

**MINUTES – HARB Regular Meeting  
June 7, 2021**

**MINUTES**

**HARRISBURG ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
June 7, 2021  
VIRTUAL MEETING ON ZOOM PLATFORM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Trina Gribble, Chair  
Anne Montgomery, Assistant Codes Administrator  
April Rucker  
Kali Tennis

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jeremiah Chamberlin, Vice Chair  
Camille Bennett

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Zachary Fisher, Crystal Cline, Chris Dawson, Molly Mank, Nitzan Zecharya, Tahirih Alia

**CALL TO ORDER: 6:01 PM**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Ms. Rucker moved, and Ms. Montgomery seconded the motion to Approve the May 3, 2021 minutes. The motion was adopted by unanimous vote (4-0).

**OLD BUSINESS:** N/A

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. 116 Calder Street, filed by Zachary Fisher, to replace two existing historic wooden windows on the second floor of the primary façade with double hung Marvin Elevate fiberglass windows.**

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

1. The proposed replacement windows feature materials (fiberglass) that are not an historically contextual or compatible material, and do not feature *any* wooden material in the material composition of the window, as opposed to other products that HARB has reviewed and approved in the past (such as wood composite).
2. Efforts to repair and rehabilitate the original wood windows should be attempted before replacing them with other materials.

## **MINUTES – HARB Regular Meeting**

**June 7, 2021**

3. The Applicant has other material options for replacing the existing windows such as wooden windows, which would be in-kind replacements, or the use of wood composite materials which HARB has approved in the past.
4. The Secretary of Interior's Standards state that "using substitute material for the replacement that does not convey the same appearance of the surviving components of the window or that is physically incompatible" is not recommended.

The case was represented by Zachary Fisher and Crystal Cline, 116 Calder Street Harrisburg, PA 17102 (aka "the Applicants").

Mrs. Gribble asked the Applicants if they had anything to add to the proposal. The Applicants stated that there are only two existing wooden windows and the other non-original aluminum windows were able to be replaced with new windows via administrative approval. The Applicants explained that they would like the last two windows on the second floor of the primary façade to be replaced with the same fiberglass window product that is being installed elsewhere on the building. The Applicant explained that the rear windows have been replaced prior to their ownership.

Ms. Tennis stated that she is the neighbor of the Applicants and is very familiar with these specific houses as she is a resident of one. Ms. Tennis asked the Applicants to explain the existing material of the other windows and their replacement. The Applicants explained that the aluminum windows were able to be approved for replacement with new windows as they are not original to the building and that the approval could not be granted to the last two wooden windows. Mr. Grumbine stated that the existing aluminum windows are not original not compatible with the building and the new fiberglass windows would be more compatible with what would have historically existed whereas the subject wooden windows are likely original to the building and are architecturally compatible.

Mrs. Gribble asked if there is wood on the interior of the proposed window. The Applicants stated that there is wood on the interior of the proposed windows. Ms. Montgomery stated that she is not opposed to the replacement of the two wood windows to retain consistency with the product and material type throughout the building. Mrs. Gribble asked about the sight lines and dimensions of the windows. Mr. Grumbine stated that the proposed windows are the same product that was previously approved at 121 Herr Street in January of 2020 and is the same exact material and configuration. Mrs. Gribble stated that since the windows are a one over one sash configuration and that they are out of the touch zone her concerns are not as great as they would be if they were a different style of window. Ms. Tennis stated that if the product is paintable then she feels the integrity and consistency of the façade would benefit from the same product throughout.

Mrs. Gribble said she is concerned about the precedent of the continual approval of fiberglass products. She continued and stated that fiberglass has a better expansion and contraction rate than vinyl products and that if paintable then the product would be fairly compatible. Mrs. Gribble asked the Applicants whether the window product is paintable without voiding the warranty. The Applicants stated that the product is believed to be paintable. Mrs. Gribble stated that is a condition she would like to have to move forward. Ms. Tennis asked Mrs. Gribble if the condition should be that the product must be paintable in order to move forward with a vote.

**MINUTES – HARB Regular Meeting  
June 7, 2021**

Mr. Gaylord asked Mrs. Gribble whether the condition would be that the windows be “paintable” or “painted.” Mrs. Gribble confirmed that the windows must be paintable and would require a letter to confirm as such to satisfy that condition. Mrs. Montgomery stated that it says in the paperwork that the window is paintable. Mr. Grumbine stated that he would prefer a letter or literature that definitively states that the exterior of the product is able to be painted.

Ms. Tennis moved; Ms. Montgomery seconded the motion to Approve with Conditions. The motion was adopted with a majority vote (3-1).

**2. 1414 & 1416 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, filed by Chris Dawson Architect, to demolish the two existing historic structures on the subject properties and prepare the site for a new three-story addition to 1408 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.**

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

1. If applicable, the applicant shall submit the necessary applications and information for variances and/or special exceptions for review by the Planning Commission and the Zoning Hearing Board.
2. If applicable, the applicant shall work with the City Engineer’s office to coordinate the installation of sidewalks and ramps.
3. Any modifications or changes to the initial concept of the new construction should be coordinated with the Planning Bureau.

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

1. The structures at 1414 & 1416 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street are structurally unsound, have partially collapsed, and retain little to no architectural or historic integrity due to many alterations and long-term neglect. As per the structural engineer’s assessment from October 2020, the buildings “represent an ongoing hazard to the health, safety, and welfare of the public.” The buildings are in a severe state of deterioration and are in a state of collapse.
2. Based on an onsite tour and walk through of the properties on May 26<sup>th</sup>, the cost of rehabilitation is not financially feasible or realistic due to collapse and structural deterioration.
3. The scale, massing, and materials for the proposed building are appropriate for the site and setting of commercial North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Furthermore, the proposed new construction is clearly differentiated from historic building stock while maintaining rhythms and patterns of the directly adjacent buildings.
4. The proposed project will remove blight, increase local property values, and will overall have a positive impact on the district and the neighborhood.

