

**MINUTES – HARB Rescheduled Meeting
February 11, 2021**

MINUTES

**HARRISBURG ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
RESCHEDULED MEETING
February 11, 2021
VIRTUAL MEETING ON ZOOM PLATFORM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trina Gribble, Chair
Jeremiah Chamberlin, Vice Chair
Anne Montgomery, Assistant Codes Administrator (6:18PM)
Kali Tennis
April Rucker
Camille Bennett (Arrived 6:09PM)

MEMBERS ABSENT: N/A

STAFF PRESENT: Frank Grumbine, Historic Preservation Specialist and Archivist
Isaac Gaylord, Deputy City Solicitor

OTHERS PRESENT: William Sturges, City Resident
Donna Faith & Caty Carter, Riverview Manor
David & Elaine Bomberger-Schmotzer, 110 Boas Street

CALL TO ORDER: 6:07 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ms. Tennis moved, and Ms. Rucker seconded the motion to Approve the January 4th minutes. The Board approved the motion to Approve the minutes from the January meeting by unanimous vote (4-0).

OLD BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. 1525 North Front Street, filed by Sheri Naser, to install a new twenty-foot streetlight in the existing parking lot.**

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be Approved with the following condition(s):

1. The newly installed LED light shall not have a luminosity so great that it impacts the well-being of adjacent neighbors or has a negative impact on their properties. The light must be shielded so that it does not shine into neighboring windows and doors.

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The case was represented by Donna Faith and Caty Carter, 1525 North Front Street Harrisburg, PA 17102 (aka “the Applicant”).

Ms. Tennis stated that she has a conflict of interest in this case and is recusing herself from discussion and will not be voting on the matter.

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicant had anything to add to the proposal. The Applicant stated that the reason for the new light pole is for security purposes as they have had a couple criminal issues with vehicular break-ins.

Mrs. Gribble opened the discussion for public comment. William Sturges of 1518 North 2nd Street stated that he feels that the new light pole will adversely impact their quality of life as it will shine into their bedroom window, back patio, and may impact resale value of the property.

Mrs. Gribble discussed that there are a variety of types of light that may be used to ensure security. Mrs. Gribble asked the Applicants if there has been a light study performed. The Applicants stated that there has not been a study performed. Mrs. Gribble asked if there has been a consideration for shorter poles. The Applicants stated that there are currently flood lights on the building and stated that they require a taller light so that there is additional light at night for the parking lot and therefore they did not consider shorter poles as they are not as effective.

Mr. Chamberlin stated that he feels the Board only has purview over the design and location of the light-pole itself. Mrs. Gribble stated that the luminosity of the light itself may impact the neighborhood and the district and that it is worth questioning. Mrs. Bennett stated that she feels that the new lighting may be under HARB’s purview.

Mr. Gaylord stated that the aesthetic aspects of the light-pole are within HARB’s purview, but the lumens and directionality of the light is not under HARB’s purview. Mrs. Gribble stated that there is a condition which reflects the directionality of the light. Mr. Gaylord stated that the condition is not enforceable, but the applicant can agree to the proposed condition if they want. Ms. Montgomery stated that the Planning Director reviewed the location of the light-pole and did not have an issue with it.

Discussion ensued about alternative light fixtures and how the proposal may impact neighboring properties.

Ms. Bennett moved; Ms. Rucker seconded the motion to Approve with Conditions. The motion was adopted with a majority vote (4-1).

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2. 110 Boas Street, filed by David Bomberger-Schmotzer, to remove an existing historic slate roof to install asphalt architectural shingles.

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be Denied for the following reason(s):

1. The Secretary of Interior Standards state “replacing an entire roof feature when repair of the historic roofing materials and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing components are feasible” is not recommended.
2. The Secretary of Interior Standards state that “removing a feature of the roof that is unrepairable and not replacing it, or replace it with a new roof feature that does not match” and that “using a substitute material for the replacement that does not convey the same appearance of the roof covering...” is not recommended. Therefore, the removal of an historic slate roof to install asphalt shingles is not recommended.
3. Synthetic slate is an affordable alternative to real slate while retaining the appearance and texture of slate. The HARB has previously approved the use of synthetic slate shingles on other historic slate roofs in municipal historic districts.
4. The Harrisburg Historic District Guidelines state that the removal of historic roofing materials to install asphalt shingles is not recommended.

