

STAFFORD COUNTY ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES
September 9, 2024

The meeting of the Stafford County Architectural Review Board of Monday, September 9, 2024, was called to order at 6:02 PM by Linda Burdette, in the ABC Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Burdette, Doris McAdams, Kim Taylor-Wilson and Billy Shelton

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mark Ethridge

STAFF PRESENT: Nancy Kotting, Vicki Sowers

GUESTS PRESENT:

CALL TO ORDER

Linda Burdette called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Vicki Sowers called roll. There was a quorum.

VOTE TO ACCEPT OR AMEND THE AGENDA

Linda Burdette requested to amend the agenda for reports by ARB members with some information she has received from Supervisor Bohmke regarding the Grizzle Building. Doris McAdams asked to amend the agenda to add Shelton Cottage, Counting House and Grizzle Building to Old Business. Billy Shelton **motioned to accept the agenda as amended**, Ms. McAdams seconded. **Motion passed 4 -0.**

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Little Falls Farm (Duff Green) Historic Resource Overlay District Recommendation

Nancy Kotting passed out a PowerPoint overview of Little Falls Farm.

- 638 Kings Highway
- TM Parcel: 58C 2 6
- 64.27 acres
- A1 Zoning District
- Owned by Stafford County
- Currently being Leased

She explained that the property has been determined as ELIGIBLE for the National Register of Historic Places by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VA DHR) as on June 20, 2024. She said the eligibility determination was based upon Criteria 'C' – Distinctive Characteristics of Architecture/Construction and said there is potential for eligibility under criteria 'D' but would

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need an additional survey by a state archeologist. Ms. McAdams questioned who would pay for the additional survey/research and Ms. Kotting said they would be responsible we just need to schedule the visit.

Ms. Kotting said the property is currently under a long-term lease with a 501c3 non-profit organization that is utilizing the resource for educational purposes and the tenant plans to do restoration work on the structure, according to their business plan which may include vinyl window installation. She said HROD would require a Certificate of Appropriateness for any future changes so all of that would be addressed.

Ms. Kotting said staff recommends the ARB to submit a recommendation to the Stafford County Board of Supervisors to consider placing an Historic Resource Overlay District (HROD) zoning classification on TM 58C 2 6 based on:

1. The historic resource's National Register of Historic Places eligibility determination.
2. County precedent in placing HROD zoning classification on county-owned resources deemed eligible for listing or is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Counting House and Shelton's Cottage)

Ms. McAdams questioned if there will be an issue since the County entered into the leasing contract prior to the Overlay determination. Ms. Kotting and Linda Burdett recommended consulting with the County Attorney.

Ms. Kotting advised that two properties were presented to the Board of Supervisors for an HROD recommendation at their last meeting – no action was taken. It is a slow process and could take up to a year. **Ms. Burdett made a motion to get this property on the Board agenda for an ARB Historic Resource Overlay classification.** Mr. Shelton seconded.

Ms. McAdams noted that she had watched Ms. Kotting's Board presentation and complimented her. She said that the Board took interest and could tell that light bulbs went off. They requested to do some background homework. She said it was a good presentation with a lot of information. Ms. Taylor-Wilson agreed that getting through three of the six properties on the agenda was very good since Ms. Kotting was only given 15 minutes to speak. Mr. Shelton said all the properties and information interested him. He read the packet for all six and commended Ms. Kotting on her professionalism. Ms. Burdett reiterated that the Board process will be long, and ARB will need to be patient. She then called for a vote on the motion previously declared – APPROVED 4-0.

2. Finalize proposed changes to Ordinance regarding required expertise on ARB.

Ms. Brudett said she sent an email to Ms. Kotting but wires got crossed so the message wasn't sent to everyone prior to the meeting. She provided a copy of her recommended Ordinance changes. Copies were made and passed out. The highlights are as follows:

Stafford County Virginia Code of Ordinances
Section 28.58

- (1) ...Preference will be given to any applicant who is....
- (2) ~~.At least one member shall be a registered architect, or an architectural historian, with a demonstrated interest in historic preservation.~~
- (3) ...a requirement that a quorum of four (4) a majority of the appointed members...

