

# APPROVED MINUTES

December 10, 2015

## THE FAIRFAX COUNTY ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

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### Fairfax County Government Center Conference Rooms 2 & 3, 6:30 PM

#### Members Present:

Jason Sutphin, Chairman  
Robert W. Mobley, Vice Chairman  
Susan Notkins, AIA, Treasurer  
Richard Bierce, AIA  
Joseph Plumpe, ASLA  
John Boland  
John A. Burns, FAIA  
Elise Murray  
John Manganello  
Michele Aubry

#### Members Excused:

Christopher Daniel

#### Staff Present:

Linda Blank,  
*Fairfax Department of  
Planning & Zoning*  
Casey Gresham,  
*Recording Secretary*

Mr. Sutphin opened the December 10, 2015 meeting of the Architectural Review Board (ARB) at 6:31 p.m. in Room 2/3 of the Government Center; Mr. Mobley read the opening statement of purpose.

#### APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

**Motion: Ms. Murray moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Notkins seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a vote of 10-0.**

#### INTRODUCTION/RECOGNITION OF GUESTS:

- Aaron Grotsva, student from Maine
- Eva Campbell, Intern from Heritage Resources in Planning and Zoning

**CONSENT CALENDAR ACTION ITEMS:** None proposed

#### ITEMS FOR ACTION:

- 1. Proposed signage** at the intersection of Pickwick Road and Wharton Lane, tax map # 54-4 ((16)) A4, in the Centreville Historic Overlay District (HOD). The 90% completed freestanding monument measures 4' high X 12' long X 2' wide. The monument was constructed with benefit of a building permit issued in error using an adjacent property address which is outside of the overlay district. The materials are red brick veneer at the monument base with stone finish stucco capping. The signage to read *Englewood Mews* is proposed and has not been installed. Landscaping is proposed either at grade or in a 12' X 1' brick veneer planter. A September 21, 2015 determination by Zoning Administration has allowed this application to be submitted to the ARB. Ms. Genel Clark, Sequoia Management Company, represents the application. (Item-**ARB-15-CTV-05**)

- Presentation made by Mr. Erik Bighton, representing Englewood Mews HOA
  - Ms. Blank provided initial clarification – the builder came in for a permit for a monument sign about two years ago. When it was logged in, County staff did not see the open space lot number, and they chose the closest house and picked that lot number (which was outside of the historic district). The applicant went through the permitting process, began construction on the sign, and they were awaiting the signage to be installed on the monument structure. The vendor realized that the sign is in the historic overlay district, and that there were issues with sight distance and zoning. A letter from Zoning has indicated that the sign is actually within the zoning regulations and can be permitted.
  - The applicant added that the final permits and inspections have been obtained. The design does not include a planter box, as the sign would be blocked by any plants within a planter box. Brick was chosen to be similar to the brick houses in the neighborhood.
- Discussion:
  - Ms. Aubry noted that samples for landscaping were provided to the ARB, but the proposal has nothing to do with landscaping. She asked if the applicant would be coming back to the ARB with a landscaping plan.
    - Ms. Blank clarified that the landscaping is all included in this application, with an option for at grade planting or a brick veneer planter box.
    - The applicant stated that they do not want a brick planter box, and they added that any plant used would not block the signage. If necessary, they would get the plants trimmed so the signage would not be blocked.
  - Ms. Aubry asked what the nature of the subsoil was during the excavation. She asked if there was any intact stratigraphy in the area or if any archaeological artifacts had been found in the area.
    - The applicant replied that nothing had been reported to the HOA.
  - Ms. Notkins asked which landscape plan did they plan to pursue.
    - The applicant responded that they aimed to provide the ARB options, and they will provide whichever option is recommended by the ARB.
  - Mr. Burns observed that there is plenty of structure, so ground level low plantings should suffice to differentiate the monument from its surroundings.
  - Ms. Notkins believed English Boxwoods grow half an inch at a time, and they are very expensive plants that might not grow.
    - Mr. Plumpe responded that the Boxwood is probably a good choice, as they would not turn into a hedge for many years. They're slow-growing and low-maintenance plants. He added that it would be great to have a planting bed that blends in with the landscape.
  - Mr. Plumpe asked if any lighting was included.
    - The applicant said no lighting would be involved.

