

BAR MINUTES
CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
Regular Meeting
June 21, 2023 – 5:00 PM
Hybrid Meeting (In person at City Space & virtual via Zoom)



Welcome to this Regular Monthly Meeting of the Charlottesville Board of Architectural Review (BAR). Due to the current public health emergency, this meeting is being held online via Zoom. The meeting process will be as follows: For each item, staff will make a brief presentation followed by the applicant's presentation, after which members of the public will be allowed to speak. Speakers shall identify themselves and give their current address. Members of the public will have, for each case, up to three minutes to speak. Public comments should be limited to the BAR's jurisdiction; that is, regarding the exterior design of the building and site. Following the BAR's discussion, and before the vote, the applicant shall be allowed up to three minutes to respond, for the purpose of clarification. Thank you for participating.

Members Present: Breck Gastinger, Carl Schwarz, James Zehmer, Cheri Lewis, Roger Birle, Tyler Whitney, David Timmerman, Kevin Badke

Staff Present: Mollie Murphy, Jeff Werner, Remy Trail

Pre-Meeting:

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM

A. Matters from the public not on the agenda

No Public Comments

B. Consent Agenda (Note: Any consent agenda item may be pulled and moved to the regular agenda if a BAR member wishes to discuss it, or if any member of the public is present to comment on it. Pulled applications will be discussed at the beginning of the meeting.)

1. Meeting Minutes – April 18, 2023

Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda – Mr. Schwarz. Second by Mr. Birle. Ms. Lewis abstained due to not being present at the April BAR Meeting. Motion passes 7-0.

C. Deferred Items

2. Certificate of Appropriateness Application

BAR # 23-05-01

180 Rugby Road, TMP 090152000

The Corner ADC District

Owner: Wooglin Company

Applicant: Ian Brown / UVREF

Project: Landscaping

Jeff Werner, Staff Report – CoA request for landscaping project: brick piers at the front walk (limestone caps, brick coursing to match house); steps and pavers on the sides and rear with five (5) pathway lights;

and two areas of artificial turf installed in the front yard. (Note: The submittal indicates misc. pruning and clean up, which are not subject to BAR review.) Also, the five bollards at the rear corner will not be lighted. This is incorrectly noted on the plan.)

Ian Brown Applicant – What we’re looking at is the best solution for us and for Rugby Road. We don’t want to roll out some sod every fall and have it die in October, roll it back up, and go back to the mud. We don’t want a pervious surface that is going to create runoff that we can’t manage. One of the things that you requested was the installation standards. There is going to be a lot of earth work to create the proper base and proper drainage so that this really is a pervious surface, and the drainage is handled correctly. This is a \$2 million property. We invested a million dollars in it about 10 years ago. The front yard looks bad. We’re trying to invest more money in the property. I don’t think it is fair to suggest that we’re not going to maintain it in a quality manner. The only solution to that is leave it as it is or pave it. Neither of those are good. This allows the water to run through. It will be a cleaner surface. It will be sturdy. We get types of citations when there are beer cans and when the trash cans are in disarray. When this becomes a problem, we will replace it.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Questions from the Public

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Schwarz – Do I understand correctly that you’re going to have a wood timber around the perimeter of the lawn?

Garrett Smith, Applicant – I don’t believe that is correct. That will not be visible. The edging goes underneath the product.

Mr. Birle – The detail makes it look like it would be visible.

Mr. Smith – If so, I have misunderstood the installer.

Mr. Timmerman – Did you look at alternative permeable paving systems?

Mr. Smith – That would be a measure of last resort for us.

Mr. Timmerman – Why?

Mr. Smith – Due to the sterile nature of it. I understand that it is public facing area. It is still home to several men. Personally, I wouldn’t want to have pavers outside my house. We want to give it as much of a residential look as possible. Pavers would make it more sterile and less hospitable.

Mr. Brown – That is consistent with our views. I would like to point out that the front porch is similarly 58 feet wide. It is about 6 to 8 feet extended from the house. That is cement. We already have that. What you would be doing is having two steps down and more impervious surface. We don’t think that is attractive. It doesn’t appeal to us stretching around the side of the house. Behind it are brick pavers. We have used brick in those areas. The house is brick. This originally was a font yard. We want it to have the same feel that it originally was intended to have, not an impervious surface.

Ms. Lewis – What is the projected length of this?

Mr. Smith – It should be 7 to 10 years. It could be less in this setting.

Mr. Brown – The installer will be providing annual service to ‘fluff it up’ and clean it up as needed. They’re providing a warranty. This is what they do. They offered us 15 or 20 different kinds. We chose the Zoysia because of its durability.

Mr. Zehmer – I have a question on the brick piers. You have them shown as 20-inch squares. Does that work out for the bonding? Does it match the brick of the house in terms of the width and the length of the brick to get a stretcher-header-stretcher?

Mr. Smith – I exchanged an email with the architect, and it does. You can see the bricks on that scheme. It is basically two bricks width. It shows two of the bricks that are turned.

