

MINUTES
HILTON VILLAGE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2009
HILTON LIBRARY
7:00 P.M.

PRESENT: J. Roger Hamilton, III; Chairman, Connie Keator, Robert Saunders, Sandra Dekker

ABSENT: Katie Stodghill, Douglas Nunnally, John Wartens

STAFF: Johnnie E. Davis, Planner-Planning Services

(1) Mr. Hamilton welcomed Ms. Sandra Dekker to the board. He called the meeting to order, and thanked the audience for attending the meeting.

(A) Application No. CA-09-1525 – Jenniemay Brown, 96 Main Street, requests a 35”- 0” x 30” – 0” projecting sign to read: “Retro - Plaza – Int’l”.

Ms. Brown showed the board the sign that she wanted to use. Ms. Keator asked if she had the requested plot plan. Ms. Brown responded yes, and submitted a drawing to the board.

Mr. Hamilton asked Mr. Davis if the sign was too large for the space.

Mr. Davis replied the sign is less than 12 square feet; however, the Department of Codes Compliance will have to give the applicant the final approval on where the sign can be located. He said the sign will have to meet a height requirement, and it cannot overhang the City’s right-of-way.

Mr. Saunders asked how far the sign would extend out towards the sidewalk.

Ms. Brown said the sign does not go out to the sidewalk. She said it would overhang the flowerbed.

Ms. Dekker said the sign is not as large as some of the other signs in the area.

Ms. Dekker moved to approve the application as submitted. The motion was seconded by Ms. Keator and approved with a unanimous vote.

- (2) Ms. Keator moved to defer approval of the December 18, 2008 minutes to allow other board members who were at the meeting to be present to vote on the minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dekker and approved with a unanimous vote.
- (3) Mr. Hamilton stated at the last meeting the floor was opened for election of the vice-chairman. He said there were no nominations and the election was deferred to this meeting. Mr. Saunders asked Ms. Keator if she would be interested in the position. Ms. Keator said she would have to decline, mainly due to the reason that the vice-chairman is in a position to move up to chairman. She said she was chairman before, and she does not have the time to devote to the position. Ms. Keator said she would not want to take a position that she knows that she cannot fill. Ms. Keator asked Mr. Saunders if he would be interested in the position. Mr. Saunders replied that he does not have the time. Mr. Hamilton asked if there were any other nominations. There were no other nominations. Mr. Saunders moved that the nominations be deferred to the February 6, 2009 meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Keator and approved with a unanimous vote.
- (4) Ms. Dekker asked about the review of the guidelines. Mr. Hamilton said the board will probably hold the public hearing on the guidelines at next month's meeting. Mr. Davis said it is up to the board if they prefer to hold the public hearing next month; however, the guidelines have to be reviewed within a twelve-month period. He said the guidelines were last reviewed in March of last year. Mr. Hamilton said the board has until March to review the guidelines and he asked the board if they wanted to review them in March or February to give the board time to look over the guidelines to see if there are any issues that might be brought up. Mr. Saunders said there appears to be people in the audience who are here in probable anticipation of the review of the guidelines. He said he thinks that it would be suitable for the board to open the floor to hear if anyone has any concerns or comments. Mr. Hamilton agreed with Mr. Saunders and opened the floor for comments from the public.

Mr. George Insley, 204 Palen Avenue, asked the board if they had considered allowing synthetic slate that is made of rubber or some other synthetic material. He said he saw an episode of This Old House where they used rubber slate. Mr. Insley also asked what does the board intend to do about owners in a duplex when one owner keeps up maintenance on their half of the duplex and the other owner does not. Mr. Insley said he would like to see the board look at windows when reviewing the guidelines. He said at present the board requires windows that are vinyl on the outside and wooden in the inside. Mr. Insley said he would like to see the board consider the use of replacement-vinyl-windows, which would be a cheaper window for the homeowners. Mr. Insley said he

asked a previous board member what did the board intend to do about owners who have houses that have enclosed front porches with jalousie windows or storm windows which were done back in the 50's prior to the board? He said many of those people would like to remove the windows and install a more permanent window. Mr. Insley said the previous board member told him that the board would prefer to see the owner remove the enclosure and bring the porch back to its original. Mr. Insley said he did not think that anyone would be willing to restore the porches. He asked the board to look into that situation.

Ms. Keator said she will address Mr. Insley's first two concerns. She said with regards to his concern about the front porches, that she thinks that the board would have to look at it on a case by case basis. Ms. Keator said she also saw the episode of This Old House about synthetic shingles. She said she saw it during the time when she was trying to decide what type of shingles to use for replacement shingles on the roof of her back porch. Ms. Keator said after seeing the program, she decided to do some research on artificial slate, and based upon her research she decided to use natural slate. She said there are three types of artificial slate that is on the market. Ms. Keator said all three types look very much like genuine slate. She said the problem with artificial slate is that they fade very quickly, usually within a month's time, and after they fade they look worst than asphalt or fiberglass shingles. Ms. Keator said in her opinion, there is not a lot in Hilton that makes it architectural unique; however, she said slate is one of the few things that does make Hilton unique. Mr. Insley said he agreed. Ms. Keator said if you start replacing genuine slate with artificial slate which will possibly fade within a month's time, than you are starting down a very slippery slope. Ms. Keator said with regards to Mr. Insley's concern about windows, the board is not concern about the type of material that is used inside of the window. Ms. Keator said the board's concern is the shadow detail and the depth of the muntins on the exterior of the windows. She said the board wants the windows to look like the original windows. Ms. Keator said the board has approved quite a few vinyl windows. Mr. Insley said he was not aware that the board approves vinyl windows.

