

**MINUTES – HARB Regular Meeting  
March 2, 2020**

**MINUTES**

**HARRISBURG ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
March 2, 2020  
THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CITY GOVERNMENT CENTER  
PUBLIC SAFETY AUDITORIUM, ROOM 213**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** AJ Jordan  
Trina Gribble, Vice Chair  
Anne Montgomery, Assistant Codes Administrator  
Neil Heffelfinger  
Jeremiah Chamberlin  
April Rucker

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Camille Bennett

**STAFF PRESENT:** Frank Grumbine, Historic Preservation Specialist and Archivist  
Tiffanie Baldock, Senior Deputy City Solicitor

**OTHERS PRESENT:** See attendance signature sheet

**CALL TO ORDER:** 6:02 PM

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mrs. Montgomery moved, and Mrs. Bennett seconded the motion to Approve the February 3<sup>rd</sup> minutes. The Board approved the motion to Approve minutes from the October meeting by unanimous vote (6-0).

**OLD BUSINESS:** N/A

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1 **109 Washington Street, filed by Michael Della Porta, to replace an aluminum handrail with a wooden handrail system on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor balcony.**

There was no representative present for this case.

Mrs. Gribble moved to table, Mr. Chamberlin seconded the motion to table the case. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (6-0).

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**2 912 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, filed by Michael Lam, to install cementitious fiberboard, install new window openings, and reconfigure fenestrations.**

Mr. Grumbine gave a synopsis of the case report recommending the request be Approved with the following conditions:

1. The newly installed windows must be painted when appropriate.

The case was represented by Michael Lam, 22 West Terrace Road Great Neck, NY 11021 (aka “the Applicant”).

Mr. Jordan asked the Applicant whether they had anything to add to the proposal. The Applicant stated that one of the originally proposed window locations is being changed from the front to the side of the building. The Applicant handed out copies of the newly proposed changes to HARB members.

Mr. Jordan asked whether any Board members had any comments regarding the case. Mr. Chamberlin asked what the Applicant is doing with the original window opening. The Applicant stated that it will be covered with cementitious fiberboard and will be uniform in design.

Mrs. Rucker asked the Applicant the proposed use of the building. The Applicant stated that the building is used as two apartments and that use will continue after the alterations and upgrades. Mr. Knee asked about the egress of the apartments. The Applicant stated that the building is a separate detached building and that there is a main door on the back and that all windows will be egress windows.

Mrs. Rucker asked if the entire building will be covered with cementitious fiberboard. The Applicant responded that only the top of the building will be covered and that the cement blocks will be painted.

Mr. Jordan opened the discussion for public comment. Mr. Neil Hollis, 915 Susquehanna Street, voiced his concern about the slow deterioration of the building for decades and that he supports the proposed upgrades to the building.

Mr. Jordan asked whether the Applicant could meet the condition set forth by the Planning Bureau. The Applicant responded that he would definitely paint the windows.

Mrs. Gribble moved to Approve the amended proposal with conditions, Mr. Heffelfinger seconded the motion to Approve. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (6-0).

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**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**1 Proposed porch materials by Debra McClain & Linda Rutherford**

Linda and Debra introduced themselves and stated that they live at 1417 North Front Street and recently had the foundation issues that are now resolved. Mrs. Rutherford explained while they recently completed the foundation repairs at their home they encountered structural issues with the porch on the front of their home. Mrs. Rutherford stated that they will be submitting a building permit to perform work under the porch to prepare it for additional stabilization.

Mrs. Rutherford explained that they were exploring wood-alternative materials for the porch. Mr. Jordan asked whether they were altering the porch roof. Mrs. Rutherford said nothing will be done with the roof. Mrs. Rutherford brought an example of their existing balusters to show to Board members. Mr. Chamberlin stated that the existing balusters are made of pine and likely from the 1950s. Mrs. Rutherford also brought examples of a proposed material made by Durabrac. Mr. Chamberlin asked whether it is paintable. Mrs. Rutherford stated that it is paintable. Mrs. Gribble stated that the proposed material is worked and milled whereas many other products are clearly molded with seams. Mr. Jordan raised the concern that the Board previously denied a similar type of floor boards due to the profile of the grain end.

