

Architectural Review Board
August 4, 2005

Jeffrey Plank, chair, called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers; also present were members Lillian Copeland and Ruth Klippstein and applicant Steven Meeks. Ruth read notes from the July meeting; the official minutes will be reviewed in September.

Summary of Actions: We recommend approval of Steven Meeks's application for renovations, as listed below, at 732 Valley Street, with the condition that the State Department of Historic Resources approve the plans.

Old Business: Steven showed us photographs, architectural plans, and site plan for his property at 732 Valley Street, as our minutes indicated we requested. He has met at the house with Fred Schneider of the ARB to discuss developments. His two outstanding problems, besides the condition of the building, are the structure's setback and his need for off-street parking. He showed how, with an easement he expects to obtain from adjacent property owner Barbara Lane, he can build a driveway from Warren St. across the creek to parking spaces behind his house. An alternate plan would require filling in land closer to Rt. 20.

Steven plans to create a new, safer entrance to the house at the rear, and to unify and simplify the look of the back of the building while adding a new bathroom area. He means to add a new metal roof; to replace all windows with 6-over-6 windows, as well as add several new windows; to rebuild the existing chimney and remove the rear chimney flue. We reviewed his paint choices and discussed the addition of some type of traffic barrier to the north of the house on Rt. 20 for added safety.

Jeffrey reiterated that we wish to "be in a position to support what the property owner wants." Steven was willing to fill out a formal COA, and is going to submit his plans to the Department of Historic Resources in Richmond so he can receive tax credit for historically correct restoration. The ARB feels that DHR's approval will protect us from any incompatible changes to the building, and is an excellent arbiter for how to proceed.

After further discussion of Steven's timetable and Council and ARB's processes, we agreed that we were ready to support Steven's plans. We moved, seconded, and unanimously passed a motion to recommend approval of Steven Meeks's application for renovation at 732 Valley Street, including a new rear entrance, replacement of existing windows and addition of new windows, a new standing seam roof, rebuilding the chimney and removing the old rear chimney flue, on the condition that these plans meet with approval from the Department of Historic Resources. We understand that with input from Barry Clark, we will need to request Council consider a variance for some aspects of the building's renovation, based on ordinance 18.3.5.2.c.

Repair and maintenance: Steven discussed the situation of 135 Warren St., which he is representing for the property owner Barbara Lane. There are several structural problems, as well as procedural problems, which we will address. There is no further information on repair of the Masonic Lodge/Coleman's.

Inventory project: Jeffrey reported that Fran Smith is ready to be fully engaged in this work, and she will meet soon with him and Edna to develop a plan and lay the groundwork for fundraising. Jeffrey feels optimistic about the future of our publication.

Other: We are continuing Walter Neighbors's application for exterior lighting at 380-92 Valley Street until we can have Fred's consultation and talk with Mr. Neighbors.

With no further business, we adjourned at 8:20

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Klippstein, secretary