Mr. Birle – The elevation in the plan don’t coincide/correlate. It looks like it would be easier at one foot, four inches than it would be at 20 inches. The proportions here feel Ok. I appreciate the fact that you came back to us since we asked you to give us a detail and show us what you’re intending.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Comments from the Public

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Timmerman – I appreciate your explanation of why you want what you want. It makes sense to me. However, I am still of the same mindset from the last time that you came. For me this is a precedent. I don’t feel as if the material is appropriate for this context. It is not that the material is inappropriate for certain places. I refer directly to our guidelines under plantings. Number eight says to select mulching and edging materials carefully and do not use plastic edgings, lava, crushed rock, and naturally colored mulch or historically suitable materials. For me, it is a precedent setting thing. It is such a small space. I made the same comment in May. When you say paving, I feel that there could be some lovely opportunities to do a hardscape that could be permeable. There is an easy way to manage drainage in this case. When I lived in Old Town Alexandria, our front porch was like the brick. There was an extension of the brick sidewalk. I always thought that was a lovely front yard, especially for the amount of foot traffic that this is going to get, the kind of activity that is going to be had on that turf. It might work out fine from a functional standpoint. It seems to me a hardscape would be a more suitable material for the current use function. This is this style. It is a kind of sustainability standpoint for me of putting plastic down. We keep replicating that. That is not the best use of our resources.

Mr. Werner – This is an image to help visualize. The red is the house. There is this front porch so that you see both, at least roughly what GIS gives you for dimensions.

Mr. Zehmer – With the brick piers, I think that if the intent is to match the Flemish Bond of the house and build the piers such that they match that with a stretcher-header-stretcher and don’t have cut bricks to make the one foot, eight inches measurement, that is what I would prefer to see as the design intent. I am Ok with that. If it ends up being 18 inches instead of 20 inches once you get your mortar joints in there, just making it look right is what I am hoping is the intent. I am Ok with the limestone cap matching the profile details of the pilasters of the house. That is a nice touch. We have discussed hopefully setting these closer to the sidewalk and letting the hedges grow to them. I think you’re looking for traffic control. That should help. With the artificial turf, it is a struggle. I work at the University, and I am familiar with the area. As an example, the Bailey Museum has a middle terrace that was once grass and is now paved with Bluestone pavers. For some of the same reasons, they probably had some maintenance issues. It also gave

them a gathering space to use, which is hardscape. There is a precedent in this district that shows that there as a solution of using hardscape in lieu of landscape to achieve that same type of goal. I am still struggling with where I am landing on it. I wanted to bring that up as something else that is in this historic district did away with the original fabric and put something that was compatible and appropriate in the district. It is a good solution. A paved surface here would work. It doesn't have to be brick. You can contrast it with Bluestone or even concrete pavers if they're nice ones. You can do an underlayment that allows drainage. It is tough to think that plastic grass is appropriate in a historic district.

Mr. Schwarz – I basically agree with what has been said. A lot of our guidelines point to materials that are long lasting. I realize that landscape materials aren't necessarily long lasting. It is not grass anymore at this point. It is a constructed surface. You have the hedges out front, which do a very good job of softening the project. If it was just brick pavers that came out to the sidewalk, there would be a problem. I am still weary of the precedent of the artificial turf. If you need to soften the area more, there is maybe an opportunity to put some planted areas in that space, maybe some small trees, something that wouldn't grow up and hit the powerlines. I can't support the artificial turf.

Mr. Whitney – I don't mind the artificial turf. I understand your desire to have something that feels soft under your foot in front of the house where you can hang out in and something that is more comfortable than a hard paved surface. This one is a little different than a precedent across all the front yards because of how hidden the front yard is with the hedge with the piers. I feel that it is an acceptable application of the product. The artificial turf could be used in this application. I do feel that there is going to need to be a condition of what the detail at grade is. I don't think you're going to want a small strip of the artificial turf. You're also not going to want true grass in that little area. There's going to need to be a concrete base to bridge from the sidewalk around the brick piers. The brick piers are appropriate. I think the artificial turf is Ok.

Mr. Badke – I agree. If we didn't know if it was artificial, people driving by wouldn't even know. This stuff has come a long way from the carpet that I played on in 1992. It is hard for us to judge it because you're staring at a piece of plastic. If you didn't even know that was plastic, I would think that was grass. I do understand the historic part of this and the idea of maybe having that concrete jungle in front of your house when you want something green. I agree. I am Ok with it.

Mr. Gastinger – I agree with most of what has been said. On the one hand, I agree that a more appropriate landscape material for this situation would be a hard pavement. I believe that it could look elegant and look beautiful. However, we are charged to assess what has been put before us and whether this solution detracts from the historic district and this historic property. I agree with the last couple of speakers. This very particular situation and installation is both small and screened. It is fully reversible. This is a unique situation. I do not want to treat it as a precedent. We need to be very specific, if we approve this, why. I am in favor of the proposal. It is a better solution than its current state. I would love to see a paved court. That would be more appropriate. That's not what is before us tonight.

Ms. Lewis – I am not going to object to this turf. I agree that it wouldn't be appropriate in a lot of places. I asked Mr. Zehmer about Mad Bowl. The University, a couple of years ago, completely redid Mad Bowl. It was muddy. Grass wasn't growing in it. They chose not to do an artificial turf. There is natural grass there. In a larger application, I would have a problem with it. Given the hedge and the size of it, I don't. Personally, I would prefer that you plant two trees in this area to shield the house from the western sun and put a bench near them as a staging area for people coming and going from the house for visitors and do some hardscape there. That is not what is before us. That would be my preference. I would just note that because of the hedge and small area, I would be in favor of this installation here.

Mr. Werner – You can express in a motion including the following.

