

Historic District Review Board
Regular Session
September 21, 2010

At approximately 4:30 p.m., in the Town Council Chambers, Chairman Russ Dunton, having established a quorum, called to order the Regular Session of the Historic District Review Board. In addition to Chairman Dunton, present were Jan Neville, Bob Sellers, and Dianne Davis. Also present were Town Planner Tom Bonadeo and Asst. Town Clerk Linda Carola. Board Member Melvin Dudley was absent with an excuse.

Dianne Davis led the Invocation and all recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion made by Dianne Davis, seconded by Jan Neville and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as presented.

Chairman Dunton noted one correction to the minutes under New Business. Under B-Enforcement Review, “concert block” was changed to read “concrete block.”

Motion made by Dianne Davis, seconded by Bob Sellers, and unanimously approved to accept the minutes of August 17, 2010 as corrected noting the one change.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Cape Charles Historic District Guidelines

Chairman Dunton stated that he felt there were two main issues to be addressed: i) differences between the Zoning Ordinance and the Historic District Guidelines; and ii) changes based on things that had happened since the guidelines were created. Mr. Dunton stated the current guidelines were copied from Smithfield and they did not address products that had been developed such as PVC trim board and cement board siding. He suggested the guidelines be modified to be in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Dunton went on to state that he researched how other districts handled vinyl siding problems and explained that other districts did not deal with the problem because they have smaller districts with like homes. He further cited Portsmouth, Virginia, which had some of the same issues and explained that Portsmouth had divided the area into five separate districts with each district having its own set of guidelines. Mr. Dunton explained what was allowed and not allowed in each and further stated that no fake vinyl/aluminum shutters, or liquid siding are allowed in any of the Portsmouth districts.

Mr. Dunton explained to the board members that the Historic Guidelines for Cape Charles had some discrepancies: i) Zoning Ordinance states no aluminum or vinyl siding (in checking the Zoning Ordinance, aluminum or vinyl siding is not allowed in the Commercial District C-1, this is further clarified by the Town Planner later in the minutes); ii) Historic Guidelines allows a little leeway. Mr. Dunton reviewed page 19 of the Historic Guidelines with the board members stating all 10 Department of Interior Standards must be met when creating the guidelines for a Historic District. Mr. Dunton also discussed what material could be used for a “substitute

material.” He explained the standard set by the State for individuals applying for tax credits, for repair or replacement, the following test must be met; i) retain and repair original material; ii) replace material with new material made out of the same thing; iii) replace the original fabric with a compatible substitute. Mr. Dunton explained this was the test, and it would be the board’s decision.

Mr. Dunton asked the board members if they had a chance to review the guidelines, noting some discrepancies between the ordinance and guidelines. Mr. Dunton referred the board members to page 43, item 7, of the guidelines referring to “porches” and felt perhaps a word had been left out, stating it should read “do not enclose “front” porches on primary elevations.” Further discussion continued regarding rear and side elevations and Mr. Bonadeo stated his interpretation of a “primary entrance” is the main entrance, being the front porch and agreed that item 7 needed clarification. Mr. Dunton referred the board members to page 49, last sentence, stating only brick or parged block will be used for the foundations of framed residences, and these were the only two choices. Mr. Bonadeo stated he would review all plans and then submit to the building department for review and approval.

Mr. Bonadeo suggested that the board review the guidelines and he would compare it to the ordinances for any discrepancies and follow all proper procedures for any changes. Mr. Bonadeo stated that he would present the proposed changes at each meeting for the board’s review.

Mr. Bonadeo began by reviewing “aluminum siding,” Section III of the Zoning Ordinance, and referred the board members to page 7, however Mr. Dunton interjected. Mr. Bonadeo made the clarification on the aluminum siding, stating that on page 6 of the Zoning Ordinance the reference to vinyl siding was for Single Family Residential District R-1, and Page 17, Article 3, stated that aluminum and vinyl siding would not be allowed in the Commercial District C-1. Mr. Bonadeo further explained that vinyl siding would be permitted in the Residential District as long as each individual clapboard was no wider than five inches. Mr. Dunton referred Mr. Bonadeo to page 55 of the guidelines, “Synthetic Siding,” which allowed for the use of vinyl siding. Mr. Dunton had 2 samples of vinyl siding and proceeded to explain the different characteristics of each sample and suggested the Cedar Impressions sample (synthetic product) be better defined in the guidelines and a list of acceptable products needed to be developed. Further discussion continued regarding acceptable products.

Dianne Davis viewed the siding samples and questioned what was allowable for new construction, and what product, vinyl or aluminum siding, would be permitted.

Mr. Bonadeo asked the Board Members to submit a list of items that the board could have better control over in the guidelines which he would review, re-write and make recommendations for the board’s review at the next meeting. Mr. Dunton had several items of concern: i) synthetic siding, stating what is a suitable substitute material and referred to page 55 of the guidelines and asked for additional clarification; ii) page 69 of the guidelines, “definitions” and “synthetic siding” needed to be addressed, with more specifics. Further discussion continued regarding synthetic siding.

Mr. Bonadeo stated that some of the interesting variations/corrections that would be recommended fell into a group of homes that were contributing structures in the National Historic District. He stated that there was a part of the town that was not in the National Historic District but was in an area classified as the Historic Overlay and recommended the homes that were contributing structures in the National Historic District be reviewed more stringently.

Further discussion continued regarding this issue and Tom referred the members to the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, explaining two sections were left out of the form: i) a list of homes by address that were contributing/not contributing; and ii) group of photos. Further discussion continued regarding the National Register of Historic Places and he suggested consideration of re-districting the Historic District, but no positive response was received from the board members.

Dianne Davis questioned wrap-around-porches and were they allowed to be closed in? Discussion continued regarding secondary porches and side porches. Chairman Dunton referred Ms. Davis to page 42 of the guidelines, "porches," and explained the definition of "secondary porches."

Dianne Davis asked a question regarding demolition and thought any demolition would be by Demolition-By-Neglect; however, after reviewing Section 4.10 of the Zoning Ordinance, "Demolition Policy Guidelines," clarified some of her questions. She further questioned two properties that were demolished, and Mr. Bonadeo informed her that both properties were deemed unsafe and therefore demolished. Mr. Dunton explained to Ms. Davis that if a property was not deemed as unsafe (structurally sound); the property would be reviewed by the board for permission to demolish. If the property was deemed as unsafe, it could be demolished without the permission of the board and would be handled through the building department.

Mr. Bonadeo informed the board members he would review all of the suggestions and make recommendations at the next meeting. Mr. Bonadeo had expressed a concern regarding the re-writing of the Historic District Guidelines. Discussion continued regarding who had printed the original document. Mr. Bonadeo was given a contact name of David Phillips and would contact him regarding the printing of the revision of the Historic District Guidelines.

Mr. Bonadeo reviewed Item 5-A, 114 Randolph Ave., explaining the item was on last month's agenda when it was noted that the height of the building was not allowable; therefore, the architect revised the blueprint to meet the allowable height requirement. Mr. Bonadeo reviewed the change with board member Jan Neville.

Motion made by Bob Sellers, seconded by Dianne Davis and unanimously approved to adjourn the Historic District Review Board Meeting.

Linda Carola, Asst. Town Clerk

Russ Dunton, Chairman