

Wilmington Design Review and Preservation Commission
Wednesday, February 16, 2022
6:30 PM

Commission members: Peter vonGlahn, Jay Macklin, David Ross, Toren Williams (on phone)

Staff: Rose Tassone, Law; Pat Maley, John Kurth (on site); Herb Inden, Tim Lucas, Dorien Snyder, Jessica Molina (Zoomed in) Planning

6:32 pm start

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Reading of the rules of procedure by Peter vonGlahn.

NEW BUSINESS

Permit Referral DR-1713: 1801 Lovering Avenue. Request for new vinyl siding on rear ell and new basement door on east façade elevation. Forty Acres Neighborhood Conservation District. Resolution 03-22.

Presentation was by Mary Kate Garmin, owner. Complete renovation – everything is brand new – at stand still need approvals for siding to be able to place insulation, etc.

Pat Maley did a quick presentation of Planning’s slides showing both present areas of concern and the work done since the 2021 review of windows and doors.

Commission found no problem with the new door – they do need a definition of what siding they will use, the owner responded that they are looking to mimic the bigger exposure so they will use the 8” exposure.

Toren – what material for the door?

Mrs. Garmin said they will use wood that will mimic the existing door as much as possible – weather resistant wood painted black to match the windows.

There were no other questions.

There was a quick Q & A about vinyl siding – it was acceptable to the Commission because the area is a Neighborhood Conservation District with the more liberal material standards.

Peter von Glahn read the entire first resolution to get verbiage in the record. It was seconded by David Ross and approved unanimously.

Permit Referral DR- 1714: 501 West Street. Request to place new windows in two second floor bays visible from 5th Street. Quaker Hill City Historic District. Resolution 04-22.

The Case was represented by Solomon Clark contractor for G. Fedale and the owner, Fr. John McVoy.

Planning's slides were presented by Pat Maley who was stressing the visibility of the two bays and the position of the building in the Quaker Hill Neighborhood.

Bayard Marin in the audience

Peter addresses the problems -vinyl – there is no precedent for DRPC approval of vinyl window in this district.

He also stressed that aluminum wrap is not appropriate for the district – changes character defining element proportion and creates a rot program in the original wood once the inevitable leaks through the wrap occurs.

Toren asked about what windows were allowed in that district.

Pat Maley clarified that because the area is both a full City Historic District and a National Register District wood windows or wood clad windows would be required.

Toren Williams said he was not ready to set a new precedent that would go against that and allow vinyl windows.

Fr. McVoy jumped into the discussion saying that the request is for vinyl -and added further detail about the other windows in the building he has worked on or had replaced (the Front elevation has wood windows) –he summarized that he cannot afford the approximate One thousand dollars each that it would cost to place wood in the 2 bays (for a total of \$7,000). He noted the Economic reason as well as the fact that obtaining old growth wood with its durability is generally not possible today. He further noted that he understands what the board is trying to do – going forward. He verbalized other work needed such as the side door needs to be painted, and he noted that he has spent upwards of \$250,000 so far on the house repairs and renovations since his 2006 purchase.

HE further stressed that these bays are on the SIDE of the house (trying to say that it is not a primary elevation).

Pat Maley jumped in with a discussion of reasonably priced Jeld-Wen W-2500 windows from an application for 515 Taylor Street that she had processed that morning as an administrative approval. The dollar figures for the clad wood windows were only in the high \$600 range, not the one-thousand-dollar range. This opened a discussion of Fr. McVoy having his contractor explore other brands of windows for more reasonable wood or wood clad window.

Pat Maley asked John Kurth address Downtown Development District funding possibilities – he did note that it would require a minimum real property investment of \$25000, but that possibly could include interior work such as Fr. McVoy had listed in his application that came with the window work application. John offered to look at the scope of work to see if there are other expenditures that could qualify.

There were no other commission comments at that time.

Peter von Glahn read a letter submitted to DRPC from QHNA Casandra Marshall requesting DRPC reject the application.

Bayard Marin who was in the Zoom audience chose to make comments, which included if an alternative to the vinyl can be found that would be great – it is a magnificent bay window -and should be treated historically correctly. He noted his 38 years in Quaker Hill and stated that there had not been DRPC approval of vinyl at any time.

Fr. McVoy rebutted saying that he did not buy his house for \$1 and did not buy it in ignorance – then thanked Pat Maley for the positive stance about finding an appropriate alternative window selection.

Peter von Glahn closed the discussion by asking, “So, the sense of the commission is to deny the request as written?”

He then read the prepared resolution with addition of a caveat about not allowing the aluminum wrap–

“2. Aluminum capping is not acceptable in the historic district.”

The resolution with the addition was seconded by Toren Williams and approved unanimously.

Permit Referral DR- 1715: 818 N. Market Street. Request for placement of a highly visible illuminated signboard on the King Street façade of the Grand Opera House. Market Street City Historic District. Resolution 05-22.

Mike Hewitt the sign contractor, and Terry Cruse, a representative of the Grand Opera House made the presentation address the application by saying that “The Grand wants to communicate with people traveling on the King Street side.”

Because staff had briefed the applicants earlier in the day that there were issues about the application because of the site of the proposed placement, Terry Cruse from the Grand stated that they were willing to move the sign to the right of what had been shown in the application.

With the permission of the chairperson, Pat Maley used Planning’s slides to lead the lengthy discussion through the reasoning of the case analysis, using section §42-542 of City Code as the basis for rejection and pointing out the several reasons within the Code that make the present proposal untenable.

1. The sign is advertising – not just a business name sign – and there is already name signage on that elevation in the awning canopy. Separate advertising signage is not allowed ON the buildings.
2. The proposed sign placement would destroy the architectural symmetry of the King Street elevation.
3. The sign is an RBG illuminated digital message board which is verboten within visual distance of a traffic signalized intersection – and there are two traffic lights immediately adjacent to the proposed placement area, at the intersection of 8th and King Street (less than 100 yards) and at the mid-block crossing from King to Market Street.

Peter vonGlahn stated that the staff prepared recommendation is that the proposal not be approved. He stated to the applicant that they need to find at some other way of presenting this information to the public. HE further stated that he does not think that it is a good thing from a safety point.

Toren Williams stated that he had problems with the aesthetics of the sign and the placement and was "Not even getting into the illumination issues." He further stated that the sign looked like it was thrown up against the wall and takes away from the symmetry of the King Street elevation.

He asked for them to come up with some other ideas.

The Grand Opera House representative said they were– willing to let it be put further down on the building (closer to the sidewalk).

Toren stated that he did not like the location – and ended calling it a square peg in round hole.

Peter vonGlahn inserted that the discussion topic was moot since the proposed sign was not allowed by Code.

Terry - is there any recommendation what could be put back there ?

Toren made remarks that echoed what had been in the analysis.

Peter vonGlahn – told the applicant that DRPC could form a subcommittee of the commission to meet and had Pat Maley explain the concept of the non-quorum subcommittee to consult and provide guidance to the applicant. Peter further told the applicant to go online and review the code.

HE then said that the pronounced sense of the commission is that this application will not be approved, and he read the prepared resolution.

This was seconded by Jay Macklin and agreed upon by the commission members present.

There being no further business, a Motion to Adjourn was made by Jay Macklin, seconded by David Ross, and approved unanimously.