

Architectural Review Board
January 6, 2005

Jeffrey Plank, chair, convened the meeting at 7:15 in Council Chambers, Victory Hall; all other members were in attendance: Lillian Copeland, Ruth Klippstein, John Koski, Fred Schneider. There were no observers. The agenda was adjusted and old business visited, comprised of an informal report by Jeffrey on a meeting with Charlottesville-Albemarle Historical Society to develop a budget for our inventory publication. More information will be presented next month.

New Business: We discussed, with no action requested, maintenance of 732 Valley St., sometimes called the "Blacksmith's House." One of the oldest structures in Scottsville, it has been deteriorating for years; in our preliminary Building Survey, Fred deemed the condition poor. Council is interested in starting a process of condemnation leading to demolition of the building.

Fred noted that ARB has authority for issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness for razing a building in the Historic District (Section 23 of the Zoning Ordinance, VII). He considers our position to be one of agreeing to lose "as little as possible" of our architecture and the fabric of the town's history and culture; he noted the ordinance requires steps similar to the Code of Virginia, offering the structure for sale for a period of time before destroying it. Lillian described Council's position, saying the house is no longer saleable legally, as part of the lot has been sold to the town for Rt. 20 right-away.

Jeffrey spoke of not "subtracting from our unique heritage" as an incorporated town in Virginia, and of not being passive in the face of VDOT's plans for road development. We all assume that a narrower Rt 20 at the north end of town would have the beneficial effect of slowing traffic as well as saving buildings.

We agree to recommend, in a letter Jeffrey will draft with Fred's assistance, that Council follow the process described for this matter in Zoning Ordinance 18.5.9; to do otherwise seems to us to set a dangerous precedence. We have not ourselves contacted the property owner, as outlined in 18.5.9.h, giving 90 days to remedy maintenance and repair problems, as we were informed Council was already working with the owner. Lillian will represent this agreement to Council at the next Working Session.

Other business: Jeffrey will draft a letter Barry can use as a model in corresponding with new owners, if they are in fact buying the Bocce building, to alert them to problems of maintenance and repair outstanding with the ARB. Barry reported by note to Fred that he will ask Chris to replace the cornice he removed. New ownership of the lace factory is also in doubt; we assume Jean Dansey is still responsible for necessary maintenance and repair there.

Steve Phipps asked if ARB could review renovations on a house on Page St., in the view shed of the Historic District. Barry wrote his opinion that the "view shed is confined to the Historic District," though the ARB thinks it has addressed similar situations previously, and that it would be appropriate.

The November minutes were circulated. Jeffrey reported that he had not written the letter about streetlamp banners to town, thinking it moot, but will do so.

The ARB gave kudos to Fred for the award he and Preston Coiner received for Public Preservation (of the Old Tavern) from the Monticello Chapter of the Association for Preservation of Virginia Antiquities.

With no further business, we adjourned at 8:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Klippstein, Secretary