- Mr. Plumpe asked if the applicant had a waiver for the sign to be within VDOT sight distance.
  - The applicant noted that the permit allowed its location to be within the sight distance.
  - Mr. Plumpe suggested consultation from a legal standpoint to ensure that it will not cause future car accidents. He also noted that he had no real concerns with its landscaping, and that the applicant should keep in mind what the plantings will look like through all four seasons as the plants are deciduous rather than evergreen. In summary, the landscaping should be sufficient for what the applicant is trying to accomplish.

**Motion: Mr. Plumpe moved to approve ARB Item ARB-15-CTV-05:** Mr. Chairman, I move that the ARB approve item **ARB-15-CTV-05 for the signage to be installed** at the intersection of Pickwick Road & Wharton Lane, which was submitted and presented to the ARB at the December 10, 2015 meeting **subject to the following:**

- 1. Elimination of proposed concrete planter box/masonry planter**
- 2. Sight visibility is pursuant to County review.**
- 3. Any future proposed lighting shall come back to the ARB for review.**

Upon review of the materials and adherence to the items cited above, the proposal is found to meet requirements of Zoning Ordinance 7-200 HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICTS.

**Mr. Burns seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a vote of 10-0.**

- 2. Revisions to previously approved plans for additions** at 10010 Colvin Run Road, tax map # 18-2 ((1)) 23, in the Colvin Run Mill Historic Overlay District (HOD). Additions proposed to the “Money House”; identified as one of the HOD’s contributing properties were approved by the ARB at its October 8, 2015 meeting. Proposed revisions are to reconfigure the footprint and roof of the additions at the southeast and northwest and construct an enclosed gabled entry at the north entrance door. Mr. David Olin, property owner, represents the application. (Item-**ARB-15-CRM-05**)
  - Presentation made by Mr. Olin:
    - Mr. Olin stated that he was asking the ARB for guidance, as an element suggested in his previous submissions was not included as an actual action item. He also noted a slight expansion of the gable over the kitchen door. As the footprint of the home extends into the hill, soil tests show that the ground closer to the base of the hill is sturdier. The approved proposal includes significant excavation into the hill that poses drainage concerns and financial concerns. Mr. Olin thought the excavation is too intrusive into the environment and is unsightly. His new proposal included a grade-level addition that matched the grade of the existing house with a slight cantilever. The engineer has advised on maintaining the existing retaining wall. Mr. Olin added that the footer would be pier footings, and the new masonry wall would be in front of the existing retaining wall. The extension would be made smaller and moved to the south in this new application.

- Discussion:
  - Mr. Burns noticed on the front elevation, the window on the new second floor was no longer shown. He asked if this is what was approved.
    - The applicant stated that the window was removed in the previously approved application.
    - Mr. Mobley remembered making a motion to remove the dormer but the motion was not seconded. No mention was made in the motion regarding the window. Discussion followed about the design of the dormer.
  - Mr. Mobley stated that the original historic home had previously had a rhythm, order, and scale to it. The approval had a simplicity to it, and he felt that this proposal was taking a step backwards. He stated that he could not support this project, as it looks like an addition added on as the years progressed with no ARB input. He did not support the previous application, and he continued to feel the same way as he did with the previous proposal.
  - Mr. Sutphin also agreed to an extent with Mr. Mobley, and he asked Mr. Olin if he was willing to go back through the entire process for these proposed changes.
    - Mr. Olin replied that he was listening to the engineer, who strongly encouraged the changes. He would like to get guidance and was willing to go back through the process.
  - Mr. Sutphin recommended workshop sessions so the ARB could work with the applicant on alternatives.
  - Mr. Bierce stated that there has been an improvement over time, but they have had issues with the drawings and perspectives being the primary image. He asked Mr. Olin to prepare accurate orthographic drawings showing pieces and relationships of what will be changed in the new proposal. He also requested these drawings to be dimensions and scaled for all three elevations, as perspectives are not sufficient for ARB analysis.
  - Mr. Manganello requested a grading plan so he could analyze the hillside.
  - Mr. Mobley asked if Mr. Olin had a permit at this stage.
    - Mr. Olin replied that he did not have the permit yet, and he will most likely need a grading plan for disturbing more than 2,500 square feet of land.
  - Mr. Manganello asked if he was working with a structural or civil engineer.
    - Mr. Olin said he is working with a structural engineer.