Mr. Brown – We can certainly lay brick around the base of those two pillars on the outside/the sidewalk side. We will look abutting the turf up to it. Depending on the installation techniques, it might be better. We don't have any problem with that appropriate footer.

Mr. Zehmer – Did anybody have any comments about the lighting? It is a good idea to put some more site lighting in for pathways. That was also on the application.

Mr. Brown – I hope that you will approve this. We're already getting close to the end of June. Part of our goal is not to have to come back again a third time with another design. We would like to get this done in July and August.

Motion – Ms. Lewis – Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including the ADC District Design Guidelines, I move to find the proposed landscaping plan for 180 Rugby Road satisfies the BAR's criteria and is compatible with this property and other properties in this ADC District, and the BAR approves the application with the following conditions:

- The turf will remain flat and the surface unaltered. No added art, logos, images, symbols, and other uses.
- The turf will be maintained, including appropriate drainage.
- Removal or replacement may be required upon a determination by City staff that the turf is in a state of disrepair and/or deterioration.

I make this motion under these conditions because we realize that this is a reversable application. It is screened well by a hedge, the area is relatively small in dimension, it doesn't go to the public right of way/sidewalk, and there is no adverse impact on the historic assets within the district.

Second by Mr. Birle. Motion passes 5-3.

D. New Items

3. Certificate of Appropriateness

BAR # 23-06-01

122 E Main Street, TMP 280027000

Downtown ADC District

Owner: Harold Brindley III, Trustee

Applicant: Michael Caplin / Friends of Charlottesville Downtown

Project: Rehabilitation/preservation of vestige signs

Jeff Werner, Staff Report – Request CoA for the rehabilitation of early-20th century vestige signs on the east elevation of 122 E Main Street. Note: Last summer, when the applicant initially raised this project, the intent was to rehabilitate/restore the Coca-Cola sign in the top center of this wall. (There are three Coca-Cola signs here, see the Discussion.) The current proposal is, if possible, to rehabilitate and preserve all the vestige signage on the wall.

Michael Caplin, Applicant – We ask your approval to rehabilitate this historic, vintage mural to clean and seal the entire wall, to document the existing conditions with photographs, to assemble historic photos that confirm the original style of each mural, to rehabilitate all the ghost murals on the wall, rehabilitate each one just enough to achieve legibility so that each mural can tell its story of the history of Downtown, to rehabilitate in a delicate and skilled manner, and to preserve the vintage qualities that are a part of its magic. The artist we found is an expert. This is what he does. He has positive reviews everywhere he has worked. The results will be exactly as represented in the computer image that you approve. The final

results will, in no way, diminish or compromise any nearby structures. The final results will be compatible and consistent with the Downtown Historic character and ambiance. We believe that there is a responsibility to preserve these unique and fragile historic assets. They are vintage public art. They provide a window into yesterday, who we were, how we lived, and how our downtown looked over the past one hundred years. The murals compliment the historic character of downtown because they are genuine, historic memorabilia. They amplify the authenticity of our historic district. They make people stop and smile and think about the passing of time and marvel that a soda pop ever cost 5 cents. The murals also increase the urban vitality and the allure of our downtown. Rehabbing the legibility will make the Second Street stroll even more interesting and fun. People are stopping to contemplate and discuss the charming puzzle that all these different names compile. Fading is not inevitable with a wall mural. A wall mural fades only when that is allowed to happen due to a lack of concern or funds. We have a building owner who want to rehabilitate their wall and preserve a fragile, historic asset. We have an expert who is available to assure the authenticity and respect for the historic district. The mural rehabilitation makes a valuable contribution to our downtown and its economic vitality. Please grant us permission to save these before they're lost.

Tom Chapman, Executive Director of Albemarle & Charlottesville Historical Society – I have been very interested in the work Friends of Charlottesville Downtown have been doing to rejuvenate and reimagine how we think about the downtown area. Their work to build community connected to place is important. It tied directly with we, at the Historical Society, are trying to do to shed light on our whole history. All this history starts at the local level. How we tell these stories come in many, various shapes sizes and forms. The Albemarle & Charlottesville Historical Society supports The Friends proposal to rehabilitate and preserve this mural at 122 East Main Street. Rehabilitating it will bring it to life, the history of the downtown Charlottesville that is fading away that we want to bring back and preserve it for future generations. The contractor Brushcan, who will conduct the rehabilitation has a wealth of experience. Their work has been noted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. During my time at Montpelier, I know that the Trust approval of anything does not come lightly or easily. If they like Brushcan, I can only imagine that they're a good company. This is an important consideration. In conclusion, The Historical Society supports Michael Caplin in this proposal and what The Friends want to do.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Questions from the Public

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Zehmer – Is the intent to restore these such that the latest sign the furthest out, in terms of a layered approach? Is the most recent sign going to look the most prominent and the oldest sign look the furthest back and covered up?

Mr. Caplin – The artist from Brushcan says that he gets up on the lift. He stares at what is there for him to find. He stares at it for a couple of days before he even starts. The longer you look at it, the more you discover. The idea is to lift what is there slightly. That, which is older, is probably going to be fainter. The idea is not to make them all equal but to maintain their relative status but to boost the legibility at each status.

Mr. Birle – The note here says rehab of Coca-Cola sign is the primary project. Rehab of additional portions of the wall is TBD. In your spoken comments, you said that is not TBD. You are planning on doing the entire mural. Is that correct?

