

COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

JULY 23, 2020

Members Present

Michael Nicholas
Robert Stowe
Robert Weir
Robin Crews
Susan Stilwell
Jeffrey Bond

Members Absent

Staff

Ken Gillie
Lisa Jones
Ryan Dodson

Ms. Crews called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

Request PLCAR20200000146 filed by, Mike Spangler, requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a 6' dog-ear style wood privacy fence along the rear property line at 165 Holbrook Avenue. This was approved in 2016, but never undertaken.

Mrs. Crews opened the Public Hearing.

Present to speak on behalf of this request was Mr. Mike Spangler, owner of 165 Holbrook Avenue. Mr. Spangler stated in 2016, I think it was around May, if I'm not mistaken we all sat here that day or most of us did anyhow, and discussed this particular issue. I have a problem within my property, as do my neighbors in that, we have a one-way alley or a one-entrance alleyway from the back of us, which is only, mildly maintained by the City. For the most part forgotten by almost everybody except for those of us that live on that alley that occasionally use it for driving and parking in the rear yards. Because we have had public access alleyways is considered my back yard is considered by the CAR to be a front yard and subsequently falls under the doctrine of the front yard restrictions. This is somewhat frustrating but for the most part it has been livable and it has been no big deal. Back in 2016 when I applied for this variance, I was having problems with security issues. I had several thieves and subsequently I had asked for the fence to be installed. Since then I haven't had anything that I can put my fingers on, a few things have turned up missing but I don't know whether it was because someone came on the property or because one of my guys came and picked it up and simply forgot to return it. In any case, we started to put the fence back up again, assuming that the variance that I received in 2016 was still valid. The building department sent someone out on another situation, looked at one of the other buildings in the back of the facility, noted the construction, and asked me if I had proper

permitting. I then contacted Beth Harrington with the building department who told me that the City of Danville does not require a fencing permit for installation. However, obviously the CAR does and because the CAR permit or variance that has been issued 2016 apparently had expired at the end of 2016 and therefore was not valid in 2020. What I am here for today is to get a re-variance or reissuance of that original variance so I can go ahead and complete the construction of fencing.

Ms. Crews stated I did want to note for the minutes that Jeff Bond, Commissioner has joined the meeting at 3:32 p.m.

Mr. Spangler stated the only people that we have had out are the building department and they have already seen the construction so far and their only worry is that we get the CAR approval. That is their only regard.

Mr. Gillie stated did you do work to your stairs as well?

Mr. Spangler stated the stairs?

Mr. Gillie stated yes.

Mr. Spangler stated the stairs were originally removed back in 2017 or 2016. That was something also that went through the CAR that was approved.

Mr. Gillie stated did you change them again?

Mr. Spangler stated you may be thinking of 151 Holbrook that is three houses down. They have had a collapsed on the stair system and I'm involved in the repair work. The stairs on the rear of 165 Holbrook are still there. The stairs that are on the front porch were removed. Those were there primarily before I bought the house because it had been set up in a quad-plex at that point in time and I had it reduced back down to a single-family dwelling. The stairs were removed and it was brought before the CAR and it was approved.

Mr. Stowe stated that I think Mr. Gillie is referring to the front steps.

Mr. Spangler stated oh the front steps. Back before I was familiar with the CAR activities, the front steps had been old concrete that was falling apart and breaking on the bottom first two. They were replaced with wood because it was a fast correction that would still work within what I considered in a way of the construction methods practiced in the late 1800's. We had a problem with the CAR in regards to the authenticity of the construction or maybe they wanted to maintain the 1979 photograph over what was originally built. It was required that I replace them with like material. Over the last several years those wooden steps have degraded to a point where they were actually

rotting, falling apart and recently I had them replaced to brick, which is more in line with the cement in 1979.

Mr. Gillie stated but you haven't asked for approval for that.

Mr. Spangler stated no. I assume since it was like for like for all intents and purposes it would work just fine. That was the idea behind it, because when you change things you come in and ask for approval.

Mr. Gillie stated concrete for concrete is like for like, but concrete for brick is not.

