

Architectural Review Board
Thursday, May 1, 2008

Jeffrey Plank, chair, called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. in the Town Council room of the Municipal Building. Members present were Nancy Gill, Ruth Klippstein, Steven Meeks, and Fred Schneider. Also attending were Clark Draper, Barry Grove, George Goodwin, and Hawes Helwig and Michael Wertheim. The agenda was adjusted and minutes of the April meeting approved as presented. New member Steven Meeks was welcomed.

Summary of actions: We respectfully resolve that the mayor and town council confer with the Architectural Review Board prior to making general communications to property owners in the Historic District about design alterations and changes to the exteriors of their buildings.

Old business: Hawes Helwig of Eagle Bay and Michael Wertheim of Allied Concrete supplied brochures and examples of “hardscape pavers” as possible composite material to be used in the Streetscape crosswalks. Helwig described the many advantages towns such as Williamsburg and Richmond have had with the long-lasting material; the cost (\$5 per installed square foot, with the substrate costing a possible additional \$5); and the warranty. He described his firm as “proactive” and on-site at all times. Helwig said that current design trends are not to mimic brick or the color of other local materials, but to use the pavers in a grey stone color that doesn’t show tire marks. The pavers can be taken up and reused after future asphalt work. Helwig estimated the installation as about two days and recommended the use of an ICPI-certified firm. Wertheim said they could return for talks at any time; we thanked them for their attendance. Jeffrey noted this as a “good meeting and a great example of the right process” in gathering and evaluating information for Streetscape, and Fred looked forward to other such meetings.

The Methodist Church is moving forward with its window renovation. Nancy urged Clark to get a schedule of the order in which the windows will be renovated when the church applied for the COA.

Renovations at 496 Valley Street, the former telephone switching building, were considered, and we read the letter Clark wrote last month to the property owner, Hilton Patterson. Fred met with Jimmy Marshall and Hilton Patterson at the site and repeated our request for plans in a COA for treatment of the whole building, and rejected windows for renovation that had been purchased. Patterson was “antagonistic” to ARB review and, as Fred said, “the conversation deteriorated.” Jimmy Marshall suggested he would continue to install the windows, and the ARB directed Clark to issue a stop-work order until a COA has been given.

New business: It was reported that Mayor Phipps sent a letter to business owners encouraging them to add awnings to their buildings. Jeffrey said this is not understood town procedure, and a conversation ensued. Fred noted that ordinance 18.5.2c exempts awnings from ARB review, but our feeling was articulated in the resolution, unanimously passed, “ARB respectfully requests the mayor and council confer with us prior to making general communications with property owners in the Historic District concerning design alterations and changes to the exterior of their buildings.” Specific to this case, while in some circumstances an awning may be appropriate, we do not support the general addition of awnings to structures in the Historic District.

Repair and maintenance: Fred reported on meeting with Mayor Phipps and Nancy at the Municipal Building to consider the railings, roof, and woodwork. With so much damage, he believes removal and replacement the best solution, including removal of the roof to be patched and refinished comprehensively with a standing seam metal with baked-on finish, similar to what he used in the old tavern, with a 20-year guarantee. A small, simple projecting sign will be added at street level. Fred advised that the roofers and woodworkers talk together before beginning. Nancy hoped work could start soon.

550 Valley Street, the former Stinson house, has presented a plan for renovations, but work has not proceeded in a timely fashion. We noted that if the time frame for action we suggested in our first letter to the property owner has elapsed, Clark write again to him. We invite him to our June meeting.

Inventory project: this continues on hold while Jeffrey works on Streetscape issues.

Jeffrey reported on the Streetscape Oversight Committee activity, with Barry Grove steering all issues of future work toward the RFP, and working with council and contractors on past work. As not much satisfaction is likely being gained in the matter of past work, the hope is that the RFP will generate a good new finish to East Main, Valley, and the intersection. Jeffrey spoke of the possibility of a more historically accurate and down-played development of the intersection, possibly installing a steam whistle as in the past, since no clock tower was ever there. He praised Grove's directive that members research and bring examples of their suggestions to meetings.

The Farmers' Market RFP was just issued, for a relatively simple building based on indigenous forms such as the pole barn or church pavilion. The ARB will pass on the final design.

Ruth Klippstein reported on finding a 1985 photo of the double doors on the old Beal building requested by Walter Neighbors for his restoration.

With no further business, we adjourned at 8:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Klippstein, secretary