

**TOWN OF ABINGDON
HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2021 – 5:15 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS– MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A Regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Review Board was held on Wednesday, February 3, 2021, at 5:15 pm in the Council Chambers in the Municipal Building.

A. WELCOME by – Mr. Byrum Geisler

B. ROLL CALL – Mason Gragg, Town Planner, Pro Term

Members of the Board Present:

**Mr. Mike Owens
Mrs. Kristi Hartshorn
Mrs. Betsy White
Mr. Byrum Geisler**

Members of the Board Absent: **Mr. Michael Weaver**

Comprising a quorum of the Board - Yes

Administrative/Town Staff: **Mr. Mason Gragg, Town Planner
Mr. Cameron Bell, Town Attorney
Mrs. Janice Dornon, Administrative Assistant**

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. February 3, 2021, Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. White, seconded by Mrs. Hartshorn, the Board approved the minutes for January 6, 2021 Regular Meeting as presented.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Mike Owens	Aye
Mrs. Kristi Hartshorn	Aye
Mrs. Betsy White	Aye
Mr. Byrum Geisler	Aye

The board approved January 6, 2021, Regular Meeting minutes as presented.

D. CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

1. Certificate of Appropriateness – Dennis & Rachel Campbell; 126 Valley Street, Abingdon, VA 24210; owner. Application for Certificate of Appropriateness to add to existing fence to enclose a small garden area. Located at 126 Valley Street, Abingdon, VA 24210. Tax Map No. (012-1-55)

Mr. Dennis “Evan” Campbell represented the property located at 126 Valley Street.

Mr. Campbell would like to expand the existing fence to enclose a small garden area: 20’ x 38’. Using all pressure-treated lumber; 4x4 pressure-treated posts, 2x4 pressure-treated wooden running boards, and 3” pickets. The height will measure 42” and will match the existing fence. The color will remain natural.

Mrs. Hartshorn asked if there would be a gate at the Plumb Alley side. Mr. Campbell explained that the gate would not be located on the alley.

On a motion by Mrs. Hartshorn and seconded by Mr. Owens, the Board approved the COA as presented.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Mike Owens	Aye
Mrs. Kristi Hartshorn	Aye
Mrs. Betsy White	Aye
Mr. Byrum Geisler	Aye

The board approved the COA as presented for the property located at 126 Valley Street.

2. Certificate of Appropriateness –Washington County Government; 1 Government Center, Abingdon, VA 24210; owner. Jason Berry, Abingdon, VA; Representative.

Application for Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the Elliott Building. Located at 179 & 181 Main Street, Abingdon, VA 24210. Tax Map No. (013-1-60)

Jason Berry, Randy Pennington, Kevin Hill, and Dewayne Ball represented the property located at 179 & 181 Main Street, Abingdon, Virginia, for the Washington County Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Berry mentioned that they had come before the Historic Preservation Review Board concerning the courthouse referendum in November, 2019.

Mr. Berry disclosed that a Request for Proposal (“RFP”) had been published concerning the demolition of the Elliott Building.

Mr. Kevin Hill said that the demolition would allow construction to start with a blank slate. The replacement façade will contribute much more to the character of the Historic District.

Mr. Geisler stated that the Elliott Building is not a contributing structure in the Historic District. A new concept could better compliment the surrounding structures.

Mr. Hill announced that Washington County would like to begin the demolition within the next 90 days. Breaking ground with new construction would likely begin in the Autumn of 2021. The estimated completion date is 2024. The new structure will reach three stories and contain a bigger footprint by extending back to Plumb Alley.

Mr. Dewayne Ball mentioned that since the referendum failed, Washington County now has a clear picture of what the community expects in the design of the structure. Mr. Ball said that Washington County has the funding in place for the demolition, and understands the Town’s concern for the duration of this project.

Mr. Owens asked if Washington County has a plan in place for the site. Mr. Berry answered that they had received multiple conceptual plans in the past week, and wish to share those plans with the courthouse committee at the upcoming meeting.