Mr. Caplin – Yes. At the time we first approached everybody, we mistakenly thought that less would be easier for you to say ‘yes’ to. As everybody discussed it, it became apparent that it undid the whole purpose if you just have one piece. It is about the whole wall. With whatever protocol is necessary, we’re asking for permission to do the whole wall.

Mr. Werner – We are talking about the whole wall. There is nothing odd about that question.

Mr. Gastinger – You mentioned that there is a cleaning process. A sealant is applied. Is the painting done outside of the sealant?

Mr. Caplin – The sealant, which is porous, prevents what is under it from deteriorating further. It is clear polyurethane still lets the whole thing breathe. The new paint goes right on top of that.

Mr. Gastinger – Is it possible with the application of the urethane, that brings color forward in a way that makes it more legible in and of itself?

Mr. Caplin – I would guess that you’re probably right. I really don’t know. Scott’s Attack is like hour by hour to get where everybody wants to go. If that seal alone, does it, you won’t need to touch that spot.

Mr. Timmerman – How does one anticipate how the sealer is going to enhance the wall or change the wall? In a location where there isn’t any signage and they apply the sealer, how different would that appear than the rest of the wall?

Mr. Caplin – I have no idea. I am told that it is porous. It is light and color neutral. My home experience would suggest that it will darken something if you put this on it. Apparently, it dries as a clear seal. Each part of that whole chemical process is part of what he is doing to get us to this look. If the sealer itself helps do that, less additional is going to need to be applied.

Public Commenter – The brick deteriorates. If you don’t stop that, you probably see lots of old walls which just gets worse and worse. That protects it and brings back the old color from the brick. We have done it. It will improve it. When you look closely at it right now, it looks really deteriorated/ It is bad. It will come more alive and protect the brick for a long time. That has two purposes.

Mr. Badke – The urethane is going on first? They’re going to paint over that.

Mr. Caplin – It is urethane created for this purpose. There is a final coat that goes over top of everything when it is finished. It is UV repellent and further stabilizing the work.

Mr. Badke – I would be interested seeing what that original coat is. My understanding is that stuff brings out a lot of color. I think you need to recognize what that is going to do with lights and lighting and how that is going to effect it. That is a shine on that, especially if you’re going to do another coat on the end there. There are a lot of different factors there as far as nighttime lighting and how that is going to look. The reflection on that is significant. When it comes to the artist, those guys are unbelievably talented. I worry about the creativity there. There shouldn’t be any. What is on that paper, the creativity needs to go out the back door and they’re a ‘worker bee’ with unbelievable talent. That’s important to put that out there. We’re not looking for creativity. This is what we want.

Mr. Caplin – After the meeting with you last month, when I reported back to him, the discussion was about the whole wall. He got excited because he felt that everybody was ‘humming the same tune.’ To

him, the artistry is to be able to give each ghost it's due, not to sup it up to his taste. He told me that the finish is matte. I will get you a more comprehensive response.

Mr. Badke – I wonder if that is a high gloss because that is a significant difference. Bringing all this stuff out, are you going to lose it? I need to see what this computer-generated picture looks like. I worry about all those different things coming out and then you're losing things in the process. Bringing more out actually loses it.

Mr. Caplin – He is bringing out what is there. He is not adding to what is there. It is a puzzle. When you give them all their due, it becomes a puzzle. It also becomes a piece of art. What you're now looking at, there is more than you can't see in this photo. You must stand there and let your eyes adjust. You suddenly start seeing that there is a whole lot of story up there. Perhaps these coats of seal will bring some of that out. His goal is to give us back the wall that we have. It is not a place for artistry. It is a place for authenticity.

Mr. Badke – As far as the business/building owner wanting to make improvements, thank you for doing an improvement to downtown that is wonderful and appreciative.

Mr. Timmerman – The last time you were here, you were talking about how he can enhance and bring some things out and modulate what the final expression of the sign is. Given that ability to play with the different impressions, who is the final arbiter of that?

Mr. Caplin – Some of what you described, he says that he cannot do until he is up on the lift and sees it. At that point, he will generate a computer image of where he thinks we can go with this. With your approval, we can take it back to staff and to you. It is such a gradual process that it is not going to run away from us.

Mr. Werner – We're understanding what is going to be done but it is that calibration of what is acceptable. For example, with the Owl Cigar, the owl is gone. The brick was replaced, or something was done there. Sometimes we see things that aren't there. I know that the artist had done some research on the older signs. If it is not there, it doesn't get added. In the image that the artist was trying to work with, we were trying to express what it could look like. It is not what he is presenting as his final. If you all were inclined to this, is there a graphic that you would like to see? Are there images? Are there assurances of what is there?

Mr. Gastinger – Can I understand the difference between the image that is on pg. 64 (packet) and the image, that is similar, on pg. 65? Maybe one is from the city, and one is from the applicant.

Mr. Werner – There is an earlier image. A week or two ago, we got a better image from the artist.

Mr. Caplin – When you said that you wanted to talk about the whole wall, he submitted a fresh image that better reflected that. The earlier image was a smaller area.

Mr. Werner – I dated them because they are slightly different. I included them because it does show the difference in interpretation, the difficulty is reading it. You can see in the Owl Cigar the bottom. I don't know if that owl image is still there. I don't know if the artist in their initial research, had said that there would have been an owl there. If you are inclined to approve it, it would be helpful to give some thought to what certainty can we approve.