## **MINUTES – HARB Regular Meeting**

**June 7, 2021**

The case was represented by Chris Dawson and Molly Mank, 300 North 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite 701, Harrisburg, PA 17101 (project architects) and the owners Nitzan Zecharya and Tahirih Alia 607 Susquehanna Street Marysville, PA 17053 (aka “the Applicants”).

Mrs. Gribble asked if the Applicants had anything they want to add to the proposal. Mr. Dawson stated that he is pleased with Mr. Grumbine’s recommendation and that the project would remove a dangerous situation as per the engineer’s report which state that the buildings are structurally dangerous. Mr. Dawson stated that he has worked very hard to comply with the historic district design guidelines and the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for the project while developing this project. Mr. Dawson asked to go through the packet sheet by sheet to briefly discuss the project.

Mrs. Gribble shared her screen of the submitted materials. Mr. Dawson explained the existing conditions photos and explained that it is difficult to interpret the state of deterioration of the buildings until you are able to see the damage to the structures from the roof. Mr. Grumbine agreed and stated that the structural deterioration was only evident until viewing the roof structure and seeing the damage on the interior; otherwise, from the street level, the buildings don’t appear to be dilapidated.

Mrs. Rucker asked if the proposal is for complete demolition. The Applicants stated that is correct. Mr. Dawson explained the site plan with context photos and explained that the new building is to connect the other buildings to the south through the interior. Mr. Dawson explains the concept of the new building and how it’s design will engage the street as an office and gallery space and potential use for community events. Mr. Dawson explains the concept of the new building and how its materials and design tie in surrounding architecture to ensure compatibility into the streetscape.

Mr. Gaylord stated that Mr. Grumbine’s report is recommending demolition based on the fact that the buildings are unsound. Under the City’s HARB ordinance, if the board makes a finding that the building is unsound then the building can be demolished for new construction; but if the building is not found to be unsound then the existing buildings must be maintained until a bond is filed until a building permit is submitted and obtained for the new construction. Mrs. Gribble stated that this is to prevent demolition until a new building is planned for the site. Mr. Gaylord stated that is correct and does not appear to be the case given the proposal is to construct a new building.

Mrs. Gribble stated that she always has concerns about demolition in historic neighborhoods but she is looking at this case a little differently based on the condition of the buildings and the fact that the subject buildings are not particularly unique to the City. Mrs. Gribble also stated that the context of the site in relation to the two adjacent buildings have larger massing and that the new building would improve the rhythm and continuity of that side of North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Mrs. Gribble stated that the new building maintains the historic setback and that the proposed materials appear to be appropriate for the site and historic district. Mrs. Rucker stated that she agrees and that the existing buildings are in poor condition and that the new construction would be far more contributing to the streetscape than the existing buildings.

## **MINUTES – HARB Regular Meeting**

**June 7, 2021**

Mrs. Tennis states that she agrees with Mrs. Gribble and Mrs. Rucker and wants to confirm that the buildings are unsound. Mrs. Gribble stated she is unsure if HARB can determine the soundness of a building. Mr. Gaylord stated that HARB does have the authority to state whether a building is sound or unsound. Ms. Tennis reiterated that she wants the record to reflect that she feels the buildings are unsound based on Mr. Grumbine's report and the evidence displayed before the Board. Mrs. Montgomery stated that she agrees and states that the buildings have little integrity and that the new building appears to be compatible with its setting.

Mrs. Gribble asked if there should be a condition to ensure that the current concept is retained and if something changes that the HARB is notified. Mrs. Tennis stated that she feels that the new building is beautiful and appropriate for the setting and the Applicant's track record is impeccable and has established their credibility in the City. Mrs. Gribble stated that when a building permit application is submitted it should be reviewed in accordance to the plans reviewed by HARB. Mr. Grumbine stated that the review of a building permit application in relation to what was approved by HARB is part of his protocol regardless of a condition. Mr. Grumbine stated that he always ensures that the submitted building permit application and plan sets match those of what HARB approved. Mr. Dawson stated that it is true that concepts can change and does not intend to change anything and will coordinate with the City if changes must occur.

Mrs. Gribble read the proposed conditions from the Planning Bureau. She asked if the Applicants had any issues or questions with the proposed conditions of approval. The Applicants stated that they had no issues with the proposed conditions. The owner of the property thanked the Board and City staff for their time and assistance with the HARB process.

Ms. Rucker moved; Ms. Tennis seconded the motion to Approve. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (4-0).

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

#### **1 Vote on adoption of new 2021 Historic District Design Guidelines.**

Mr. Grumbine stated that since last month he performed small changes to the document including negative space management, changing photos to convey concepts, basic formatting, and including links into the document for compatibility for digital use. Mr. Grumbine stated that he has worked very hard to get to this point and is proud of the final product. Mrs. Gribble stated that the document has been available to the public for several months for public comment. The Board thanked Mr. Grumbine for his work and his efforts in developing the new Mr. Gaylord stated that City Council may vote on the document before their summer recess but they also may want additional public comment on the document prior to their review of the document.

Ms. Gribble moved; Ms. Rucker seconded the motion to Approve the new 2021 City of Harrisburg Historic District Design Guidelines. The motion was adopted with a unanimous vote (4-0).

### **ADJOURNMENT: 6:52 PM**

Ms. Tennis moved, and Ms. Rucker seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion was adopted by unanimous vote (4-0) and the meeting adjourned at 6:52 PM.