Ms. Burdett noted on the document that the justification for the request will be:

- (1) Elimination of requirement of registered architect: For the past 5 years, ARB membership has always included one from the Planning Commission and sometimes one resident of an HROD, but the members of the ARB and the BOS have been unable to identify and attract a registered architect or architectural historian with a demonstrated interest in preservation. To remedy this, the ARB has worked with the Planning office to establish contractual methods to seek the professional advice of a registered architect or architectural historian, when needed. We request that this requirement be dropped from the Ordinance and this position be available to appointees from the general public with a demonstrated knowledge, interest, or competence in historic preservation.
- (2) Change in quorum: For the past 5 year, the ARB has operated with, at most, 5 members and often with only 4. The Ordinance appears to be written with the assumption that the ARB would always be operating with 7 members, in which case a quorum of 4 would be a majority of members. With only 4-5 members, it has become increasingly difficult to maintain a quorum and to do business on a regular basis. It is particularly disappointing with a resident has applied for ARB approval and the Board is unable to review and approve their plans because of quorum issues.

After a bit of discussion, Mr. Shelton motioned to **approve the amendments as written**. Ms. Taylor-Wilson seconded. **Vote approved 4-0**. Ms. Kotting said she will have all reviewed by legal prior to taking to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Sherwood Forest Proposed Historic Overlay District Updates
2. Clifton Chapel Proposed Historic Resource Overlay District Updates

Ms. Kotting said she presented both of these to the Board of Supervisors at the last meeting and they did not make any decisions. They said they needed more information and time to do some research. She said the last time a property in Stafford County has been designated to the HROD was 15 years ago and it is a new process/new territory for many. She also said that the Board requested to set up 2x2 meetings with the County Admin, staff and two Board members. Ms. Taylor-Wilson agreed that it is important for them to understand the relevance and to educate on the significance of the HROD classification. Ms. Kotting emphasized that it is a tool that is mandated from Federal to State to localities and all of this needs to be taught so the HROD classifications can be actively used as intended.

3. Counting House (added with Agenda Amendment)

Ms. Kotting said there is a meeting already scheduled with the Board of Supervisors on this. Ms. Burdett asked who makes the decision regarding the RFB (Request For Bid) and Ms. Kotting confirmed that it is the Board of Supervisors.

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4. Shelton Cottage (added with Agenda Amendment)

Ms. Kotting said that the information regarding the Shelton Cottage was also included with the packet for submission to the Board, but time ran out and it was not reviewed yet. The key is to explore the options due to the flooding on River Road. She said she is working with Parks and Recreation with regards to some research on the cottage. Ms. McAdams and Ms. Burdett asked if the cottage could be moved again. Mr. Shelton recommended moving to the Grizzle Building area. Discussion began regarding the widening of Butler Road and parking. Mr. Shelton suggested checking into the research and history that was done Mary Washington College in 1972. Ms. Kotting said she has seen much of that research done by a MWC Professor. She said preservation and research techniques have come a long way since 1972 and there is constant uncovering of new information; therefore, it is always good to revisit the research.

5. Grizzle Building (added with Agenda Amendment)

Ms. Kotting said she does not have any updates. Ms. Burdette said she spoke with Supervisor Bohmke and advised that she is very well aware of the history of the building and shares the concerns. Discussions began regarding the last survey in 2008, asbestos issues, road widening, expenses/budget regarding bringing it back to its original state, and gravesites.

Mr. Shelton said that Supervisor Diggs spoke with Parks and Recreation and is pleased to see that the vines have now been removed from the building.

Ms. Kotting reiterated that a lot of the information being discussed is in the Board packet that was submitted for the last BOS meeting and that progress is being made. She also wanted to go on record to state it is important to document and survey the Union Cemetery for accuracy and for understanding of location choices – details regarding cultural norms.

REPORTS BY ARB MEMBERS

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 1, 2024 (No August meeting)

Mr. Shelton motioned to approve the July 1, 2024, minutes. Ms. McAdams seconded.

Approved 4 - 0

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 6:42pm.