Mr. Birle – Are we approving or considering a version that recreates an owl?

Mr. Caplin – We must start by putting on the seal and see what reveals itself. If there is a ghost there, the artist would factor that into his computer drawing. It then would go to staff that says this is the owl we see. In the example here, where owl appears in the photograph is based on the Owl Cigar mural wherever you find it in the country. That is their mural. He said that it would be here. That is one of the decisions that communities make. Some go back to 100 percent, full saturation exactly the way it looked on the day it was installed. That is a value choice. It seems to be the consensus among us that the idea would be to preserve the karma of the historic vintage.

Mr. Gastinger – What I might suggest for our purposes is that tonight we consider the process that they have put forward, which requires more research and final product. We can choose whether to approve that or not. We continue to work with the applicant approval of a final art direction later if the process is approved.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Susan Christian – I would be foolish to think that I could do a better job of arguing the historical significance than the Historical Society. This corridor is the most important entry onto the Downtown Mall given its proximity to the Water Street Parking Garage. When you walk up that corridor, you see an unfinished hotel on one side and dilapidated and run-down large wall on the other side. Hopefully, the Dewberry Hotel will get finished. I am not hopeful for that. I am excited about the idea that we can bring some life and some excitement to this important entry corridor. This is an interesting and cool way to do it. It does pay homage to our historical background here but also celebrates artists. That is also an important consideration in this discussion.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Schwarz – I would say what you suggested about approving the process makes sense to me. If something is not there, they're not going to try to restore it. It does look like a window was filled in where there may have been an owl at some point. We have a lot of vestige signs in this town. This would be a great way to find out. This is a big test case. The process they have described would be perfectly acceptable to use as a test case.

Mr. Birle – I agree with that. I don't know how we codify being able to look at it in process. If there was a way that we can have some input, I would be interested in going down that route.

Mr. Werner – You're not saying, ‘that's fine, go do it.’ You're expressing that you want to be involved in this, have updates, and follow it. We will have to work that out. I don't think the guy is going to come in and knock this out in a couple of days. There are periodic pauses that allow the applicant and I to communicate. Ms. Murphy has been saying that we need to put the word out to the city and ask: Do you have photographs of downtown? It could be a family photo. Encourage people, if they have photographs, share them with us so we can see further back in time what was there. The applicant has done a good job explaining the process and the incremental steps. I have a better idea of what the artist would be doing. The first step would idea of what the artist would be doing. The first step would be that if I don't see an image there, you're not painting an image there. If you can express that, I will be tracking this project process incrementally.

Ms. Lewis – How quickly would this artist get started on this?

Mr. Caplin – I have been keeping him available while you were deciding, and the patron was deciding with the money. The artist is currently freezing the last two weeks of August for us. He will move here and stay for two weeks to do this job. That's the target window we're working on. If you are to give us a 'green light,' it would be done on or around September 5th.

Mr. Gastinger – If the project was approved this evening, this research phase would happen and there would be an additional guiding document/guiding communicative image before he starts.

Mr. Caplin – He is waiting for you to 'quarterback' it. The second photo that staff was talking about was based on what I reported to him after our last meeting. They want to see the whole wall. We will keep 'massaging' that until the first dab of paint goes on. He will probably be tuning it in to where staff and whoever among you is also engaged. He will then pick up his paint.

Mr. Gastinger – This is such a unique case. I would think that we should appoint a small working group to work closely rather than using our meetings to follow this process. I don't think it will happen on our timeline.

Mr. Zehmer – I am in support of this project. It is a fantastic idea. The BAR has approved new murals on buildings in historic districts. If that building gets sold to somebody two years after we approve that mural, and that new owner wants to maintain that mural. Are they not allowed to? Are they not allowed to keep that mural like it is and repaint it the same colors? I don't think we can say 'no' to that. To some degree, it is maintenance. The tricky part is that it is very old, and nobody has been maintaining it. You have lots of layers. Staff's recommendation is to look at this as preservation/rehabilitation. We're looking through it through that lens. If staff had said to look at it through a restoration or reconstruction lens, we could do that. It would give us a different set of guidelines to follow. Part of the conversation is what lens we look at it through. Based on what the applicant wants to do, we're looking at it through the rehabilitation and preservation lens. That is helping guide this conversation. The process that they're proposing makes sense. Showing the layers of the different signs makes sense. It's going to give the wall a lot of depth and a lot of vitality. This could potentially encourage future projects like this, which would add to the layered value of the history of Charlottesville.

Mr. Gastinger – I came here tonight 'on the fence' about this. I was really conflicted because this is such a cool part of downtown Charlottesville. I didn't want to be part of messing it up. Touching it is a question of whether you mess it up. I appreciate the way that you have approached this and the expertise that you have brought to this project. You are doing this with the same approach that you don't want to mess this up. You want to bring it forward. It is an unusual situation. It might be unusual for a restoration to tackle this many layered signs at one time. I can imagine that it will be a subject of conversation, probably pro and con about preservation of this signage. The restoration of the Coke sign was less interesting because of how many of those signs there are across the country. It wasn't particular to our town. The approach to the whole wall and a careful attention to the layered quality has the potential of saying lot of pulling forward local businesses that were present in those locations and the layered nature of it. I was speaking about the changes of usage over time. It brings forward a part of Charlottesville that was pre-20s and 30s when a very different kind of approach to architecture took over downtown. It is interesting to see this portion of Charlottesville come back to life in some way. I came in 'on the fence.' I am feeling in support of this project given the way that you have approached it and the care you have brought to us.

