

COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

April 24, 2014

**Members Present**

Susan Stilwell  
Sarah Latham  
Robert Weir  
Richard Morris  
Michael Nicholas

**Members Absent**

Robin Crews

**Staff**

Renee Burton  
Scott Holtry  
Christy Taylor  
Clarke Whitfield

Chairman Stilwell called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

**ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING**

1. *Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness PLCAR201400087, filed by Rick Morris, to complete the following at 878 Main Street:*
  - *Addition of cast iron railing system to rear patio*
  - *Cover rear patio with slate roof to match front porch*
  - *Complete front side porch with slate tiles to match front porch*

Open the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of the request was Mr. Richard Morris. This is apparently something they already had approved before my time and I have sort of taken over the whole project. The covered section will look very similar to the side porch and of course the other portion of it is to install slate on the side porch that still has tar paper on it.

Close the Public Hearing.

Mr. Morris read a conflict of interest statement.

**Mrs. Latham made a motion to approve the request as submitted. Mr. Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 3-0-1 vote (Mr. Morris Abstained).**

2. *Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness PLCAR201400088, filed by Richard Holbrook to install 14 vinyl replacement windows on the southwest elevation at 1045 Main Street.*

Open the Public Hearing.

No one was present to speak.

Close the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Latham stated given this is the exact same request as I understand it as last year and nothing has changed nor has he offered to replace the vinyl windows with appropriate material, I move to deny a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Mr. Nicholas stated I will second the motion, but I think we need to state for the record why and go through this application even though the applicant is not here. Going off of his application that he submitted.

Mr. Nicholas read the applicant's request.

Mr. Nicholas stated I think we then need to look at the Design Guidelines that bind us from City Council. Looking at the guidelines, specifically number two the last bullet point. I think it is the applicant's burden to show why a Certificate of Appropriateness should be granted when on the face of the application it would appear to go against the Design Guidelines. Looking throughout the application, I see no assertion or evidence or anything in support of the contention that it would not be feasible to install anything that would be appropriate. The applicant puts nothing forward to show that the aesthetics of the vinyl windows, that he proposes, would resemble historical wood windows, which would give us an avenue to approve it. He does not submit anything that there would be a particular hardship or cost a substantial amount of money. I think when we look at the application, as presented at this hearing, he does not carry his burden and should be denied.

Mr. Morris asked does this being a non-contributing structure have any significance?

Mrs. Latham responded not according to current guidelines. It is something that we briefly discussed in the wake of this particular issue but the guidelines have not been changed. There was an offer by Allison Platt to update the guidelines and that could potentially take into account non-contributing structures, but that has not happened. My understanding is that it makes no difference that it is a non-contributing structure. It was not going back like with like. This building was constructed with wood windows and those were removed to put in the vinyl windows.

Mrs. Stilwell stated they were destroyed.

Mrs. Latham stated they were discarded and reports say that they were not in bad shape. They could have been restored.

Mr. Morris asked are these GBGs?

Mrs. Burton responded yes.

Mr. Morris stated a simple solution could be to, we don't necessarily disallow clad windows. In other words, if he put true divided light and just replaced the sash, wouldn't that be an alternative for him?

Mr. Nicholas responded I think we are getting into the weeds. That could be an alternative, but he has got to get here to present it. It is not our job to come up with solutions for him.

Mrs. Latham stated we had discussed on occasions some compromises that might be allowable but given that Mr. Holbrook didn't bother to show up to discuss it with us, I agree with Michael. It is not our job to find a solution for him. If this was important to him, he could have made time to show up and discuss it with us.

Mr. Morris stated I agree but is that something we should present to him as a possibility?

Mrs. Latham responded this is the forum in which these things are presented. He wants to keep the windows that are already in there.

Mrs. Burton stated your other option would be to table this request to give him an opportunity to come next time.

Mr. Nicholas asked was he notified of the hearing?

Mrs. Burton responded yes, but you are within your right to table the item if you want to give him a chance to come next month.

Mr. Morris stated I am just wondering if we should not be so hostile toward him.

Mr. Whitfield stated I don't think applying the rules is hostile.

Mr. Morris stated if we tabled this and gave him one more chance to look at alternatives to total replacements maybe we could get him in here to resolve this rather than deny it.

Mr. Nicholas stated I disagree and here is why. We judge the applications that come before us on the basis of that application. Forget the history. Don't look at any of the history that has to do with this application. I can't because I wasn't on the Board when this was presented. Purely on the basis of the application presented it fails, in my opinion. We do not as a matter of practice table things without the applicant's request or have sessions with me to figure out how their applications could be made better. That is not what we do. That is not our job, so I respectfully disagree.

Mr. Morris stated a lot of times before if an applicant does not show up, a lot of times they do table it to give them one more chance to get there.

Mrs. Stilwell asked if we table it, what happens?

Mr. Whitfield responded it will be brought to the next meeting.

Mrs. Latham asked did Mr. Holbrook contact you at any point today to say that he had some emergency and would be unable to make it?

