

TOWN OF ABINGDON
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
PUBLIC HEARING
OCTOBER 7, 2003 - 7:00 P.M.

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Architectural Review was held Tuesday, October 7, 2003 at 7:00 P.M. The meeting was held in the Municipal Building, Downstairs Meeting Room.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Charles R. Day, Chairman.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mr. Charles R. Day, Chairman
Mrs. Betsy White, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Thomas C. Phillips, Jr.
Mrs. Doris Shuman
Mr. Andrew Hargroves

Comprising a quorum of the Board

Members Absent: None

Administrative Staff: Mr. Albert C. Bradley, Director of Planning Zoning
Mr. Garrett Jackson, Town Planner

Visitors: Mr. Luther Cain
Mr. Robert Gilmer
Mr. Sam Hurt
Ms. Lena McNicholas
Mr. L. B. Atkins
Dr. Stephen C. Jett, Ph.D
Mrs. Kitty Henninger
Mr. John Jordan
Mrs. Baja Conrad
Mr. Edison Jennings
Ms. Ann Johnson
Ms. Ginny Alvis
Others

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(2) **PUBLIC HEARING** - Consideration of the Barter Green Project

Mr. Luther Cain opened the meeting by briefing the Board of Architectural Review and the public on what had taken place, to date, on the Barter Green Project. Mr. Cain referenced meetings held since January 7, 2003, and the input from each meeting. Mr. Cain further explained the use of experts by the Barter Theatre and the Board of Architectural Review to assist in their decision making. The Board of Architectural Review acquired the expertise of Mr. Gibson Worsham, a Historic Architectural Consultant and both, the Board of Architectural Review and Barter Theatre sought advice from Mr. Kevin Sigmon, Town Arborist, on the tree matter. Mr. Cain summarized the minutes of each meeting, showing how the design process had slowly evolved. He also explained the discussions that he and Mr. Worsham had concerning the design elements the Board of Architectural Review wanted improved.

Mr. Robert Gilmer summarized the proposed plans and reasons for development by the Barter Theatre. He explained the need for boarding facilities for the actors and stated that the commercial shops would help fund the needs that are required by the theatre.

Ms. Ginny Alvis of the Virginia Highlands Festival Committee inquired as to whether or not the festival would still need to find a “new home” during the festival. Mr. Gilmer and Mr. Cain explained that the Virginia Highlands Festival could still be located on the “Green”, however, many of the tents would have to be set up in the parking area.

Mr. Sam Hurt inquired as to the differences in the two designs and if Mr. Worsham’s eight points had been considered in the new design. Mr. Cain explained that the new design was symmetrical and more appealing to the eye. Mr. Hurt expressed his distaste for the size of the buildings, especially the center building. He asked how long it was expected to complete construction once it began? Mr. Gilmer explained that construction on the center building on Main Street would be first, dependent on funding, with parking improvements to come later.

Ms. Lena McNicholas inquired as to whether or not the Board of Architectural Review was aware or interested in the funding sources for the Barter Theatre. Mrs. Shuman explained that the Board’s sole job was to determine if the architectural designs were appropriate for the Historic District.

Mr. L. B. Atkins asked if the project would have enough spaces when completed to meet code? Mr. Day explained that would be a topic for the Town staff and Planning Commission to address.

Mrs. Kitty Henninger inquired about the break in the stone wall along Main Street. She noted that historic pictures of the property show a break in the center. She also wanted to emphasize the breaks at the corners of Church and Main Streets, and Partington and Main Streets.

Dr. Stephen C. Jett, presented research he had recently taken upon himself concerning historic replacement at the site. His research showed much of the architecture throughout history and he explained that the current stone wall is a replacement from a much earlier one. Dr. Jett urged the Board of Architectural Review to keep with the past. He stated that this is a perfect opportunity to replicate the Floyd House and Stonewall Institute.

Mr. John Jordan asked how close to scale the site plan is? Mr. Cain scaled the drawings out, showing the approximate dimensions and parking lot size; to date, there are 121 spaces.

Ms. Ann Johnson questioned the vertical change between the proposed plaza and the Green. Mr. Cain stated there would be a 13 ft. grade difference. Ms. Johnson requested more trees and that the project not compete with the Martha Washington Inn.

Mrs. Baja Conrad questioned how many retail businesses would be located in the facilities and commented that off street parking was limited. Mr. Cain stated that the lower level would be completely retail, but he had no idea how many businesses there would be.

Mr. Edison Jennings wanted to know if it is a concern of the Board of Architectural Review as to the types of businesses and number? Mr. Day emphasized that those are not concerns of the Board.

Mr. Hurt asked if there would be an archeological survey performed? Mr. Gilmer stated that there were no plans at this time. Mr. Day explained that should the Barter Theatre have state or federal funding, such a survey would be required.

Mr. Day asked the public if there were any further comments; hearing none, he asked the Board of Architectural Review if they were ready for a consensus. Mr. Hargroves made a motion that the concept, as presented, be accepted with the knowledge that the Barter Committee and Mr. Cain would work on details of each structure, subject to review and approval. Mrs. Shuman seconded the motion, with unanimous approval.

Mrs. White stated that a Certificate of Appropriateness **would not** be issued until details have been submitted and approved. Mr. Hargroves explained that the “basic” footprint and arrangement of the buildings, including placement and size, had met the Board of Architectural Review’s acceptance.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 P.M

Charles R. Day, Chairman

Albert C. Bradley, Secretary