Mr. Whitney – I have walked past this wall many times. It has never felt more than just a brick wall. When I first heard about the concept of trying to rehabilitate it to a certain degree but not fully restore it, something about that felt false. It was either going to continue to naturally fade or it was going to need to be fully restored. Something about trying to do it halfway felt skeptical. Seeing the previous work that the

artist did in in Mooresville, North Carolina helped tell the tale that it can be done in the right way. Something about this felt different. I like the mural further up West Main Street on the Public Oyster building. It is different because it is an art mural. It is not an ad. The previous mural is still there. The new mural went over the top. You get both layers on top. This one felt different because it is an ad. You can debate what an ad is, what a sign is, what art is, and what a mural is. Seeing how it has been successful in other cities, it would help bring more life to that wall. I have slowly come around that the rehabilitation process will slowly bring it out. It can be a positive in this application.

Mr. Timmerman – Your excitement is very commendable. It shows a love of your community and your willingness to step out and make this happen. It is a good thing to have. It will hopefully be infectious to another point, which how these kinds of things might grow. You made compelling points, which only helps this. What came out of the meeting tonight was that procedurally we want to maintain a process. This needs to be handled carefully so that we get it right. This is the first good step. What will make it successful is following through with it, having as many check-ins as we can. I was surprised to hear that it was only going to take two weeks. I was expecting longer. These kinds of things are successful when somebody gets into it. We could talk about it for so long. We can look at imagery. At a certain point, it is a craft. The magic happens in the construction/artwork. It is to make sure there is a hands-on approach where it is not just one person. We will find that we will find or generate more rules as we move forward. It will get more technical and detailed as we move along, whether it is with the sealer. We may discover things as he starts in August. It might be a good idea to codify that, so we have a record of what we're trying to attain.

Ms. Lewis – I want to thank Friends of Charlottesville for bringing this forward. It is very exciting. What is exciting about this is that is not just a Coca-Cola sign. The rest of the murals tell a history about the building, which is amazing. These are not just murals, commercial signs, advertisement from the past. TJ Wills, once that is restored, tells a story of a grocery store that was here 100 years ago. That's important. I am very supportive of this.

Mr. Werner – There is a question about that sheen. The process that is laid out in that spreadsheet, the initial research. They're going to be doing that research to tell us what they can identify before they get up there and do things. That archival information will be provided prior to starting something like that so that we know that it has been looked at and it has been photographed. You all have asked for some clarification on the sheen. When do say that that it is far enough? The red and the green of Coke sign have been pulled forward than what is there. In the period of that two weeks, it is going to take some collaboration, cooperation, and staff staying on top of this, consulting with the BAR chair and co-chair. There are some things that we would want to resolve prior to work starting. It is that process during the work. I am consulting with the BAR chair/co-chair understanding that we can decide that it doesn't become a restoration or re-creation.

Motion – Mr. Schwarz – Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including the ADC District Design Guidelines, I move to find the proposed rehabilitation/preservation of vestige signs at 122 E Main Street satisfies the BAR's criteria and is compatible with this property and other properties in this ADC District, and that the BAR approves the application with the following conditions:

[Prior to work on wall]

- Complete research and photo/image analysis, fully document existing.
- Applicant will confirm the sheen [of the coatings] and [how/whether] the coating will create [color change]
- [Rehabilitation] will be based on the process [during the work] and not on images [submitted]
- Hierarchy of various signs [will be maintained], not re-create what does not exist.

- [Applicant will] work with staff [during rehab] who will work with the BAR chair and vice-chair to confirm process is appropriate. Second by Mr. Zehmer. Motion passes 8-0.

4. Recommendation on Special Use Permit

207-211 Ridge Street (Salvation Army), TMP 290029000

Ridge Street ADC District

Owner: The Salvation Army

Applicant: Erin Hannegan / Mitchell Matthews Architects & Planners

Project: Redevelopment of site

Jeff Werner, Staff Report – Special Use Permit (SUP) request to modify the setback, build-to percentage, and parking requirements. SUPs are approved by City Council; however, per City Code Sec. 34-157(7), Council is required to consider recommendation(s) from the BAR “as to whether the proposed [SUP] will have an adverse impact on the [Ridge Street ADC] district, and for recommendations as to reasonable conditions which, if imposed, that would mitigate any such impacts.” Additionally, the planned redevelopment, regardless of this SUP, will require BAR design review and approval of a CoA.

Erin Hannegan, Applicant – The Salvation Army has been serving Charlottesville since 1912. They have occupied the site at 207 Ridge Street since 1965, when they constructed the chapel, the administration offices, and the gymnasium. Around 1980, they built the emergency shelter at 211 Ridge Street, which is on the 4th Street side of the site at the rear. Around 1992, they added transitional housing and the soup kitchen. The Salvation Army is the only year-round shelter available in Charlottesville. Last year, they helped more than 21,000 individuals and families with critical social services.

Salvation Army Goal:

“Have each person they serve partner with the Salvation Army in the pathway of hope program. The plan is to assist in breaking the cycle of poverty and assist individuals and families to achieve their goals through securing stable jobs, housing, and becoming self-sufficient.”