Mr. Spangler stated we may end of having to come back before the Board again. The problem is the house was not originally built with concrete, it was built with brick. The concrete was poured in the early 30's of 1900's and subsequently it shows I guess in 1979 photographs as being concrete steps opposed to brick steps that were on there originally. I don't have any way of proving this because obviously I don't have photographs from 1879 when the house was built. All I can tell you is that concrete didn't exist in residential structures in 1879 and subsequently it couldn't have been built with concrete back then residential structures anyway. Obviously, the Hoover dam was built, but residential structures were not using it. That is outside the point right now, what we are looking at is the fencing. If you guys, want me to come back again for the front steps, I would be more than happy to come back.

Mr. Gillie stated we need you to take care of that as well. I was pointing that out and I was looking at all of the things that we need to make sure that we got in front of the board.

Mr. Nicholas stated is this the same one that we approved back in 2016?

Mr. Gillie stated yes, with the fence in the back.

Mr. Nicholas stated what is the issue?

Mr. Gillie stated because they expire after a year.

Ms. Crews stated I did want to note for the minutes that Michael Nicholas, Commissioner has joined the meeting at 3:37 p.m.

Mrs. Crews closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Nicholas made a motion to approve the citing 2016 approval and that it is the same application. Ms. Stilwell seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0- vote.

APPROVAL OF THE MINTUES

Mr. Nicholas made a motion to approve the June 30, 2020 minutes. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

Renee Burton stated The Virginia Department of Historic Resources has requested comments for the National Register nominations of the Schoolfield Historic District. I have given you a map as well as kind of a shorter version of this packet. (please see letter and map attached) After discussion with the Board members and Ms. Burton they made a motion.

Ms. Stilwell made a motion we acknowledge and support the Department of Historic Resources in their actually listing of this on the National Register of Historic Places that had been deemed eligible since the early 90's, this is an excellent move for the future of Schoolfield and we are in favor as a Board. Mr. Stowe seconded the motion. The motion was defeated by a 3-3 vote.

Mr. Nicholas made a motion to hear Request PLCAR20200000152. Mr. Bond seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Nicholas made a motion to hear Request PLCAR20200000151. Ms. Stilwell seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Request PLCAR20200000152 filed by, Clyde Wrenn at 234 West Main Street, requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a Central Air System, Landscape dimensions 32" wide by 26" tall by 8" depth.

Ms. Crews opened the Public Hearing.

Present to speak on behalf of this request by Clyde Wrenn was Ms. Luanne Long, both owners of 165 Holbrook Avenue. Ms. Long stated we have just bought 234 West Main I know most of you know exactly which building it is or structure. The one that you can see the entire side of the house with the rustic out chain link fence and the air conditioner units are hanging out the window. We are trying to fix all that and we have done quite a bit of work on the inside of the house. We can't get to things like the painting and my kitchen, which is supposed to go in next week. We were turned down when Peter came on Monday to get the permit for the AC units and the electrical support for those units. Peter said we can't do it and I didn't understand why. Then we found out that we were in the Historic District and my realtor did not tell us that. We were totally unaware that we were in the Historic District. Be that as it may, where we are at the moment is we have set the actual box and we are using mini split one unit on the outside which actually feeds five units on the inside of the house. We set that in the only place that we have been told we can set it, because if it set on the other side of the

house the reasoning is logical we couldn't put it anywhere else. Therefore, they put it where they could put the unit and what we would like to do is go live with that unit. We would like to get those air condition units out of the windows, my painters are coming Monday for the inside, they are going to be painting, and I get a new kitchen and so forth. The window air condition units are inefficient and it is hot in there. We have a lot of construction going on in the inside of the house. What we would also like to do, we do not have a plan for this yet, and we will resubmit the application once we get a plan for it. When it cools down a little bit we would like to landscape right in front of that horrible chain link fence that makes it look like an institution. We would like to get some kind of proposal from Newton Ray and some people that know how to do that sort of thing well. We would like permission please. We can't move in until we have AC. I would like to move in, get a new kitchen, and have it painted certainly before September, if possible. I'm here today to ask permission please follow forward with the AC unit going live where it is at the moment.

Ms. Stilwell stated is this the little mini split?

Ms. Long stated yes, that is the only thing that is there.

