

The Smithfield Board of Historic and Architectural Review held its regular meeting on Tuesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at the Smithfield Center. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Members present:**

Trey Gwaltney – Chairman

Julia Hillegass – Vice Chair

Gary Hess

Russell Hill

Justin Hornback

Judith Lally

Laura Brown

**Staff present:**

Tammie Clary – Community Development & Planning Director

William H. Riddick, III – Town Attorney

Charles Bryan – Vice Chairman for the Planning Commission

**Press:** -0-

**Citizens:** 4

Chairman Gwaltney welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Community Development & Planning Director's Report:**

The Community Development & Planning Director reported that Summit Design & Engineering Services, PLLC, Town consultants for the 2020/2021 Comprehensive Plan update, have developed a website to assist in providing transparency in the comprehensive planning process. The website is accessible via the following link: <https://smithfieldvacomprehensiveplan.com/>. A draft existing conditions report and a draft summary report of the recent citizen survey are accessible via the link. We have surpassed our citizen participation target. Our consultants are currently working on a draft vision statement, as well as a draft Goals, Objectives and Strategies that has been posted for citizen feedback. Town staff recently received a formal written complaint on the former Tastee Freeze located at 1400 South Church Street. A letter was sent via regular and certified mail on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021, in accordance with Section 22-2 “Removal or repair of dangerous buildings, spot blight abatement” of the Town Code. The owners have thirty (30) days from the date of the letter to respond with an abatement plan. On July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021, staff received a response proposing a 12–18-month rehabilitation expectation. Town staff has requested a more detailed abatement plan be submitted prior to July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Town staff recently received a complaint about the unauthorized installation of vinyl windows at 360-368 Main Street. A stop work order and notice of violation was mailed to the owners. Town staff received a grass height complaint for 339 Main Street. A “Notice of Correction” was mailed to the owners.

Vice Chair Hillegass stated that she had a phone call about the yellow house that was totally gutted. The caller wanted to know why the BHAR had allowed vinyl windows there. She did not have the information in front of her. The caller had to install many wooden windows that were required by the BHAR. Vice Chair Hillegass stated that it was the yellow cottage on Main Street with the turret, referred to as the Clay House.

Mrs. Lally stated that the owner had said she was putting in wooden windows.

Chairman Gwaltney thinks the property address is 313 Main Street.

The Community Development & Planning Director, Tammie Clary, stated that she would look into it and let the BHAR know what she finds out.

**Upcoming Meetings and Activities:**

Tuesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 PM – Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting

Monday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 PM – Town Council Committee Meetings

Tuesday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 PM – Town Council Committee Meetings

Tuesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6:30 PM – Town Council Meeting

Tuesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 PM – Planning Commission Meeting

**Public Comments:**

There were no public comments.

**Board Member Comments:**

Chairman Gwaltney welcomed Laura Brown as the newest member of the BHAR. He explained that the BHAR is glad to have her and will be happy to help her get acclimated.

**Accessory Structure (Fence) – 237 Cary Street – Non-Contributing – Premiere Landscape Design c/o William Moore, applicant:**

Mrs. Clary reported that the applicant is seeking approval to erect a new black aluminum fence. The proposed fence will be four feet (4') tall in the rear and side yards and will be three-and one-half feet (3.5') tall in the front yard. Town staff recommended approval as submitted and deferred to the BHAR for architectural discretion.

Michael Siggers resides at 237 Cary Street in Smithfield, Virginia. He was available for questions. He explained that this is the second time around with the application.

Vice Chair Hillegass explained that the first application was tabled due to the BHAR not allowing chain link fencing in the historic district.

Mr. Hornback made a motion to approve the application as presented with black aluminum fencing. Mrs. Lally seconded the motion. With no further discussion, Chairman Gwaltney called for the vote.

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Mrs. Lally voted aye, Mr. Hess voted aye, Mr. Hill voted aye, Mr. Hornback voted aye, Mrs. Brown voted aye, Vice Chair Hillegass voted aye, and Chairman Gwaltney voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

**Color Change (Door & Shutters) – 100 Commerce Street – Non-Contributing – Steve & Rhonda Stewart, applicants:**

Mrs. Clary reported that the applicants are seeking approval to paint the front door and the front and side shutters, Sherwin Williams “Gauntlet Gray” (SW7019). Town staff recommended approval as submitted and deferred to the BHAR for architectural discretion.

