

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Historic Architectural Review Board Regular Meeting October 15, 2020

The Historic Architectural Review Board met in formal session at 1:00 P.M., Thursday, October 15, 2020, in the Alcazar Room at City Hall, St. Augustine, Florida. Catherine Duncan, Chairperson, called the regular meeting to order, and the following were present:

1. ROLL CALL:

Catherine Duncan, Chairperson
Barbara Wingo, Vice-Chairperson
Jon Benoit
Paul Weaver, III
Gaere MacDonald

City Staff:

Jenny Wolfe, Historic Preservation Officer
Julie Courtney, Historic Preservation Planner
Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney
Candice Seymour, Recording Secretary

2. General Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

The Board heard from the following member of the public:

- B.J. Kalaidi

3. Approval of Minutes

MOTION

Mr. Benoit MOVED to APPROVE the September 24, 2020 minutes as presented. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Weaver.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: Benoit, Weaver, MacDonald, Wingo, Duncan

NAYES: NONE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Modification and approval of Agenda

MOTION

Mr. Weaver MOVED to APPROVE the Agenda as published. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. MacDonald.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: Weaver, MacDonald, Benoit, Wingo, Duncan

NAYES: NONE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Continued Items from Previous Meetings

5. (a) Certificate of Appropriateness F2020-0097 – St. Johns Law Group – Applicant Sea-Wall Motor Lodge Inc – Owner 32 Avenida Menendez

To add a one-story covered entry within the courtyard and to enclose an open space behind an existing wall on the Charlotte Street elevation.

Ms. Courtney read the staff report and said based on the previous HARB review, a review of the AGHP, and without the support of evidence to the contrary, staff finds that the board can **APPROVE** a Certificate of Appropriateness at **32 Avenida Menendez** for design option 1 because it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation 9, with the following condition:

1. That the structural elements of the new structure will not impact the

salvaged steps and plaque exhibit from the Monson Motor Lodge

James Whitehouse reviewed the application.

Ex Parte Communication:

(None)

Public hearing was opened.

B.J. Kalaidi asked for clarification that the applicant's presentation was consistent with Option 1 recommended in the staff report.

Public hearing was closed.

The Board discussed:

- Confirmation that the scuppers were functional to prevent rainwater overflow and gutters were internal to the pillars
- Improvements from the previous proposal
- Rounded archway presented was Option 1
- Parapet wall was more appropriate than rail to avoid creating a faux walkway

MOTION

Mr. Benoit MOVED to APPROVE application F2020-0097 for Option 1, with the rounded arch, with the findings that the addition of the covered entrance does not affect the view of the building from the street, does not adversely affect the original fabric of the building that had been preserved from the Monson Hotel, and it is compatible with the existing building and other surrounding buildings in terms of a material and design. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Weaver.

Mr. Weaver asked that the motion clearly reflect the staff condition that the new

structure would not impact the salvaged steps and plaque exhibit.

Mr. Benoit AMENDED his motion to include the condition as listed in the staff report. The amendment was SECONDED by Mr. Weaver.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: Benoit, Weaver, MacDonald, Wingo, Duncan

NAYES: NONE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. (b) Certificate of Appropriateness F2020-0098 – David Grande – Applicant J Prabhu, LLC – Owner 120 Avenida Menendez

To cover existing deck with a roofed structure and to replace existing metal railings and supports with wood railings and supports.

Ms. Courtney read the staff report and said based on the previous HARB review, a review of the AGHP, and without the support of evidence to the contrary, staff finds that the board can **CONTINUE** a Certificate of Appropriateness at **120 Avenida Menendez** because the proposed railing system does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards 2 and 6 and the need for additional design clarification on the proposed roof over the porte cochere's upper deck remains.

Dave Grande reviewed the application with additional information that had been submitted after the meeting packets were distributed¹.

Ex Parte Communication:

(None)

Public hearing was opened; however, there was no response.

¹ Attached to original minutes

The Board discussed:

- Applicant's effort to respond to Board feedback
- Proposed wood railings had sufficient detail to maintain existing style and could be compatible based on existing issues with the salt air
- Flat roof more compatible than gable or hip from a design standpoint
- Recommendation to alter design to make posts on first and second floors align better
- Flat roof solved problem of awkward turn in the roof
- Proposed spindles could be plain or turned at the direction of the Board
- PVC material was not appropriate
- Concept from rail system was meant to match existing decorative posts and spindles on the building.
- Staff concern that the proposed wood elements would change the style of the building
- Change from metal to wood may not be necessary if metal railings were repaired
- Aluminum posts could not be used as they are not structural and replacement in-kind could be cost prohibitive
- Monterey Style with a Spanish theme that had been the original intent of the structure ,
- Lack of a convincing case that the railing needed to be replaced
- Possibility of repair with an additional hospital rail to reach the necessary height to meet code which would be the preference from a preservation perspective
- Existing posts were not structurally sound, but may be repaired with some welding

Ms. Wolfe offered the following recommendations for the Board's consideration:

- Having the applicant supply an engineer's report that reflected the need to replace the posts
- Exploring the option to repair the posts and railings
- If replacement was the decision, Board would need to provide feedback on appropriate wood designs
- Consideration that wood had its own maintenance concerns

Board discussion continued regarding the following:

- Desire that the applicant provide an expert opinion regarding the necessity of replacing the railing
- Option for replacement:
 - Replace it with a like material and design
 - Replace with a compatible contemporary design approved by the Board
- Wood spindle design proposed was not a compatible contemporary design
- Board preference that the railings be replaced with similar metal material
- Railing details made the building distinctive
- Flat roof

MOTION

Mr. Weaver MOVED to APPROVE Certificate of Appropriateness application F2020-0098 to approve the existing deck with a flat roof structure and to CONTINUE the replacement of existing metal railings and supports with wood railings and supports to the November 19, 2020 meeting. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. MacDonald.

There was a brief discussion regarding the applicant changing the rail design to bring the railing into the column versus going around the column as well as making the railing on the upper balcony was concurrent

with what the Board would approve for the rest of the building.

Mr. Weaver AMENDED his motion to include the discussed conditions. The amendment was SECONDED by Mr. MacDonald.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: Weaver, MacDonald, Benoit, Wingo, Duncan

NAYES: NONE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Planning and Building Staff Communications

6. (a) Planning and Building Staff Approved Permits Report

(Provided for informational purposes)

7. Other Business

7. (a) Discussion Regarding Implementation of Partial Demolition Standards

Ms. Wolfe gave an overview on the subject. She asked the Board to consider options for defining partial demolitions and/or making alterations to the Demolition portion of the code.

The Board discussed:

- Separating Demolition and Partial Demolition into separate categories that were manageable by staff and clear to the public
- Character-defining features as elements considered partial demolitions that would require Board review
- Cumulative effects of partial demolitions over time
- Community understanding regarding HARB's purview over partial demolition review was limited

- Identifying areas with high concentrations of character defining features that may need HARB review such as chimneys or foundations
- Adding thresholds within the categories of character defining features that would trigger HARB review
- Concern that more stringent rules regarding partial demolitions may inhibit repairs and renovations of historic structures
- Flag National Register buildings, Contributing, and Landmark buildings in National Register Historic Districts as structures that may require HARB review for partial demolitions
- Concern that restrictions and regulations may discourage the formation of new historic districts
- Ways to incentivize National Register Historic Districts and partial demolition review such as waiving fees or tax exemptions
- Concerns related to house lifting were not as predominant of a concern as losing the exterior fabric of structures through alterations such as window or door siding
- Foundations and house lifting that could trigger a HARB review if above freeboard
- Defining foundations as a character defining feature
- Design review in districts where currently there were none
- Existing incentives in Lincolnville: Fix-It-Up program and Institutional Rehabilitation Program
- Concerns regarding demolition by neglect of structures that may not initially meet the criteria for demolition
- Design criteria as a way to promote compatible new design and discourage demolition by neglect

Ms. Wolfe reviewed the Board's discussion, advising that the next step would be for staff to formulate the Board's recommendations into potential changes to procedures or codes. She noted that it did not appear that the Board was in favor of removing partial demolition from the code and further defining "demolition."

The Board continued discussion regarding the following:

- Possibility of developing a list of partial demolition items staff could approve administratively
- Goal of the discussion was to be consistent regarding what would constitute partial demolition
- Pin-pointing real-world examples from outside of St. Augustine that illustrated what the City was trying to avoid
- Promoting community involvement in such changes

Public comment was opened, and the Board heard from the following members of the public:

- B.J. Kalaidi
- Charles Pappas

7. (b) Discussion Regarding Resilient Heritage in the Oldest City Publication

Ms. Wolfe presented the publication to the Board and reviewed recommendations. She sought the Board's comments and suggestions regarding next steps for the City.

The Board discussed:

- Water-proofing measures for historic structures
- Salt intrusion mitigation
- How to implement waterproofing and flood mitigation measures in a practical way

- Measures unnecessarily discussed in the document because they did not pertain to St. Augustine
- Recommendation to include a discussion regarding the water-table in relation to structures
- Concern that the document did not contain comments regarding the local water management district.
- Defining basic recommendations for colonial structures as a starting point
- Recommendation that the city invest resources in Resiliency officer and staff
- Starting with achievable goals
- Making methodologies available for waterproofing available to the public

Ms. Wolfe announced that the City was awarded a National Park Service grant for Hazard Mitigation Planning which included a project to create a Town Plan National Historic Landmark District, a component of which would be flood mitigation. She added that the Grant funding would also provide a survey and National Register Update for Model Land, Lincolnville, and Abbot Tract which also required a flood mitigation component.

Mr. Weaver updated the Board on preservation and flood mitigation efforts being done by the Historical Society at the Llambias House which he hoped could be a model for protecting other colonial buildings.

Ms. Wolfe asked that the Board consider the worksheets included in the packet which were intended to help both the City and the public evaluate adaptations methods for properties. She added that Andrea White helped craft the Archeology portion of the document and part of the effort was not just to protect archeological resources that were still in the ground, but also to protect the collection of artifacts housed at the archeology lab.

Public comment was opened; however, there was no response.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:56 P.M.²



Catherine Duncan, Chairperson

² Transcribed by Candice Seymour