

Architectural Review Board
Thursday, February 7, 2008

Jeffrey Plank, chair, called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. in the meeting room of the Municipal Building. Members present were Nancy Gill, Ruth Klippstein, and Fred Schneider. Also attending were Steven Meeks, Bebe Williams, and Kevin Denby. We adjusted the agenda and approved the minutes of the January 2008 meeting.

Summary of actions: We recommend acceptance of Ted Childress's COA for painting 350 Valley Street, pending receipt of a digital photo of the building. We agree to continue working with Kevin Denby on his COA for 460 Main Street, but to allow him meanwhile to work on the rear porch and addition demolition.

Old business: In the matter of the Farmers' Market, we need a COA from the town, as well as a plan for an affordable structure. Fred reported on a follow-up meeting he attended that confirmed the concept not to proceed with a very reduced budget, but to find other funding, possibly exploring private funding. The Town Council is to discuss this further.

We need a COA to proceed with considering the side entrance porch at 401 Valley Street.

We discussed Streetscape. Jeffrey has been appointed to an oversight group of stakeholder committees and interested citizens to help develop priorities for finishing Phase I and plans for Phase II. Jeffrey and Fred toured Streetscape with a preservation architect and found the survey "sobering": most of the problems, they decided, cannot realistically be fixed. Some of the quality-of-work issues can be changed, and we need to review the original specifications, which Fred agreed to do, to find where problems about minimum expectations arose, and to offer language that architects and designers might use in future plans. For Phase II, the Town might hire a professional to develop these specifications as appropriate for a Historic District; this person could also facilitate communications among all parties—such a solution has been used in Charlottesville. Elements of Phase I that might be redressed include minimal camouflage—such as painting—rather than extensive screening, for transformers, etc; dealing with the varied surfaces of the sidewalks, and finishing details on the storm sewers and drainage that might change their look. Of critical importance is the north side of the corner of Bird and Valley, where the drainage system seems to direct water onto the building, possibly causing damage. The truck-turning issue at that corner is a major public safety issue, as tire treads on the sidewalks demonstrate. It is possible the Charlottesville downtown mall has extra cast iron planters that could be used as barriers against damage to the buildings when the light pole comes down.

New business: Kevin Denby showed photographs of the building at 460 Main Street and described his plans for renovation to create an office for his business and possibly a commercial space. There is major work needed at the rear of the building, where the bank is above the height of part of the structure. Kevin wants to regrade, replace damaged parts, repair walls and foundation, and put the building back to its original look as much as possible. As it was a service station until the early 1960s, he envisions adding non-working gas pumps in front. The initial work to stabilize the structure will take 6-8 months, and we agree to allow him to proceed

at the back of the building. Fred and Jeffrey will meet with him on-site to consider a new roof and other elements for which a COA will be necessary.

Steven Meeks described the planned painting of 350 Valley Street, the former F&M bank, and showed color chips. These met our approval, as Fred had consulted with Steven on-site, but Fred asked for a digital photo of the building we could annotate and add to the COA. The COA was unanimously recommended for approval pending the photo.

New business: Nancy showed photos and plans for a paper recycling dumpster offered by Albemarle County to Scottsville, and asked about two potential sites for it: Dorrier Park parking lot and the shopping center parking lot. We discussed this “pilot program,” that has no cost to Scottsville but offers no revenue, and has no maintenance or oversight. Our opinion is that such an installation is inappropriate for the Historic District or its view shed, especially as it has no supervision. It is distressing to be in a position of turning down recycling facilities, but we encourage the town to search out other recycling strategies that would better serve us, including a private recycling business or a public-private venture.

Repair and Maintenance: Jeffrey and Fred met with Jimmy Stelling at 550 Valley Street to discuss a repair and maintenance schedule for the building. His plan is appropriate, but has not come in writing to us, as requested, and we will ask Clark to write to him.

We reviewed the draft of Clark’s letter to Walter Neighbors in reference to 392 Valley Street. We correct Clark’s description of this letter as generated by the ARB; it is being send on behalf of the Town.

Other business: Steven Meeks brought to our attention the small white house behind the professional building on Valley Street, sometimes identified as a slave house of significance, which is falling into disrepair. We will ask Clark to write to the owner. We considered the new work done to the former telephone exchange building. It was reported that the braid factory condominium deal has fallen through, and a business has gone into the former doctor’s office there. We question whether the sign for that business had approval from the town administrator. We also questioned the lighted Open signs at 330 Valley Street and at the braid factory.

With no further business, we adjourned at 8:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Klippstein, secretary