**Mr. Olin withdrew the application for action.**

#### **ITEMS FOR WORKSHOP SESSION:**

- 3. Proposal for alterations, new construction and repairs** at the Colvin Run Mill miller's house, 10017 Colvin Run Road, tax map # 18-2 ((1)) 24 in the Colvin Run Mill Historic Overlay District (HOD). The miller's house is identified as a historic property in the HOD. Proposed work includes construction of ADA accessible ramp and front porch, replacing and repointing brick as needed, replacing doors, gutters, downspouts, and roof and painting. Ms. Debbie Robison, Project Manager, and Mr. Mohsen Rahini, architect SWSG, represent the proposal.

- Presentation made by Ms. Robison:
  - The first item of discussion was the masonry ramp leading to the front door. It has caused problems with snow buildup and has damaged the home from the inside. The proposal will remove the ramp and build ADA access on the side of the building.
  - The proposal also includes a new porch. The earliest photos show old stone and stone steps coming down from the porch, and they are similar to the stone steps still located on the house. A ghost mark from the 1967 time period shows angles of a roofline, but this roofline interferes with the existing window. The applicant received comments from Mr. Mobley, and elevations will be included in the next package. Shutters were added in the 1970 restoration, and they believe the shutters should be removed. The proposal would like to replace the roofing and use a wooden fish scale shingle. The Park Authority would like to replace the gutters and downspout, replace bricks following the ramp removal, and replace glazing and include molded glass. The new paint is based on a paint study, and it will be brown based on the recommendation. Cultural Resource Management and Protection Branch will be doing the archaeology studies.
- Discussion:
  - Mr. Bierce thanked Ms. Robison for her work. He stated that it would be useful to see ramp specifications and the proposed treatments.
    - The Park Authority is doing mortar testing.
  - Mr. Bierce also asked for information regarding the original joint profile and re-pointing.
    - The applicant responded that there are still areas that are from the Victorian period, and they will double check when the penciling occurred.
  - Mr. Bierce asked why the new ramp was proposed on the southeast elevation rather than the rear.
    - The applicant responded that there is more of a grade increase up to the door.
    - Mr. Bierce thought it was less intrusive and required less material to put it on the rear elevation. However, the applicant noted that it was the primary view shed.
  - Mr. Bierce asked the applicant to take a look at the grading in order to minimize the intrusiveness of whatever is built. The switchbacks might be able to be eliminated with creative landscape manipulation. Also, he added that a simple steel rail is far less intrusive.
  - Mr. Plumpe agreed with Mr. Bierce, stating that it could potentially be achieved without a ramp through raising the grade. By feathering the grade slowly from the parking lot to the entrance, it would be more aesthetically pleasing.
  - Mr. Mobley noted about an 18 inch elevation difference between the floor of the house and the existing grade. As the ground slopes away from the building, he thought grading could accomplish ADA accessibility.
  - Ms. Notkins added that a ramp built with 4x4's and steel is visually crude, and she suggested black steel for the handrail.
  - Mr. Bierce understood the unwillingness to restore the front porch without documentation, but he asked what connecting details suggest the age of the

