

Architectural Review Board

February 12, 2015 (Meeting rescheduled from 2.5.15)

Chair Jeffrey Plank called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers; also present were members Barry Grove, Ruth Klippstein, Seth McDowell, and Stephen Meeks; George Goodwin; and representing their projects, John McGurn and Mica Ruth, and Audrey Wells.

Summary of Business: We recommend approval of the COA for renovations at 371 Harrison Street; we recommend the signs as shown for Cutting Loose Salon, 100 Jackson St.; and likewise for James River Embroidery, at 383 Valley St.

Old and New Business: McGurn and Ruth, 371 Harrison St., showed colors they've chosen for the rear doors, trim, deck flooring, foundation, and porch ceilings; as well as an example of handrails for the porch. Plank and McDowell had met with them on site to discuss developments. We discussed the use of Hardiplank to replace the current asphalt siding, embellishment of the columns, and establishing a 2-car parking area at the rear of the house, re-orienting the rear stairs. McDowell agreed with the color scheme: Raspberry red for the doors, Charleston green for trim, a blue like the "Paradise View" Benjamin Moore we were shown; the Hardiplank is to be smooth textured, white. He is skeptical about painting corner elements of the house green to emphasize the building's volume, and would like to see the profile of bases and crown for the columns prior to installation. The foundation should be painted a slightly darker grey than the porch floors.

Meeks expressed reservations about the Hardiplank, as it changes the original surfacing of this Craftsman duplex, built by Dr. Stinson in 1949. In general, this did not seem a problem to the rest of the board, and will possibly improve the quality of the house.

We emphasize that the paint colors are given as our recommendations; the sliding, orientation of the rear stairs to the parking area, and columns are the heart of this proposal for ARB. We move, second, and unanimously pass the recommendation that Council approve this COA. Further amendments and details will be communicated to McDowell for final approval.

Audrey Wells of Cutting Loose salon and spa, now at 100 Jackson St., showed the new signs she wishes to use. They meet the dimension limits for the building, and both the wall and the window sign were deemed appropriate. We moved, seconded, and unanimously recommend Council approve the permit for these signs. She asked about the possibility of painting the exterior of the building, and we informed her that a request may be made for administrative approval from George Goodwin; if he or she wishes for our help, we will be glad to give suggestions.

James River Embroidery, 383 Valley, has expanded the scope of its business, and a new projecting sign is requested. As it meets the size limits, we move, second, and unanimously pass a recommendation that Council approve this sign permit.

We heard a description of the scope of work for a 12x15' storage building at the United Methodist Church; we will work with them during the month to craft an appropriate COA for March. They are also planning on changes in the front door and added awnings over three doors; McDowell is considering recommendations.

Plank and McDowell met with Shannon Brown at James River Brewery to discuss plans for exterior changes; the new brown color was recommended for the stucco, and has been applied; an off-white is recommended for the window trim. The trash rack is removed. ARB recommended covering the vertical metal divider on the left window to match that on the right, and this was agreed to. Further considerations of covering the creek and any other changes have not been formalized.

Repair and Maintenance: We did not discuss two on-going projects, 380 and 560 East Main (Doll House and Tocci's), about which Goodwin will get more information. We noted Walter Neighbor's recent email update on his progress at the Canal Warehouse. We asked property owner Stephen Meeks about progress at 135 Warren St. He said he has been able to do one more wall of cinder blocks and is trying to local wood-frame windows for replacement. Barry Grove cited concern for lack of true progress shown on this project for almost a decade of the town's involvement in its condition. He described it as a "total eyesore and detraction to town," and wished the ARB to begin another process of finding it in violation of the ordinances. We discussed this and agreed that we would again raise the issue at our March meeting, when warmer weather would be more conducive to getting work accomplished in the 90 days stipulated for the work by finding it in violation.

Minutes: Meeks suggested changing the January minutes, P. 2, para. "Vice-chair," to read "unanimously elected Seth as vice-chair" rather than "unanimously agree to Seth's acting as vice-chair." With this change, the minutes were unanimously accepted.

With no further business, we adjourned at 8:15.

Respectfully submitted, Ruth Klippstein, secretary