

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33
- 34
- 35
- 36
- 37
- 38

3

5 The meeting of the Stafford County Architectural Review Board of Monday, April 6, 2026, was called to
6 order at 6:05 PM by Ms. Burdette, in the ABC Conference Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr.,
7 Government Center.

9 MEMBERS PRESENT: Mark Ethridge, Linda Burdette, Billy Shelton, Aaron Mastin, Kim Taylor-
10 Wilson, Doris McAdams.

12 MEMBERS ABSENT: None

14 STAFF PRESENT: Nancy Kotting, Crissy Kendall

16 GUESTS PRESENT: None

18 CALL TO ORDER

20 Ms. Burdette called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

22 ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

24 Ms. Crissy Kendall called roll. There was a quorum.

26 VOTE TO ACCEPT OR AMEND THE AGENDA

28 Mr. Shelton motioned to accept the agenda as presented. He was seconded by Mr. Mastin. The motion
29 passed unanimously.

31 PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

33 None.

35 NEW BUSINESS

- 37 1. Request for ARB Comment on Comprehensive Plan Updates - Cultural Resources

Ms. Nancy Kotting of Planning and Zoning led a discussion on proposed updates to the Cultural Resources section of the Stafford County Comprehensive Plan and sought ARB members' input. She emphasized that the county's top priority must be updating the countywide Cultural Resource Survey, which is now more than 30 years old and stated that the absence of current data significantly limits the county's ability to identify, evaluate, and protect important cultural assets. This survey update is foundational and must precede substantial revisions to the Cultural Resource Master Plan or the creation of an enforceable Historic Preservation Ordinance. She also proposed revisiting the 2006 Draft Preservation Ordinance, updating it to include both archaeological and architectural resources in alignment with state law. She described the challenges of having no enforcement authority during development review and emphasized that the ordinance is critical for meaningful cultural resource protection.

Architectural Review Board Minutes
April 6, 2026

For county-owned historic properties, Ms. Kotting stressed the need for an ongoing stewardship program rather than one-time planning documents. She has already begun implementing such practices, especially in Falmouth, and wants the Comprehensive Plan to reflect this continuous-management approach. Collaboration with Tourism and Economic Development is key to leveraging cultural resources as economic drivers.

Board members raised concerns about outdated resource listings, the loss of some historic sites over the past decades, and the need for clear documentation of what remains. There was consensus that historic overlay districts should be prioritized, including for county-owned properties, as a more immediately actionable protective tool than protective easements.

Commissioners expressed general support for Ms. Kotting's approach, including her emphasis on "strategic doing"—a flexible, adaptive management style—rather than static, plan-heavy processes. Planning Commission member Billy Shelton viewed the conversation positively in light of upcoming Planning Commission review of Chapters 5 and 6.

2. Staff Update on Sherwood Forest/Forest Lane Project

Ms. Nancy Kotting provided a brief status update on the Sherwood Forest and Forest Lane development applications. No formal action was required, but she wanted to keep the ARB informed due to the board's prior recommendation for a historic overlay district. She encouraged members to contact their supervisors individually if they want updates on that issue. A second round of review submissions for the project arrived in early April, though Ms. Kotting had limited time to review the materials. She noted that a Phase II archaeological study is underway and has been formally committed to by the applicant, but the work is not far enough along to be included in the current submission. The applicant also submitted a viewshed study, however, the analysis is limited to views from public roads and does not evaluate how development will appear from the Sherwood Forest cultural resource looking outward. Ms. Kotting emphasized that this missing perspective is essential for determining visual impacts on the historic landscape. Ms. Kotting's initial review of the updated proffers showed no new commitments related to the preservation or protection of Sherwood Forest. The development plan appears to rely solely on avoidance strategies, with development concentrated in one area and expansion proposed from the railroad inward.

The Commission requested to be kept informed as these items progress so members can monitor agendas and documents online. Ms. Kotting noted that all submitted materials are already available on the county's website.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Update: Potential Historic Resource Overlay Districts

a. Slavery Related Resource – Phillips House Duplex (Burnside Manor) 901 Northside

Members discussed potential Historic Resource Overlay District for the Phillips House duplex. Mr. Shelton had planned to speak with the residents directly and confirmed he had visited the property three separate times but was unable to make contact. He mentioned seeing children's bicycles in the front yard, indicating the home is occupied, but he has not been able to reach anyone. Given the repeated unsuccessful

Architectural Review Board Minutes
April 6, 2026

attempts, Ms. Burdette suggested it may be time for the Board to move forward with the draft letter to the owner. She proposed shifting agenda items so that the Board could begin working on that letter, since personal outreach has not yielded results. The discussion concluded with general agreement that a formal letter is likely the next appropriate step.

2. Review DRAFT letter introducing HROD to property owners for future use

Ms. Burdette requested that a letter be sent to the owner. On motion by Mr. Shelton, seconded by Ms. Taylor-Wilson, members voted to move forward with the letter as drafted by Ms. Taylor-Wilson. By consensus, members agreed to use this “warm” introductory letter template when historic properties are identified that are not currently within an overlay district, explaining what a historic overlay is, how it works, and addressing concerns about potential cost to property owners. Members further agreed to proceed with preparing and sending the letter specifically to the Phillips House owner. Ms. Kotting will refine the letter’s formatting and language and coordinate with Ms. Taylor-Wilson and Ms. Burdette on a final version. Ms. Kotting also reported that the annual reminder letter to all property owners within existing historic overlay districts was sent approximately six weeks to one month prior, reminding them of their district status and related requirements.

REPORTS BY ARB MEMBERS

Mr. Mastin provided a brief update on the River Roots Coffee Shop and Art Gallery, noting that it is doing well and hosting diverse activities that draw people to Falmouth. Members expressed support for the business. Ms. Kotting reported that brush clearing has begun around the Counting House and that she expects a COA application for signage there, although it had not yet been submitted. No additional items were reported by members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The February 2, 2026, meeting were approved on a motion by Mr. Shelton. He was seconded by Ms. Taylor-Wilson. The minutes was approved with unanimous consent.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:39 pm.