- masonry work. He suggested a generic wood stoop at this point until documentation and knowledge about the structure is received.
- Mr. Bierce asked if there was physical evidence of shutters.
    - The applicant responded that there were no shutters in the earliest photos, but pintles were present.
  - Mr. Burns suggested letting the building inform the applicant's decisions and the archaeology will tell the nature of the stoop on the main entrance.
    - The applicant noted that it is possible that the shutters came later, and there is a conflict between the entrance, roof, and shutters. There was some type of roof present and a window must have either been smaller or not present.
  - Mr. Burns asked the applicant to clarify if the historic front entrance is the way most people enter and view the house today.
    - The applicant said that visitors enter through the back door.
  - Mr. Burns concurs with Mr. Bierce and Mr. Plumpe that the ramp as currently portrayed seems over-engineered, and a simpler approach would be preferred. The re-grading seems like a good suggestion. He thought that removing the mortar will be difficult, and he seconded Mr. Bierce's suggestion that it would be helpful to see the specifics. In regards to the ramp, he asked if it needed to be that close to the building (as splash from rainwater is already an issue).
    - The ramp is approximately two feet from the entrance. The applicant added that hopefully the next proposal will not include a ramp at all.
  - Mr. Burns noted that from his own experience, accessibility is about distance. He suggested an alternate path to shorten the horizontal distance to the entrance.
    - The applicant said that there is no way to park any closer.
  - Mr. Bierce asked if the applicant planned to paint the shingles.
    - The applicant will ask about this, and she believes the shingles were typically green. The fish scale shingles might be possible if some of the sheeting is removed from the roof and shows the historic roofing.
  - Mr. Plumpe asked if the applicant could also provide a site plan and any photos of existing landscaping. He also asked if the door was wide enough for ADA accessibility standards.
    - The applicant said the door is 36 inches wide and meets code requirements.
    - The applicant also asked if a mechanical lift would simplify the proposal – Mr. Bierce responded that lifts are expensive, hard to maintain, and do not last long. He would prefer a non-mechanical approach.
  - Mr. Mobley asked if the applicant had talked to staff about having four different door entrances.
    - The applicant said the long range is to remove the 1970 framed addition, and there will only be three doors.

## **BOARD AND STAFF ITEMS:**

- **Review and action on approval of minutes:**  
**Authorization of payment to Recording Secretary:**

**Motion: Ms. Murray made the motion to approve the minutes as submitted and authorize payment to Recording Secretary. The motion was seconded by Ms. Notkins. The motion was passed on a vote of 10-0.**

- **Treasurer's Report:** Staff  
\$9,864.69 was withdrawn and the ARB checking account closed and put into Fairfax County's fund. New balance: \$13,364.69
  
- **Discussion/Update Reports:**
  - **Design Guidelines: Messers Bierce and Mobley**
    - Crude draft in June of 2014; suggest calling them expectations rather than guidelines. Distributed another draft for ARB review, would like to schedule a discussion in the near future to see the general feelings.
    - Mr. Sutphin – any requirement that the BOS blesses these expectations?
      - Linda – opportunity to discuss with PC and BOS. Thinks a white paper to bring this forward is a great opportunity to help educate them and explain some of the things the ARB does.
  
- **Administrative: Election of 2016 ARB officers**
  - Mr. Sutphin as Chairman
  - Mr. Bierce as Vice Chairman
  - Ms. Aubry as Treasurer:

**Motion: Ms. Murray made a motion that the slate be elected by acclamation. This motion was seconded by Mr. Burns. The motion was passed on a vote of 10-0.**

- **Correspondence, Announcements:**
  - **Letter of appreciation for Robert Simon's work**
  - **Invitation, Workhouse Arts Foundation** – potentially having her to come speak with the ARB prior to doing a tour, then going on-site for the tour. Progress report of the Workhouse is desired.
  
- **Old Business:**
  - **Transmittal of Financial Operations, memo;** Policy on Boards, Authorities & Commission Use of Public Funds **Transfer of financial activity** (Chairman and staff)
  
- **New/other business:**
  - HOD item to Board of Supervisors members, 2016.

**Motion: Mr. Plumpe made the motion to adjourn at 8:51 p.m.**