The case was represented by David & Elaine Bomberger-Schmotzer, 110 Boas Street Harrisburg PA 17102 (aka “the Applicant”).

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicant had anything to add to the proposal. The Applicant stated that they purchased the house last year and the neighbors have already replaced their slate roof with asphalt shingles about ten years ago. The Applicant stated that they have received different quotes for different materials and that there are very steep differences between asphalt, synthetic slate, and real slate. The Applicant further stated that there are active roof leaks in the home and planned on replacing the roof immediately after moving in.

Mrs. Tennis asked if she could make a motion to approve the proposal. Mrs. Gribble stated that she would like to discuss the issue more in depth.

Mr. Chamberlin asked if the applicants received quotes for synthetic slate. The Applicants stated that they got quotes between 17-21K and received quotes from several different businesses. The Applicants stated that they moved to the neighborhood because of its historical integrity. The Applicant stated that the entire roof needs to be replaced based on recommendations from contractors.

Mr. Chamberlin asked Mr. Grumbine if he had done a site visit to review the property. Mr. Grumbine stated that he visited the property. Mr. Chamberlin asked if the other contiguous rowhouses have had their slate roofs removed. Mr. Grumbine stated that he believes at least two of them have had their original slate roofs removed to have asphalt roofs installed.

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Mrs. Gribble discussed the importance of maintaining the historical integrity of the neighborhood and the purpose of HARB. Mrs. Tennis stated that the context of that the home is residential housing stock and it is unreasonable to expect homeowners to use expensive materials and that she feels strongly about accepting the proposal. Mr. Chamberlin stated that he is upset that the other houses have had asphalt roofs installed without approval. Mr. Chamberlin stated that the current Board has not approved the removal of slate to install asphalt shingles and has only approved the use of synthetic slate. Ms. Tennis stated that she does not want to set a precedent that makes historic districts cost prohibitive. Mrs. Gribble stated that the reasonable alternative is synthetic slate.

Ms. Tennis asked what the difference is for the price per square foot. The Applicant stated that he is unsure. Mr. Chamberlin stated that asphalt shingles are about \$6 per square foot, synthetic slate is about \$9 per square foot, and real slate is between \$9-16 per square foot. Mr. Chamberlin stated that installation cost for real slate is much higher whereas the installation cost difference is minimal between synthetic slate and asphalt shingles. Mrs. Montgomery stated that the lifespan of synthetic slate is much longer than asphalt shingles. Mrs. Rucker stated that their roof needs replaced as soon as possible and the longer it takes the more damage that will occur.

Mr. Chamberlin stated that the house was purchased with a known issue with the roof and that such an issue should have been factored into the purchase price. The Applicant stated that the issue was known and was factored into the purchase price and assumed that since their immediate neighbors have asphalt roofs, that they could install the same. The Applicant stated that they would not have purchased the house if they knew the roof would have to be replaced in-kind. Mrs. Rucker stated that the agent who sold the house knew that it would have to be replaced in-kind due to its location within a municipal historic district. Mrs. Rucker stated that the agent was likely fully aware of the historic district regulations. The Applicant stated that they contacted a roofing company before purchasing the home regarding the roof and the roofing company told them that there should not be an issue with replacing the roof. Mr. Grumbine stated that roofing companies do not have purview over defining historic district regulations.

Mr. Chamberlin moved; Mrs. Gribble seconded the motion to Deny. The motion was adopted with a majority vote with Mrs. Rucker abstaining (4-1).

OTHER BUSINESS:

1 Discussion on historic district guidelines.

Mr. Grumbine described the progress he has made on the new historic district design guidelines. Mr. Grumbine stated that he about half way done with editing the document and should be publicly available by the end of the month. Mr. Grumbine also stated that the public webinars for the new guidelines will be on March 11th and 18th for the public to comment on the document. Mr. Grumbine stated that he also recently launched the new historic preservation webpage and will use the webpage to educate and communicate with the public regarding the City's historic preservation program.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:18 PM

Mr. Chamberlin moved, and Ms. Rucker seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion was adopted by unanimous vote (6-0) and the meeting adjourned at 7:18 PM.