The most important reason for redevelopment is to improve community services and increase capacity. The men’s shelter is constantly full. In addition, the current facilities are in three buildings. The programs that they have are disconnected due to the piecemeal expansion that occurred over time and constricted the nature of the existing parcel. The building goals of the new facility include increased capacity, improved functionality and efficiency, allowance for future expansion on site, and, most importantly, allowing the existing shelter to remain operational during redevelopment. The Salvation Army would also like the community, at large, to see and become more aware of their services and the work that they do and with what this new facility will provide to the community and hopefully become more engaged with the facility and the volunteer opportunities within. The building is cited closer to Ridge Street creating that visibility into the building on the primary street as a physical manifestation of the goal. The design also wished to save the existing 56-inch oak tree. We’re requesting this SUP for use. The site is a double-frontage lot with Ridge Street as a primary street and 4th Street Southwest as a linking street. The lot is 397 feet deep from Ridge Street to 4th Street and just under 120 feet wide at its narrowest point. We are requesting these other modifications: the setback relief on 4th Street. The required setback is a 5-foot m minimum and a 12-foot maximum. We’re proposing a 10-foot minimum be written into the SUP request and no maximum setback. The reason is constructability with the existing shelter to remain intact during construction. The only open available area for laydown space to redevelop is along that 4th Street frontage. The project goals are utilizing the allowable height available under the existing ordinance and leave undeveloped area open for future expansion. This means that the project is pushed towards Ridge Street, leaving the open area on the 4th Street frontage and modifying the minimum to 10 feet rather than a 5-foot minimum aligns with a street

buffer requirement of 10 feet as well. It would remain during any future expansion. No maximum allows for the currently proposed structure as designed to be built as represented here.

The second item is reducing the build to percentages. The required percentage that must fall of the building frontage that needs to fall within the minimum-maximum setbacks on Ridge Street is 80 percent. It is 40 percent on the 4th Street side. We're proposing 32 percent at Ridge Street. We're asking it not to be required on the 4th Street side. We're doing this on Ridge Street to protect that tree. The reason we're doing it on 4th Street is because the existing shelter occupies a portion of the frontage. The rest of it is the open area.

The next item is the reduction of the required parking quantity. Using the ordinance, we would be required to have 52 spaces. We're asking for no minimum so we can allow for future flexibility on site, which aligns with the proposed zoning ordinance. The actual spaces to be provided would be 32, which is a 39 percent reduction. We're also asking for the modification to the required covered parking. If you have more than 20 spaces on site, 50 percent of those are required to be covered. With the clientele visiting the building, surface parking would be viewed as more comfortable and favorable to them. It allows the parking lot to be used for other outdoor uses.

With the massing and scale, the 1.5 story chapel is the portion that reaches out towards Ridge Street in a similarly scaled to the one- and two-story houses across Ridge Street. Similarly, the one-story multi-purpose room stretches towards 4th Street Southwest. It is over 100 feet from the property line and is in keeping with the existing one- and two-story houses in scale and size on the 4th Street side. Both the chapel and multi-purpose rooms are narrow forms, reminiscent of the width of the existing single-family residential fabric that remains in the area. The massing is a direct response to the narrowness of the site and working around the tree and this existing shelter. The area around the tree and the area adjacent to it under the front porch would become public outdoor amenity space. The primary massing/upper stories is approximately 69 feet from Ridge Street and over 200 feet from 4th Street. It nearly fills the site in the north-south dimension and extends west in an L-shaped form for the upper stories. The building height is 51 feet calculated from the curb at Ridge Street, which is less than the max height of 52 feet. There is no ability to ask for increased height. This is well under the max height of 142 feet, which would be allowable under the proposed future zoning ordinance. The dogleg condition of the site, as it wraps behind, the fire station will remain open for private playground in the near term and the possibility of expansion at that point in the distant future (15 or 20 years).

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Questions from the Public

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Ms. Lewis – How parking spots are currently on site?

Ms. Hannegan – It is right around 32 spots.

Ms. Lewis – How many visitors park on 4th Street? Is the neighborhood impacted?

Ms. Hannegan – I heard from one neighbor, who does feel there is an issue with parking along 4th Street. That is because the dinner service is when the Salvation Army sees the highest capacity of people on site. I have asked that neighbor if they were open to permit parking along 4th Street as a solution. They didn't respond to that. That is a consideration to solve the 4th Street parking issue.

Ms. Lewis – Can overnight guests park there?

Ms. Hannegan – Yes. There are very few staff that run the Salvation Army. The parking is primarily for the overnight guests.

Ms. Lewis – How many staff work at the Salvation Army during the day?

Ms. Hannegan – I believe 3 full time staff. The Major just retired and is being replaced with Mark Van Meter. He will run the Salvation Army. He is supported by the shelter program manager. There is another person who runs the kitchen, and another person runs the shelter. The other people are more fluid coming and going.

Ms. Lewis – With Sundays, are there people that come to worship at the chapel who may not be Salvation Army overnight clients?

Ms. Hannegan – There are people that come to the Sunday service. They are allowed to park on the Noland site for the Sunday service. It is not a formal agreement.

Mr. Birle – Is there a maximum setback off Ridge Street?

Ms. Hannegan – It is a 10-foot minimum and 20-foot maximum. The chapel falls in that range.

