

TOWN OF ABINGDON
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 6, 2010 - 5:00 P.M.

The regular meeting of the Board of Architectural Review was held Wednesday, January 6, 2010 at 5:00 P.M. The meeting was held in the Municipal Building, Downstairs Meeting Room.

Dr. Charles M. Owens, Chairman, called the meeting to order. Mr. Jackson called the roll.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Dr. Charles M. Owens, Chairman
Mr. Jason Berry
Mrs. Doris Shuman
Mr. Peyton Boyd
Mr. Byrum Geisler

Comprising a quorum of the Board

Members Absent: None

Administrative Staff: Mr. W. Garrett Jackson, Director of Planning
Mr. Sean Taylor, Assistant Director Planning/Zoning (Absent)

Visitors: Mr. Christopher Lowe

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- (2) Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting, October 7, 2009
Regular Meeting, November 4, 2009

Mrs. Shuman made a motion that the minutes of the regular meeting, October 7, 2009, and regular meeting, November 4, 2009, be approved as presented. Mr. Berry seconded the motion, with unanimous approval.

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- (3) **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS - Buckhead-Abingdon, dba Martha Washington Hotel and Spa, Christopher Lowe, General Manager/Representative, 150 West Main Street, Abingdon, VA 24210; application for Certificate of Appropriateness for approval of canopy, used as a weather breaker for all patrons (located in front of Litchfield Hall), located at 150 West Main Street. Tax Map No. 12 (1) 121.**

Dr. Owens explained that recently the Martha Washington Inn had begun installing an awning for weather protection for their patrons. Someone noticed the canopy and brought it to the attention of the Town Staff that a Certificate of Appropriateness had not been submitted for approval of the awning. At that time a "Stop Work Order" was put in place until appropriate consideration of the awning was reviewed. Dr. Owens further stated that if the awning should not be approved, he hoped the Board would suggest a way to accommodate Mr. Lowe for the benefit of the patrons of the Martha Washington Inn.

Mr. Christopher Lowe, representing the Martha Washington Inn, submitted a letter of apology to Mr. Jackson, the Board of Architectural Review and the Town Manager, explaining the hasty

installation of the weather break canopy. He explained that he got caught up in the moment of trying to solve a guest problem at the hotel without looking at the entire picture and that he was very sorry; better judgment should have been given before allowing a project to get to the installation stage, without approval.

Therefore, this application is a request for approval of the weather break canopy in place.

Mr. Geisler explained that the Board has been put in an awkward position in the consideration of this request, however, the Board must remember that the correct procedure wasn't followed. He referred to information from the Department of Interior regarding preservation briefs for historic buildings on the use of awnings, repair, replacement and new design. The information provided indicated that preference is for awnings and canopies to be used where they existed in the past, but not prohibited where there was no evidence of preexisting awnings and canopies. There may be newly installed awnings and canopies where none previously existed, provided they are compatible with the historic building. Whatever the circumstance, it is important to select an appropriate awning shape, material, frame, dimensions and signage, if any, and placement on the façade. Some of the problems with existing canopy is the shape, which is fairly contemporary, and was also a concern of Mr. Boyd. The barrel should be facing outward rather than sideways because this appearance echoes the window shapes of the structure. He further stated that the vinyl material is inappropriate, having the taste of being stiff and formal, whereas it should be a more free flowing material, possibly with valance, with wrinkle free appearance.

After a lengthy discussion, and based on the aforementioned information, Mr. Geisler made a motion to deny approval of the requested existing canopy. Mrs. Shuman seconded the motion, with unanimous approval.

Discussion continued with recommendations for a canopy that would be more appropriate for this location. The Board members agreed to recess the meeting and gather at the site in ten minutes for further discussion.

After taking measurements of the unapproved structure, Mr. Boyd suggested an awning be connected to the existing covered walkway between the main building and Litchfield Hall. This addition would be similar in size to the pull-thru area (measuring 11 feet, east and west of the centerline of the existing covered walkway, 22 feet overall). From the existing walkway, the new structure would protrude 17.5 feet into the drive, allowing vehicles to pass by the pull-thru. The new structure would have the same material and color as the existing awning, not vinyl.

Mr. Lowe indicated he will have the awning company return and prepare plans, per the Board of Architectural Review's recommendation.

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There being no further business, Mr. Geisler made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Berry seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved that the meeting be adjourned.

Dr. Charles M. Owens, Chairman

W. Garrett Jackson, Secretary