

*****DRAFT MINUTES*****

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
Old & Historic Alexandria District

Wednesday, May 4, 2011

7:30pm, City Council Chambers, City Hall
301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Members Present: Tom Hulfish, Chairman
Chip Carlin
Oscar Fitzgerald
Arthur Keleher
Wayne Neale
John von Senden
Peter Smeallie

Staff Present: Planning & Zoning
Michele Oaks, Historic Preservation Planner
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 p.m. by Chairman Hulfish.

I. MINUTES

Consideration of the minutes of the public hearing of April 20, 2011.

BOARD ACTION: Approved as submitted, 7-0

On a motion by Dr. Fitzgerald, seconded by Mr. Smeallie, the minutes were unanimously approved, as submitted, 7-0.

II. CONSENT CALENDAR

Items on the Consent Calendar are those where the applicant has agreed to all conditions of approval shown in the staff reports. Without objection, the staff recommendation for these cases will be approved as a group by unanimous consent of the Board at the beginning of the meeting. When announced by the Chairman, any member of the Board or of the public may ask that one of these cases be removed for full discussion.

1. **CASE BAR2011-0052**
Request for new egress window and stair relocation at **917 S Saint Asaph St**, zoned RM Residential.
APPLICANT: Sarah Bobbin
BOARD ACTION: Approved, as submitted, 7-0

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

2. **CASE BAR2011-0083**
Request for alterations at **316/318 S Royal St**, zoned RM Residential.
APPLICANT: Old Presbyterian Meeting House by Donald E. Lipscomb Jr.
BOARD ACTION: Approved, as submitted, 7-0

SPEAKERS

Donald Lipscomb Jr., Architect for the applicant, spoke in support of the application.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board questioned the Staff about the longevity of the proposed cladding product. Staff expressed that Dry-Vit in early years had problems with moisture, but that the company has corrected the technology and believes that the material is a good fit for this application.

Dr. Fitzgerald commended the revised design of the project.

Mr. Smeallie made a motion to approve the application as submitted, commending the applicant on their willingness to work with staff to find a sympathetic solution to the design challenge.

The motion was seconded by Dr. Fitzgerald and approved unanimously, 7-0.

REASON

The Board felt the application was a great solution to minimize the impact of an utilitarian vent on the historic streetscape.

3. CASE BAR2011-0055

Request for partial demolition of Immanuel Chapel at **3737 Seminary Road (campus)/3591 Aspinwall Lane (Immanuel Chapel)**, zoned R20 Residential.

APPLICANT: Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia

BOARD ACTION: Approved with conditions, 5-2

CONDITIONS

1. That the applicant document the building in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 4: *Demolition of Existing Structures* application requirements for Significance Buildings. This documentation will include History of the Structure, Photographs and Measured Drawings, as outlined in Chapter 4 of the *Design Guidelines*.
2. That the following archaeology conditions shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
 - A. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that a monitoring and inspection schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
 - B. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
 - C. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection or artifact collection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology

SPEAKERS

Duncan Blair, Attorney, presented the revised application. He outlined the work that has been done to the scope of the project since the last meeting. He noted that the project team has held meetings and conducted site visits with selected members of the BAR and Staff. The Board is being presented with an interim stabilization plan which begins to preserve and memorialize the chapel.

Mary Kay Lanzillotta, architect, presented a Powerpoint slideshow illustrating the conditions assessment, the proposed selective demolition of the chapel and interim stabilization of the chapel.

John Hynan, Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF), presented that the Foundation wants restoration of the chapel. He expressed that the walls are essentially not damaged. He noted that the Foundation believes that the Chapel is “one of the foremost historic buildings in Alexandria.” He also stated that other churches in Alexandria have been damaged by fire and rebuilt, including the Presbyterian Meeting House.

Tim Behr, Student at the Virginia Theological Seminary, supports the complete demolition of the Chapel. He stated that the Seminary is not just a historic landmark to the students. He did not believe that the restoration of the chapel is the best use of the stewardship of the Seminary’s resources.

Audrey O’Brien, supported the proposal for the prayer garden. She believed that the proposal is a compromise.

Mernie Keleher, inquired if there was a cellar below the chapel, if the walls are being dismantled and stored off-site and the location for the new chapel. Duncan Blair clarified that the cellar is in the front of the chapel and some of the walls will be dismantled, cataloged and palletized and stored off-site and the location of the new chapel is being proposed near the visitor’s center.