Mr. Schwarz – You’re not proposing any changes to the Ridge Street setbacks. You’re proposing a change to the build-to width.

Ms. Hannegan – Correct.

Mr. Timmerman – The building is behind the tree. Does that have a basement?

Ms. Hannegan – No. It will not have a basement. The only basement portion will be under the chapel along that northern border. There is an existing basement in that same vicinity. The footprint of the basement is going to be smaller than the existing footprint. We’re further away from the tree in this proposed condition than current conditions. Our first-floor elevation is going to be 4 feet above the sidewalk. That is because the tree elevation is also 4 feet above the sidewalk. We’re not taking down the mound that the tree is on.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Comments from the Public

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Schwarz – I am in support of the SUP request. The future setbacks on this stretch of Ridge Street will be 0 to 10 feet. 10 to 20 feet is further back. If their current design has the front of the chapel around 10 feet, it is going to match what the future context could be if they rebuild the fire station or Noland. I don’t have any concerns with them not building to the back of the property. That is a flaw in our proposed zoning code that you have a required double frontage. I am not sure how that is going to turn out. Some conditions I might consider for this would be:

- If the tree dies, they replant a tree that will grow to that size.
- To review some of the streetscape requirements that are in the new code, which require a street tree every 40 feet. See if they can find a way to implement that in their design.

- To review the screening guidelines as far as parking lots are concerned, screening that parking lot from 4th Street.

You have a blank wall that is about 40 feet long in front of the chapel. I don't want to put a condition on that at this point. That might be something for you to think about as you're developing the design. It is not necessarily the sidewalk. It's your ramp on your property. Maybe it is the way you treat that planted area that is between the ramp and the sidewalk. I was proposing some conditions on it because the Planning Commission will sometimes say that it needs to go to the BAR.

Mr. Timmerman – I have no problem with this layout. It makes logical sense. It is an efficient land use while respecting important parts of the site. You have the issue of maintaining the operation of the place during construction, which is important. The fact that it consolidates in one side so that it leaves you the opportunity for further development. That is a noteworthy thing.

Mr. Birle – I am in full support of it.

Ms. Lewis – Was that a motion that you made (Mr. Schwarz)? I thought we're voting on whether the SUP will or will not have an adverse impact on the historic district.

Mr. Schwarz – Sometimes, we're allowed to suggest conditions. All I was doing was suggesting conditions to you guys. We don't have to include in our motion.

Ms. Lewis – Wouldn't the Planning Commission do that?

Mr. Schwarz – They would. We can offer suggestions to them.

Mr. Werner – You're making a recommendation to Council. It does go through the Planning Commission. They can consider them. Ultimately, Council will decide on the recommendations.

Mr. Gastinger – We're just making recommendations. In the past when we have made recommendations, for SUPs, they have been very helpful as we have reviewed projects. There were other projects related to the SUP request. We wanted to make sure that when it came back to us, it was still going to fit the nature and intent of our guidelines. Those are appropriate suggestions. Council can choose to make them a part of the SUP.

I am in favor of the project. Some of the SUP request is evidence of this project taking consideration of its context in the historic district, the existing tree canopy, buildings across the street, and the adjacent neighborhood.

Motion – Mr. Schwarz – I move the BAR recommend to City Council the proposed Special Use Permit to modify the setback, build-to, and parking requirements for the redevelopment of 207-211 Ridge Street will not adversely impact the Ridge Street ADC District, with the understanding that the final design will require BAR review and approval. BAR recommends that Council consider conditions in the SUP:

- If the large oak tree [at Ridge Street] dies, that another large canopy tree will be planted [in its place].
- [Require appropriate screening] to screen the parking from 4th Street.

Second by Mr. Timmerman. Motion passes 8-0.

E. Other Business

5. Preliminary Discussion

207-211 Ridge Street (Salvation Army), TMP 290029000

Ridge Street ADC District

Owner: The Salvation Army

Applicant: Erin Hannegan / Mitchell Matthews Architects & Planners

Project: Redevelopment of site

- The applicant presented the proposed design of the Salvation Army development. The project is being funded by donations.
- The applicant did specifically ask for feedback from the BAR regarding the front of the chapel part of the new building.
- Mr. Gastinger did mention that the vertical concrete did stick out and was unusual.
- Mr. Zehmer did have questions about what is going to be in the planter at the front of the building.
- Mr. Gastinger did not find the base of the chapel to be overwhelming. Mr. Gastinger did like the approach currently being shown in the renderings and drawings.
- Mr. Birle did bring that the chapel looks as if it is projecting out into Ridge Street if coming from downtown.
- Mr. Gastinger did agree with Mr. Birle with the chapel projection out into Ridge Street.
- Mr. Timmerman made some suggestions regarding the materials and suggested wood to add warmth to the front of the building.
- Mr. Schwarz did say that there is an opportunity with the planters in front of the building and creating extra shading on the sidewalk.
- The applicant did have questions and concerns regarding the height of the fencing.
- Staff did clarify that there are no fence height restrictions. The applicant can modify the height of the fence.
- Mr. Timmerman mentioned the idea of an open space in front of the building to engage with the street.
- The members of the BAR did indicate that they do like the direction of the project.

6. Staff Questions/Discussion

- Update: Downtown Mall VLR/NRHP designation
- Update: Zoning rewrite
- Question: Painting/art on walls [continuous art vs murals]

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 PM.