Mrs. Burton responded I have not heard from Mr. Holbrook today.

Mrs. Latham stated had he called and stated that he was unable to be here, I would certainly be in favor of tabling it. In the absence of that, I agree with Mr. Nicholas.

**Mrs. Latham made a motion to deny the request. Mr. Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 3-1 vote.**

3. *Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness PLCAR201400086, filed by Oadie Keen, Jr. to complete the following at 903 Green Street:*

- *Remove 3.5" t&g decking on front porch and replace it with 5.5" t&g decking.*
- *Remove pipe railings on front porch and replace them with wooden hand rails and spindles. Spindles will match existing design, but will be more narrow.*
- *Remove existing 2'x6' front steps and replace them with 2'x12'*
- *Add wooden column to right side of front steps*
- *Replace existing mismatched handrails and spindles on rear deck with 2x2 pickets with a 5 ¼ top plate.*

Open the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of the request was Mr. Oadie Keen, Sr. Instead of replacing one column, we would like to replace all of them with the same kind.

Mrs. Latham stated so instead of modifying one, you will be replacing all of the columns so they will match.

Mr. Keen stated that is right.

Mr. Nicholas asked are the columns wood?

Mr. Keen responded yes and the same size.

Mr. Morris stated those columns have a different profile. How many are mismatched?

Mr. Keen responded the three that are up there are the same thing.

Mr. Morris asked so you have one that is mismatched?

Mr. Keen responded no, she wants to add one of the right side of the steps; so she wanted to replace all of them. She wants to replace the other three, so there will be a total of four. It was just a post for the railings there.

Mrs. Stilwell stated look at the picture in your packet. There was a column probably there that was cut off where the steps are. There is a missing column.

Mrs. Latham asked do you know what year this house was built?

Mr. Keen responded no I don't.

Mr. Morris stated unless you have evidence that there was one there; I think it would throw it off. I think it was designed this way purposely.

There was some discussion about the architectural design of the house and if the guidelines would allow for an external change to the architectural design of the home.

Mr. Weir arrived at 3:50 p.m.

Mrs. Latham stated I think we have one other issue. I have no problem with replacing the front porch tongue and groove. That obviously needs doing and the steps to widen them because if they are only 6" deep, that is dangerous.

Mr. Morris asked your tread is only 6" deep?

Mr. Keen responded 12". Right now it is 5 ¼, two of them on each step. It is two 5 ¼" wide, but they are 12" steps.

Mr. Morris asked so you are trying to do what?

Mrs. Stilwell responded they are trying to extend it to 12'.

Mrs. Latham stated they want 12' wide steps instead of 6' wide steps.

Mr. Keen stated it will still be the same width. We are just going to put a 2x12" down so you will have the same 12" steps like before.

Mr. Morris stated so you will have the same riser and the same tread.

Mr. Keen stated it just won't be two 5 ¼" boards there, because that won't match. The steps will be 2x12" boards, because right now it is 12" steps but there are two boards to do it.

Mrs. Latham stated so instead of having double boards making the treads you will have single boards for the tread. I don't have any problem with that.

There was further discussion about the porch steps and decking boards.

Mrs. Latham stated I want to bring up the iron handrail. I know she would like to go with the spindles and everything similar to the porch; however, the iron pipe is weird. It looks like plumbing pipe. I would say that this iron rail is the original rail to the house. It would be a real dramatic change to go to something different.

Mr. Nicholas stated we have no evidence that this was original to the house.

There was discussion about materials for the hand rail and what would be historically appropriate.

Close the Public Hearing.

Mr. Morris stated the posts are structurally ok. They just look bad at the base. My solution to that is to cap it with a 1x10 or whatever covers that.

Mrs. Latham asked are we talking about the columns?

Mr. Morris responded yes.

**Mr. Nicholas made a motion to approve the removal of 3.5" t&g decking on front porch and replace it with 5.5" t&g decking. Mrs. Latham seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

**Mrs. Latham made a motion to table the removal of pipe railings on the front porch. Mr. Morris seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-1 vote.**

**Mr. Nicholas made a motion to approve the removal of existing front steps and replace with 2 1x6' boards. Mrs. Latham seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

**Mr. Morris made a motion to deny the addition of wooden column to the right side of the front steps. Mrs. Latham seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 3-2 vote.**

**Mrs. Latham made a motion to approve the replacement of existing mismatched handrails and spindles on rear deck with 2x2 pickets with a 5 ¼ top plate. Mr. Weir seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINTUES**

Mrs. Stilwell made a correction to the minutes.

**Mr. Nicholas made a motion to approve the March 27, 2014 minutes as amended. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.**

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs. Burton stated we will have a tabled case for next month and we do have another case that has been submitted.

Mrs. Stilwell asked which house?

Mrs. Burton responded Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church is putting in a new door.

Mrs. Stilwell stated at 5:30 today at the Langhorn House is the opening of the Gibson Girl exhibit.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

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Approved