Mr. Berry stated that Washington County would like to award the contract for the demolition at their March 9, 2021, Board of Supervisors meeting. Mr. Berry assured the Board that they would be involved in the design and review process. Mr. Berry said Washington County has a plan to demolish the Elliott Building, select a period appropriate conceptual plan for replacement, and accrue financing for the project.

Mr. Berry committed to coming back before the HPRB at their March meeting to present the conceptual plans for the building.

Mr. Berry asked if the Board would be okay with them to continue the procurement process internally.

Mr. Emmitt Yeary addressed the board with concerns about the demolition of the Elliott Building. Mr. Yeary specified that the structure stands adjacent to his property and

requested that Washington County respect the integrity of his property during the demolition process.

On a motion by Mrs. Hartshorn and seconded by Mr. Owens, the Board agreed to give their final approval to allow the demolition of the Elliott Building, contingent upon Washington County presenting a preliminary plan for the site at the March 3, 2021, HPRB Meeting.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Mike Owens	Aye
Mrs. Kristi Hartshorn	Aye
Mrs. Betsy White	Aye
Mr. Byrum Geisler	Aye

The board agreed to give their final approval to allow the demolition of the Elliott Building conditioned upon Washington County presenting preliminary plans regarding the façade of the impending structure at the next HPRB meeting, March 3, 2021.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Walter Jenny: President of the Washington County Historical Society.

Mr. Jenny asked the HPRB to consider expanding the Old & Historic District, Southern Pecan Street, to include the Hiram Dooley house. Mr. Jenny claimed the house is worth saving and protecting for historical significance.

2. Toni Doman, indicated she represented the interest and voice of the community. Ms. Doman asked if alternative options could be considered instead of demolishing the Dooley house. If the demolition proceeds, Ms. Doman hopes that the site will be replaced with a structure that preserves the integrity of the historic property. Ms. Doman has started an online petition to gain support in saving the Dooley house. As of February 3, 2021, 1,950 signatures had been collected.

F. DISCUSSION

Mr. Geisler indicated that the HPRB has no purview over the Dooley house because it is not, nor has ever been in the Old & Historic District. An approval from the HPRB is not needed for the demolition. The Town has already issued a demolition permit.

Mr. Cam Bell confirmed that the Hiram Dooley house has never been in the Old & Historic District at any point or time. The two original Historic Districts were established in 1971. Neither of these sub-districts included this parcel or structure. The established

Old and Historic District Corridor Overlay includes designated Virginia Department of Transportation arterial roads. Pecan Street is not classified as an arterial road.

Mr. Geisler reiterated the fact that the Dooley house is not in the Historic District and is privately owned.

Mr. Jenny concluded that the demolition permit has been issued, but no work has started. He asked the HPRB once more to consider expanding the district to include the structure. Alternatively, if the house were to be demolished and nothing had yet to be built in its place, perhaps that next structure could be included in the Historic District.

G. OLD BUSINESS/MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA - None

1. Preservation Plan - Sub-Committee

Mr. Owens explained that the Town Council had granted permission for the Board to update the Preservation Plan. Members agreed that a list of priorities and goals would be a great place to start.

Mr. Bell informed the board that they must discuss the Preservation Plan publically during the scheduled meetings.

Mr. Geisler told the board that they could discuss the Preservation Plan at the next meeting.

Mr. Gragg will send out the objective comparison from the initial Preservation Plan.

Mr. Owens suggested that they review the DHR Historic District Extension.

The board decided to hold the Preservation Plan updates during the discussion section of the regular HPRB meetings.

H. ANNOUNCEMENTS - None

I. ADJOURNMENT

On Motion by Mrs. White, seconded by Mr. Owens, for the Board to adjourn the meeting.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Mike Owens	Aye
Mrs. Kristi Hartshorn	Aye

Mrs. Betsy White	Aye
Mr. Byrum Geisler	Aye

Mr. Geisler declared the meeting adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 P. M.



Mr. Byrum Geisler, Chairman



Mason Gragg, Town Planner