The applicant did not attend the meeting.

Mr. Hill made a motion to approve the application as presented. Mr. Hess seconded the motion. Chairman Gwaltney called for the vote.

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Mrs. Lally voted aye, Mr. Hess voted aye, Mr. Hill voted aye, Mr. Hornback voted aye, Mrs. Brown voted aye, Vice Chair Hillegass

voted aye, and Chairman Gwaltney voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

**Accessory Structure (Screened Enclosure) & Color Change (Decking) – 113 Jericho Road – Non-Contributing – Randy Turner, applicant:**

Mrs. Clary reported that the applicant is seeking approval to erect an enclosed screened “sunroom” on portions of the existing rear deck. The rear decking will be replaced with decking colored “Mocha.” The roof of the enclosure will be “Patriot Red” metal to match the existing primary dwelling. The screened enclosure will feature white AZEK ceilings and white AZEK sleeved posts. The flat black fortress rail will replace the white railings currently located on the property. The footprint of the existing rear deck will not change. The enclosure will be approximately fifteen feet (15’) six inches (6”) by twenty feet (20’) two- and one-half inches (2.5”). The enclosure will be paneled, featuring a Cabana door on the right side (east side) of the enclosure, along with three panels, and four panels on the adjacent side. Each vinyl-glazed panel will feature four over four grids. Town staff recommended approval as submitted and defer to the BHAR for architectural discretion.

Mr. Turner explained that he is the general contractor for the property owner. He resides at 373 South Church Street in Smithfield, Virginia. He was available for questions from the BHAR members.

Mr. Hess asked if the structure of the deck would need additional support due to the weight of the new addition of the sunroom which includes a roof.

Mr. Turner stated that there will be five posts with footings installed to carry the load. The header sits on top of the posts which carries all the weight. The backside is attached to the rafters that are existing. The Isle of Wight County Building Inspection office has reviewed the plan and given approval.

Chairman Gwaltney asked if there was a sample of the windows.

Mr. Turner stated that there was not a sample small enough for him to bring to the meeting. It is not plexiglass. It is a vinyl that will stretch if pushed on and has memory. It has four tracks, and they slide over top of each other. The panels slide down and up. It can be closed for colder weather and still use it year around. It is a popular product at this time and made specifically for porches. They are custom made to fit.

Chairman Gwaltney explained that vinyl is usually referred to for siding or windows. He asked the Board members how they felt about the vinyl product for the porch.

Mr. Turner explained that the frame itself is not vinyl. It is a white aluminum. Only the space that would have glass is vinyl.

Mr. Hornback stated that the house has vinyl siding and possibly vinyl windows as well.

Mr. Turner explained that no one would be able to tell the difference just by looking at it. The brochure shows the pictures of the product.

Mr. Hess asked if the porch would be visible from the street.

Mr. Hornback stated that it will be visible from an angle if walking from Windsor Castle towards South Church Street.

Mrs. Clary referred to the packet with one of the illustrations. It shows the small part that would be visible.

Mrs. Lally asked if the porch would be screened also.

Mr. Turner explained that there is a screen which is fixed. The vinyl panels will move to open up to the air or closed them in cooler weather. It makes the porch a four-season room.

Mr. Hill stated that the product is not bad. He had seen them but never installed them. It is costly to do what he is doing in that large of an area with solid windows. If the homeowner used sliding glass doors, then there would need to be stairs. This product is about the only option. He asked Mr. Turner about the end where the grill is located.

Mr. Turner explained that one end of the deck would remain open with only a portion of it enclosed. The awning would be removed along with the chair lift.

Chairman Gwaltney explained that the home is far from being prominent in the historic district. It is an aluminum addition with vinyl windows. It is a new product that is unfamiliar. If there was a home on Main Street that wanted to use the product and was more visible, how would the BHAR feel about it?

Mr. Hess stated that it does not add to the historic nature. It is in the back and hardly visible from the street.

Chairman Gwaltney stated that the home is contributing not a landmark property.

Mr. Hill explained that the home has vinyl siding and vinyl windows. It had been done long before there were historic guidelines.

Mr. Turner explained that all of his trim would be AZEK.

Vice Chair Hillegass made a motion to approve the application as presented. Mr. Hornback seconded the motion. With no further discussion, Chairman Gwaltney called for the vote.

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Mrs. Lally voted aye, Mr. Hess voted aye, Mr. Hill voted aye, