

Minutes
April 7, 2011
North End - Huntington Heights Architectural Review Board

Members present:

Chip Carpenter, Carolyn Hughes, Mary Kayaselcuk, Robin Stippich, Andrew Velkey, Deirdre Wells

Members Absent: The Board has one vacancy.

Staff present: Saul Gleiser

The meeting was called to order at 6:00.

The minutes of the March meeting were reviewed and approved.

COA-11-252. 315 65th Street. Calvin and April Kelsey submitted a request for the replacement of four double-hung windows with vinyl double-hung windows with matching dimensions.

Mr. Gleiser submitted additional pictures of the window trim that were not in the packet. Mr. Gleiser noted that the applicant had been advised that many times windows can be repaired more cost effectively than replacement. The applicant did look into repair, but found that the windows were in such poor repair that repair would not be feasible. The Board noted that old windows are infinitely repairable, and that even the most distressed window can be repaired. Absent that possibility, they can be sold or donated to other homeowners or the Habitat Restore, for reuse. Mr. Carpenter reiterated that the proposed replacement windows are in compliance with the Guidelines, and that the replacement was merited. The Board commentary for rehabilitating existing original windows was for informative purposes and would not be used to turn down the request.

Mrs. Hughes informed the applicants of the Virginia Tax Credit program.

The applicant was encouraged to keep the old windows in the attic and to be sure to label them. In the future these windows may become valuable in future restoration efforts.

Mr. Carpenter noted that the brick molding on the windows was not original and that even though it does have minor architectural detail, wrapping it would not be contrary to the Guidelines. The Board opted to vote on this issue separately.

Mrs. Wells made the motion to approve.

Mr. Velkey provided the second.

Mrs. Wells made a motion to approve wrapping of the trim.

Mr. Velkey made a second.

Aye: Hughes, Kayaselcuk, Stippich, Velkey, Wells, Carpenter.

Nay:

New Business

Mr. Carpenter asked if there was any new business. Ms. Stippich notified the Board that her house will need roof repair and stated that the color of the shingle on the house is not available. She asked if the Board need to review a repair if the shingle is slightly different. The Board opinion was that the replacement of less than 100 square feet of roofing is a repair and can be conducted by-right.

Old Business

The discussion began regarding the Guidelines update. Mr. Gleiser gave a background discussion regarding the Hilton Village update. The old Hilton Guidelines had become rather convoluted over the decades and an overhaul was deemed necessary. The Firm that agreed to do the rewrite did so for an extremely low cost, and Mr. Gleiser stated that it was highly unlikely that these circumstances could be replicated.

Mr. Velkey stated his opinion that the Guidelines could be made more user friendly. The content is not the problem so much as the difficulty of finding the applicable sections to a project proposal.

Mr. Gleiser noted that both the City of Richmond and Hilton Village incorporate a matrix for showing what projects require which type of review.

Mrs. Wells asked how Hilton's update was funded. Mr. Gleiser stated that Hilton used leftover funds from the Framework for the Future budget. These funds are no longer available. There was also an extenuating circumstance where the firm that won the bid needed to find temporary work for an employee. That is why the Hilton Guidelines were updated for \$2000. The four other bids that came in for the RFP averaged \$60,000. Given the fiscal reality in the city, it is highly unlikely that funding can be found for this project.

Mr. Carpenter stated his opinion that issuing an RFP for a Guidelines update is a non-starter and should not be pursued.

Mr. Gleiser informed the Board that the Planning Department is considering expanding the number of historic districts in the city. This expansion could likely result in the combining of district oversight, i.e. one Board for several historic areas.

Mr. Carpenter stated his strong opposition to this idea, and the Board stated their agreement with Mr. Carpenter's opinion.

Mr. Gleiser continued by stating that the creation of these new districts do not seem likely anytime in the near future. However, if it should come to pass, the NEHH Guidelines could be easily applied to the communities in the Southeast Community. Mr. Gleiser stated that Council has a desire to take some action to improve the Southeast area, and that the historic districts are but one option under consideration.

Mr. Carpenter restated that the goal of any rewrite is not to adopt new Guidelines, but to make the existing Guidelines more user friendly.

Mr. Gleiser offered to provide the Board with copies of the City of Richmond Guidelines.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.