Mr. Chamberlin raised the concern about whether the historic railing height would be subject to new code requirements. Mrs. Montgomery stated that the new railing would not be subject to new codes and can maintain the same height. Mr. Chamberlin stated that the product is not outside the realm of possibility. Mr. Jordan agreed. Mr. Chamberlin told Mrs. Rutherford that they would have to file a formal application to be heard by the Board for a formal determination.

**2 Discussion on historic district guidelines.**

Mrs. Montgomery read through her assigned section of “right of ways.” Discussion ensued about what constitutes a right of way and edits regarding this section. Mrs. Montgomery read through her assigned section titled “Garages.” Discussion ensued about the types of garages throughout the City. Mr. Chamberlin explained that garages and carriage houses are typical along secondary streets such as River Street. Discussion regarding potential edits and additions to this section ensued.

Mrs. Montgomery read through her assigned section titled “Accessibility.” Mr. Chamberlin and Mr. Jordan discussed prior cases regarding ADA ramps in historic districts and their appropriateness for the structure. Mr. Grumbine said accessibility to historic buildings for all populations is important and is essential for the long-term preservation of them. Mr. Grumbine continued and stated that any alterations made, such as ramps, should be as unobtrusive as possible and should be able to be removed in the future without harming the original materials and form of the building. Mr. Chamberlin and Mrs. Gribble agreed. Mrs. Montgomery concluded reading her assigned chapter.

Mrs. Rucker had brought her assigned chapters and distributed them among some HARB members. Mrs. Rucker left early. Mr. Chamberlin read through the section titled “Windows.” As Mr. Chamberlin read through the proposed section discussion ensued about edits or additions within the chapter. Mr. Chamberlin and Mr. Grumbine both agreed that the proposed section is

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largely redundant and can be edited down. Mrs. Gribble agreed. Discussion ensued about the requirement of paintable windows. Mrs. Gribble said it depends upon the context of the building and whether the original windows were painted. Mr. Grumbine agreed. Mrs. Gribble stated that all historic windows, including many aluminum windows, were not meant to be painted but can be painted. Mr. Grumbine agreed and stated that the requirement should be that windows must be paintable but not required to be painted depending upon the context. Mr. Chamberlin stated that if untreated windows will deteriorate in their own right over the years and that a treatment is necessary to preserve them in the future. Mr. Jordan agreed and stated that the requirement should be changed to paintable materials rather than painted.

Discussion ensued about the proposed demolition of two historic structures on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street by Modern Rugs. Mr. Chamberlin said with some funds those two buildings would be nice livable homes. Mr. Grumbine said any proposal to demolish these buildings to install a parking lot would be denied. Mr. Chamberlin said that Dauphin County had given them money to demolish the structures without approval from the City.

Mrs. Gribble read through the section titled “Doors.” Discussion ensued about potential edits to the section and how the chapter should be structured. Mr. Heffelfinger stated that all the deeply technical information should be removed from the section. Mr. Chamberlin and Mr. Grumbine agreed and stated that a typical homeowner will not be engaged by information that is too technical. Mr. Chamberlin stated that the section needs a recommended and not recommended table as a simple guide.

Mr. Jordan read through the section titled “Porches.” Mr. Chamberlin stated that the section also needs a recommended and not recommended table. Mr. Heffelfinger said that it’s a problem with historic porches where they are enclosed for additional living space and that it destroys historic associations. Mr. Grumbine said that porches are often time the first architectural feature to be altered or removed due to its exposure to the elements. Mr. Chamberlin said that new materials, including pressure treated 2/2 balusters are not compatible in historic districts and do not constitute an in-kind replacement. Mrs. Gribble agreed. Mr. Grumbine said that missing historic features should be replaced with compatible designs and materials. Mr. Heffelfinger said that HARB should be stricter on the preservation of porches and allowable alterations. Mr. Jordan continued to read through the chapter. Discussion ensued regarding the height of historic railings and how this issue should be addressed in the chapter. Mr. Heffelfinger raised the concern regarding the preservation of historic transoms and double leaf doors and that the issue needs to be adequately addressed.

Mr. Jordan read through the section titled “Shutters.” Mr. Chamberlin suggested that the entire first paragraph should be removed from the chapter. Discussion ensued about the potential additions to the chapter regarding types of shutters, their historic uses, and their proportions.

**ADJOURNMENT: 7:45 PM**

Mrs. Gribble moved, and Mr. Chamberlin seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion was adopted by unanimous vote (6-0) and the meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.