

## MINUTES

### **HARRISBURG ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD REGULAR MEETING**

**March 4, 2024**

**THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CITY GOVERNMENT CENTER  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Trina Gribble, Chair  
April Rucker  
Kent Hurst

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Bruce Henry, Deputy Codes Administrator/Vice Chair  
Camille Bennett

**STAFF PRESENT:** Geoffrey Knight, Planning Director  
Don Styer, Assistant City Solicitor

**OTHERS PRESENT:** See Sign-In Sheet

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

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mrs. Gribble noted that Mr. Hurst had submitted minor edits to the January 2024 meeting minutes to the Board and Planning Bureau staff the previous week. She asked whether there were any other changes from other Board members; there were none. Mr. Hurst moved, and Ms. Rucker seconded the motion, to Approve the minutes from the January 8, 2024 meetings with the corrections noted by Mr. Hurst in an email to Planning Bureau staff. The motion was adopted by a unanimous vote (3-0).

**OLD BUSINESS: N/A**

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. 2041 Green Street, filed by Amanda Brewer with Renewal by Andersen, to install a Fibrex picture window to replace an existing single hung window on the first floor of the primary façade.**

The case was represented by Mildred Williams (the property owner), 2041 Green Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102 (aka “the Applicant”).

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

1. The concrete sill and header shall be repaired or replaced in-kind if necessary and shall not be encapsulated in aluminum or other inappropriate materials.

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Mrs. Gribble asked the Applicant whether they had anything to add to the case report or questions regarding the conditions in it; the Applicant stated that she did not.

Mrs. Gribble asked whether any of the other Board members had comments or questions about the project.

Mr. Hurst stated that he had no questions.

Ms. Rucker stated that she had no questions.

Mrs. Gribble asked whether the manufacturer was able to include a simulated muntin bar across the center of the picture window to replicate the double-hung appearance of the existing window. Mr. Knight noted that in past decisions, the Board had previously left it up to the Applicant to decide whether they wanted to include a simulated light divider. He noted that he had presented a similar project to the Board for their review several years ago, and that he preferred to not have the bar as it impacted visibility from inside the building and did not truly replicate the depth and appearance of the existing double-hung window.

Mr. Knight stated that the Applicant may have their own opinion on whether they preferred to have the simulated divided lite muntin bar. She stated that she would prefer to not be required to install the muntin bar and that if she was, she would prefer to have a double-hung window installed instead. Mr. Hurst noted that application documentation confirmed that a double-hung window could not be manufactured to the same specifications and thus the window opening would need to be “packed out” which would present an adverse visual impact. He noted that he had previously lived near the subject property and that his property also featured a picture window; he stated that the simulated muntin bar would affect the view from the interior.

Ms. Rucker moved, and Mr. Hurst seconded the motion, to Approve with Staff Conditions. The motion was adopted by a majority vote (3-0).

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

#### **1. Board Membership**

Mrs. Gribble noted that at the January 2024 meeting, the Planning Bureau staff was going to confirm that Mr. Henry could serve as the Vice Chair, given his position with the City. Mr. Knight stated that he wasn't aware of any issues with Mr. Henry serving as the Vice Chair given his capacity as the Deputy Codes Administrator. Mr. Knight noted that his professional position did not prevent him from serving on the Board [note: a Codes Bureau representative is actually a required member of the Board] and that because the Chair and Vice Chair did not really have any extra authority than other Board members, his position should not preclude him from serving in either role. Mr. Styer stated that he would research the Board's regulations and provide a response by the end of the meeting.

#### **2. April HARB project (340 Verbeke Street)**

Mrs. Gribble asked whether there were any other additional issues to discuss at the current meeting. Mr. Knight noted that the Board would be reviewing a unique project at their April 2024 meeting,

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which involved the Millworks at 340 Verbeke Street. He stated that the owner was going to be relocating the brewing operations on-site from the current building to the associated lumber yard building across the street (note: 1321 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street), so that the restaurant component could be expanded. Mr. Knight noted that the interesting aspect of the project was that the historic district boundary line ran between the two properties along Sayford Street, so that the Millworks was located in an historic district and the lumber yard was not, and stated that the project intended to connect the second floors of the two structures via a bridge over Sayford Street.

Mr. Knight stated that he had never dealt with a situation in which a project crossed an historic district boundary. He noted that the connection to the Millworks building was obviously under the Board's purview, but that it was less clear whether the connection to the building outside of the historic district brought that property under the Board's purview as well. He noted that a cursory review of the project documentation indicated that the proposal seemed to be appropriate for the lumber yard building. Mr. Knight stated that the Planning Bureau and Law Bureau would research the issue and have response for the Board prior to their review.

Mr. Hurst asked whether there was a precedent for this type of project in the city. Mr. Knight noted that there were only so many buildings abutting historic district boundaries and that he was not aware of properties on either side of a boundary owned by a single entity which sought to connect them.