Ms. Stilwell stated I live right across the street and I am very familiar with that. It was a lot that was butchered beyond butchering when they put in Central Boulevard. They couldn't have a drive way and they couldn't park in the front. They wouldn't let me park in front of my house or that whole block. It was the biggest mess that you have ever seen.

Mr. Bond stated any plans for the fence itself?

Ms. Long stated I didn't realize or really understand who the fence actually belongs to. We are assuming that it belongs to us. The property stakes are about 2 or 3 feet on the street side and we are assuming that it is ours. If you have any suggestions that might actually be effective then we would love to hear it other than tearing it out. I know we will have to submit more plans there are several things that we could do. It is awful and it reminds us of an institution.

Mr. Bond stated the reason I was asking, with the condenser outside, if you are going to put some landscaping or do something to the fence that would offer some screening to the unit itself. I know it will have to stay a certain distance from the unit itself.

Mr. Nicholas stated my concern and this is one of the dangers for taking it up early, and letting staff review, what is the exact request that you are asking us to approve today?

Ms. Long stated when Peter came to pull the permit last Monday. He was going to pull the permit for the AC as well as the electrical support for the AC. He was told that we

could not do that. He filled out the application and he submitted the application for \$26.00 and photographs on Monday. They told us that we would have to wait until August 27 because we had missed the deadline. We didn't even realize that we were in a Historic District.

Mr. Nicholas stated my issue is what are you asking us to approve?

Ms. Long stated please let us go live with our air conditioning system.

Ms. Stilwell stated they have already put it in.

Mr. Gillie stated this is asking for forgiveness not permission.

Mr. Nicholas stated you are asking us to approve the unit?

Ms. Long stated and to take out the window units.

Mr. Nicholas stated that's it and that's the extent of your request to approve this mini split and remove the window unit. Does staff object?

Mr. Gillie stated staff's hasn't looked at it and I'm sorry I am a one man operation.

Mr. Nicholas stated no problem and I know we added it extra.

Mr. Gillie stated staff has no comment.

Mr. Bond stated come on wing it.

Mr. Gillie stated staff does not wing it, I'm sorry.

Mr. Weir stated if I am right this does not meet the guidelines and we go through the two-step process.

Ms. Crews closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Nicholas made a motion that the request does not meet the Historic guidelines. Ms. Stilwell seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

Mr. Nicholas made a motion that we approve the application for the installation of the split ac unit will not be detrimental to the aesthetic body of the property within the district. Ms. Stilwell seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

Request PLCAR20200000151 filed by, Keisha L. Corbett, requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness at 864 Pine Street to Removal of the window on the front of the accessory structure and placing wood siding to match the existing

wood sliding. The front window on the accessory building does not match any of the other windows. This window does not appear to be an original window of the accessory structure. I am working with Mr. Ron Sexton in Halifax that will be manufacturing the replacement wood siding for this area and other areas throughout the exterior of this home.

Present to speak on behalf of this request was Ms. Keisha Corbett, owner of 864 Pine Street. I'm sorry that I am not prepared for today and I was just coming to see what was going on because I'm not here very often. Some faces look new from the last time that I was here, which was about two years ago. I did a lot of work on it the first two years and just going into the third year, and I just have received approval from the bank to do a large reconstruction loan. What I am asking for today and the reason that I am working on the back of the house first, is to do that with my own money and show them what I am going to do with that. In the mean time when a lot of things are going under contract and people are moving into the City, maybe I could get what I wanted three years ago. I sent the pictures in and I'm sorry I don't have anything to pass out to you. The main thing is on the accessory structure in the back there is four large windows that were on there when it was built, and there is a very small window that is in-between the two doors that are on the accessory structure in the back that has two doors on it. What I am asking is to be able to put in Pella windows in the back. The reason why I am asking for this is. I had someone from the Roanoke Division of Pella windows come out and take a look at all the windows. I didn't even notice this until it was pointed out to me that none of the windows in the house match. When I am looking at every window, there may be grid panes at the top and no paint at the bottom. Then the next window is the opposite and then the next window has no grids and nothing looks the same.

Ms. Stilwell stated how about windowpane configuration, which is what, is important about a window.

Ms. Corbett stated none of them are the same and there is not one of them that are the same out of the four windows.