Mr. Insley asked what is the board's opinion on solar panels. He asked the board how would they handle a request for that type of installation.

Mr. Hamilton replied that solar technology is still rather expensive, and the board has never had to deal with it; however, he said whenever it comes up the board will have to address it.

Mr. Hamilton asked if there were any more comments from the audience.

A member of the audience said as always parking is a problem.

Mr. Hamilton said you have to keep calling Codes Compliance, and hopefully they will come out and catch them.

A member of the audience said she looked through the Village and there were houses with the grids in between the glass, and that she would like the board to look into it.

Mr. Ron Franklin said he had just recently moved into the Village and he would like to know if someone could look into parking rules in the Village, such as possibly setting some type of bylaws that would limit how many cars that people can have.

Mr. Hamilton said the board address parking in the homeowner's guide, but it does not limit parking. He said on-street parking is first come, first served.

Ms. Dekker said there is not a way to mandate how many cars that someone can have.

Mr. Franklin said he has seen situations where people have left cars parked on the street for six-months.

Ms. Dekker said when you see a car sitting for long periods that you should call Codes Compliance.

Deb Platon said she also has just recently moved to the Village. She asked if there was anything that the board can do to make it easier for people who are inclined to make repairs to their houses and keep their property maintained, and if there was anything that could be done about people who let their property fall into disrepair.

Mr. Hamilton said the only thing that the board could do is to make sure that you have a copy of the guidelines and assist you when you decide to make changes. He said when a house is in disrepair; you have to call Codes Compliance.

Ms. Platon asked what will Codes Compliance do?

Mr. Hamilton said once you call, Codes will have to come out and investigate the violation, and maybe issue a citation.

Ms. Dekker said the violator is suppose to only have a certain amount of time to make the repairs.

Ms. Keator said the way the board is setup, it cannot deal with enforcement. However, she said as homeowners the board has

encouraged Historic Hilton Village Inc. to share things with other homeowners, such as, how they can get things that meet the requirements of the guidelines or how to go about getting tax credits, and other things of that nature.

A member of the audience said as of September an action committee has been started in Historic Hilton Village, Inc. that was setup to deal with just what everyone has been talking about. She said they would like to get a list of preferred contractors for people to use; however, they are not getting any help. She stated everywhere she goes she keeps hearing about what Codes Compliance is not doing. She said she thinks what would be of help would be if Codes Compliance would do a sweep of the Village as they did a few years ago. She said she knows that the City of Norfolk has a program where it goes in and targets certain neighborhoods to assist the homeowners with enforcement. She said that H.H.V. cannot do it by themselves.

Ms. Dekker said she thinks that we need to go to City Council, and get them to help us with this problem, and maybe get them to direct us to the right place.

The audience member said that she agrees with Ms. Dekker. She said there are a lot of homeowners which are wonderful about keeping up their property, but there is also a lot of homeowners that are not taking care of their property.

Mr. Saunders asked staff if the City had a similar program. Mr. Davis said that the Village has a new Codes Compliance Inspector, and that it was his understanding that he is planning in the spring to go block by block and cite everyone whose house is in need of painting. He said at this particular time, his primary concern would be painting. Mr. Davis said although he will not be looking for every possible violation that may exist, that does not mean that other violations may not come to his attention, such as, rotted wood, or some other type of violation.

Mr. Insley said he worked on a house in the Southeast Community for 7 months, and he noticed that Codes came around and checked on things periodically. He said in his opinion, this part of the City gets more service than the people in the Southeast Community or the North End.

Mr. Hamilton said the discussion seemed to be more towards Codes Compliance, and not the guidelines. He said the board does not have anything to do with enforcement. He asked if there were any more comments concerning the guidelines.

Ms. Dekker asked if the board was going to set a definite time when the board will hold the public hearing so that there will be sufficient time for notification of the people who want to attend. Mr. Hamilton said the board could hold the public hearing next month. Mr. Davis asked if that is what the board wanted to do. He said the board has a twelve-month period where the guidelines will have to be reviewed again. He said the board has received suggestions from the homeowners at this meeting, and the board has not had a chance to look at the guidelines to see if there is anything that it might want to bring to the public's attention. He said it looks like March might be a good month to hold the public hearing; however, if the board feels comfortable enough to move forward with the public hearing than he could go on and schedule it for next month. Ms. Dekker said if the board waits until March that would give enough time to notify everyone in the Village who might want to bring suggestions. Mr. Hamilton said it may be better for the board to discuss the guidelines next month, and hold the public hearing in March. The board agreed.

Mr. Hamilton said that is the last item on the agenda, and he asked if there was a motion to adjourned the meeting. Mr. Saunders moved for adjournment. The motion was seconded by Ms. Keator and approved with a unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Johnnie E. Davis
Planner - Planning Services

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