Ms. Rucker noted that there were some buildings in the city's historic districts featuring bridges, including the PHFA connection to the River Street Parking Garage. Mrs. Gribble noted that both of those buildings were in the same historic district. Mr. Knight noted that another bridge over Court Street downtown connected the former CRW offices with an adjacent parking garage, but noted that neither building was in an historic district.

Mr. Knight reiterated that the City would research the issue on their end, but stated that he didn't feel a final determination would impact the Planning Bureau's approach to the review, as he felt the overall project design was solid.

After discussion on the project at 340 Verbeke Street, Mr. Styer confirmed that there were no prohibitions preventing Mr. Henry from serving as the Vice Chair and, in fact, that there were no rules whatsoever regarding which members could serve as the Board Chair.

### **3. Broad Street Market**

Mrs. Gribble stated that she had one more issue of concern that she wanted to address, specifically the current status of the Broad Street Market rehabilitation and how the Board could support efforts towards its reconstruction. Ms. Rucker stated that she was also interested in an update on those efforts.

Mr. Knight stated that he was not sure where the project stood and that the City may still be in negotiations with insurance companies. He stated that he would provide the Board members with any updates once he received them; he noted that because the property was located in a Municipal Historic District, any reconstruction proposal would be submitted to the Board for their review. Mr. Knight stated that it would be beneficial to the public to have any proposed reconstruction

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project reviewed and vetted at a public meeting and noted that City Council would likely also be reviewing any proposed design.

Mr. Hurst asked whether the Board should formally communicate their concern to the City and encourage them to proceed with more urgency; he stated that he felt the City had handled the aftermath of the fire very poorly and that he wasn't sure that the City understood how upset the public was.

Ms. Rucker noted that as an historic building, there may be funds or resources available from historic preservation-focused entities to help with reconstruction. Mr. Knight noted that the Governor had been quick to call for action after the fire and that he expected the State and federal government to provide the resources necessary to rebuild the structure and not leave it to the City alone. He noted that a variety of architecture, engineering, and construction firms had offered pro bono services, and he hoped once they reached the point where they were ready for reconstruction, that it would happen with urgency.

Mr. Hurst stated that he felt everyone was waiting for some benefactor or philanthropist to step in and help fund the project, and that he didn't think the City was expressing the necessary urgency. He referenced the delays in getting the temporary structure up and running for the vendors.

Mrs. Gribble stated that she was concerned that the market building had not been stabilized or covered to prevent further deterioration and that it was likely becoming more expensive to reconstruct the building every day that was the case. Mr. Knight concurred and noted that there was still debris on the roof which had not been cleared since the fire, and that he was unsure how the interior of the building was weathering. Mrs. Gribble stated that she felt there were structural "bones" that could be reused, but that it seemed the City was writing off the historic structure. She stated that such an approach was wasteful and not in the best interest of the city.

Mr. Knight stated that he was not sure about the structural integrity of the building and noted that any new structure might have to be modernized to some extent including new mechanical systems or ADA accessibility, preventing in-kind reconstruction of the existing building. Mr. Hurst stated that if that were the case, the existing building should be carefully deconstructed and the bricks reused. Mrs. Gribble stated that the building didn't look so far gone that an internal structure could be built and anchored to the masonry façade. She stated that there were creative ways to address the structural issues that she hoped were not written off by the City.

Mr. Hurst noted that the Board had reviewed projects in which people purchased properties and then let them deteriorate until the only option was demolition. Mrs. Gribble stated that she felt the City's actions were tantamount to demolition by neglect. Mr. Knight suggested the Board request an update from City Council on the status of the building and reconstruction timeline. Mr. Hurst inquired as to how they should approach that. Mr. Knight noted that they could attend a meeting or write a letter to the City Council, signed by the Board members and perhaps other historic preservation organizations, referencing their unique role as the historic review authority requesting a status update and asking to be kept in the loop as plans progressed since they would be reviewing such proposals at some point in the future.

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Mrs. Gribble asked whether a formal letter would require a formal vote by the Board at their next meeting. Mr. Knight asked Mr. Styer what the appropriate process would be. Mr. Hurst stated that the Board could take a similar approach to their vote of support for the National Register nomination of the Zembo Shrine building; he noted that the Board took a formal vote in that instance.

Mr. Styer read through the section of the Zoning Code that pertained to the Board, and stated that a letter would fall under their advisory role to City Council. Mr. Knight asked if they had to hold a vote to take a formal position on behalf of the Board. Mr. Styer stated that if they intended to send a letter on behalf of the Board, the whole Board should have an opportunity to vote on the matter. Mr. Hurst suggested that the letter come from Mrs. Gribble as the Board Chair.

Mrs. Gribble stated that she would develop a brief letter for Board review and action. Mr. Knight suggested that they may want to attend a City Council meeting and read their letter on the record so that it was recorded in the minutes and in the video which would be posted to the City's website and YouTube channel.

Mrs. Gribble asked Mr. Knight to put that issue on the April 2024 HARB agenda.

**ADJOURNMENT: 6:28 PM**

Mr. Hurst moved, and Ms. Rucker seconded the motion, to adjourn. The motion was adopted by a unanimous vote (3-0).