Linda Serabian, Architect and member of Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, supports the revised proposal to retain more of the historic walls. However, she objected to the prayer garden concept and supported the utilization of the walls in the new church.

Gail Rothrock, architectural historian, supported the proposal to retain the historic fabric however, does not support the prayer garden. She does not believe a detailed structural analysis was provided to give the Board adequate information to make an informed decision. She encouraged a selective demolition of charred roof trusses, protection of the walls with coping, retainment of window surrounds, the tarping of the building and fencing the site.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Chairman began noting that Mr. Smeallie and Mr. von Senden were asked to represent the Board as a sub-committee for this project and requested a report from their meetings.

Mr. Smeallie began by summarizing the BAR’s jurisdiction on 100 year old buildings. He stated that the BAR only has jurisdiction over demolition of the structure. He noted that their role was advisory. He concluded noting that the product that is being presented to the Board is a product of their discussions with the project team.

Mr. von Senden wants to see the project move forward. He noted that without a roof you have interior materials that are not designed to weather. He also expressed that while it would take work, the walls could be conserved. He also believes that the proposal is a compromise. He also appreciates the inclusion of documentation in the submittal.

Dr. Fitzgerald noted that 45% of the existing building is being proposed for demolition including the modern additions. He believes based on the information provided that the chapel could be rebuilt.

Mr. Keleher, inquired about the interim temporary structure. He also was concerned about the fact that a tarp was not installed over the structure to preserve the interior woodwork.

Mr. Smeallie, noted that there is a struggle between building codes and preservation. The chapel would not be able to be reconstructed under the current building codes. He has determined that the best solution is the revised proposal as submitted.

Mr. Neale believes that it is the church's decision to selectively demolish and not rebuild. He would like to see the walls adaptively reused. He also encouraged the design team to re-study retaining the piers that define the naïve.

Mr. Carlin expressed that he sees this as the preservation of a sacred space. He notes that it is an edifice itself as one of the early buildings on campus and this has a value. He also states that it is important and it relates to the historic context. He also believes that the prayer garden will be a rebirth forward for the Seminary.

Mr. von Senden noted that he would like to see forward progression on the chapel project. He is also disappointed that there was not any interim stabilization immediately after the fire. He believes that the proposal is a conservation effort. Mr. von Senden made a motion to approve the application with conditions.

Mr. Smeallie seconded the motion.

Mr. Keleher asked for additional clarification on selective demolition.

The motion was approved by roll call vote, with conditions, 5-2.

REASON

The Board found that the applicant had responded to previous comments and believes that the documentation and careful salvage of the walls and the stabilization of portions of the walls will preserve the Chapel's general form, plan and spatial relationship.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Informational presentation by RP&CA Staff on the replacement of signs at the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Alisa Carrel, Director of the Office of the Arts presented an overview of the new banners, wall and window signage, standardization of the logos, and installation of awnings at the Art Center which will be funded through grant monies. The Board supported standardizing the logos on all signage and noted their concern with the proposed use of photos on the banners.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Hulfish adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:40 pm.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

The following items are shown for information only. Based on the Board's adopted policies, these have been approved by Staff since the previous Board meeting.

CASE BAR2011-0076

Request for in-kind door, storm door and transom replacement at **209 Franklin St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Gary & Allison Stevens

CASE BAR2011-0086

Request for wall repair at **224 N Columbus St**, zoned RM Residential. APPLICANT: John Hooff

CASE BAR2011-0087

Request for window trim replacement/repair at **1226 Prince St**, zoned CL Commercial.

APPLICANT: Daniel Crane

CASE BAR2011-0088

Request for shutter replacement, repair of cellar door, and removal of iron railing at **314 S Fairfax St**, zoned RM Residential.

APPLICANT: Claud & Elizabeth Eley

CASE BAR2011-0089

Request for hanging sign at **1403 King St**, zoned KR King Street Retail.

APPLICANT: Dr. Jeff Papas/Simpson Scarborough

CASE BAR2011-0090

Request for rolling metal doors at **801-833 S Washington St**, zoned CRMU/L Commercial.

APPLICANT: WRIT

CASE BAR2011-0092

Request for replacement of existing awnings at **700 King St**, zoned KR King Street Retail.

APPLICANT: Cosi

CASE BAR2011-0095

Request for new vent at **1218 King St**, zoned KR King Street Retail.

APPLICANT: Cloverdale, LLC.

Minutes submitted by,

Michele Oaks, Historic Preservation Planner
Boards of Architectural Review