

**Chairperson Newman** moved to approved the certificate of appropriateness to include the wood door or fiberglass wood grain door, the Sonoma style garage door without the hinges and with transom windows, and the vinyl windows with contour grids and the applicant will submit a revised set of plans with the changes noted; second by **Member Massey**. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

**Member McCann** said **Mr. Gallagher** seemed like a good contractor. **ED&P Manager Murray** said they will continue to work with the realtors in informing people that they are purchasing in the historic district.

**Member McCann** gave an update on the intern project. She said the town has three interns from Christendom College that will be working with the town on the historic property inventory project. Boy Scout Troop 5 has also helped with the file folders. She has also met with **Dora Buck** from Sager Real Estate and there will be a presentation on the tax credits and **Member Massey** will do some sort of a presentation, too.

**Chairperson Newman** said the ARB will need to elect a new chairperson at the next meeting.

**Member Zeimet** said she took a job last month which could affect the time she can attend

meetings.

**Member Massey** said the Shenandoah County Historical Association gave an award to the Strasburg Presbyterian Church for the work done after the fire.

**ED&P Manager Murray** said **Felicia Hart** started last month as the Downtown Coordinator for the town.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.