Ms. Stilwell stated are they double hung.

Ms. Corbett stated they are double hung, but the top grid may be the pane and then the bottom is clear and on the next window, the top is clear and the bottom is grid, then the next window has no grid on the top or the bottom. Even inside of the home, the wooding around, none of it matches. There is one that looks like from me talking to the Pella person that does the Historical properties in different places like Lynchburg he has helped with them. We have kind of geared it to one window in there that looks like it that's exactly what it looked like when the place was built. I was going to do everything by the trend of that window. I'm asking for the Pella windows which are going to be vinyl

which I know is not exactly right for the window that I have. I'm only asking for this, because it is very hard for me to find someone that knows how to do this in Danville. I've been working and working with people for a long time and I really am trying to get this project up started. If I can get a vinyl window, that it is going to have the grids from the street look like a wooden window and everything around the window is going to be wooden. The window is going to be vinyl and it is going to look like a pocket style window with the appropriate raise that will look like a wooden window. I'm just asking for like some help on that, because I don't want to wait. I'm going to be honest, I want it to look nice, and it needs to be sealed. There are not a lot of people in this City that are willing to do the labor work to get these windows fixed.

Ms. Stilwell stated have you talked to Fred and Larry Meder?

Ms. Corbett stated I have talked to them and he has helped me get the person to do the siding on the side of the house. He has a ton of projects that he is working on and I'm just trying to get this project going. To be honest and what my understanding is, we are all concerned about what you can see from the street, correct?

Mr. Nicholas stated it is what you can see from the public right away or street alley.

Ms. Corbett stated the only window that you can see and you have to be literally walking by foot to see it, is the window that is on the right side of the house. Everything is covered from the trees, shrubs, and everything else around it.

Mr. Nicholas stated so vinyl, the reason that I'm chuckling, it's not you or your application. It is because we have had many battled of the vinyl paths. Vinyl is expressly a no according to the guidelines and the fights that we have had in the past. Where vinyl has been approved in the past, is that two-step vote process? Where when you look at it from the public right away you can't tell it is vinyl and it looks aesthetically as though it is historically appropriate.

Ms. Stilwell stated do these windows clip in.

Ms. Corbett stated it is described to me as a pocket. Basically, it slides out and the window slides in. I have the pictures and I can come back next time, if you need more time.

Mr. Nicholas stated my hesitation on this is not that I don't want you to do it to save the money to do it that way. I just would need to see it, because we already know the material doesn't meet the guidelines. It all comes down to the look and it sounds like you are going to make it look as though it is properly restored as aesthetic.

Ms. Corbett stated yes.

Mr. Nicholas stated for me to vote for it I would have to see it that.

Ms. Corbett stated one last question. With what I am asking to do, if I need to bring the actual window to you, I can. Because he had told me that he would be willing to bring me the window that we would put in because he had used this window in Lynchburg and Roanoke with some properties there.

Mr. Nicholas stated if you can't do that then bring a picture.

Mr. Bond stated pictures of the house too.

Ms. Corbett stated all of that is in the packet that you will get for the next meeting.

Mr. Nicholas made a motion to move for continuation of this application to the next regular scheduled meeting. Ms. Stilwell seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Corbett stated I just have one quick question. When you mentioned about the stairs on the property on Holbrook, the stairs are gone on the front of the main house at 864 Pine Street, and one reason is because the beavers have dug and it has crumbled. It has been taken away. I have asked Ms. Burton, whom I talk to right frequently about what I could replace them with. I got a little confused, because I was told that I could put kind of back what I wanted, but I just want to know what is right. I don't want to have one thing in my mind that I'm doing because down the street another house put wood steps up but mine were like cinder blocks in like concrete over top that they made smooth. I just want to know the right thing because no matter what I put down, I'm supposed to be asking for permission. Literally, I have to put back and I don't really know what those steps were. It looks as if someone had built it not brick, and it looks as if someone had built concrete, and smoothed it and just painted over it.

Mr. Nicholas stated that guy in the blue shirt you ask him. If he says you do need to ask then you will need us. If you do ask and his answer is crazy and way too expensive, then you come to us.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:12 p.m.

Approved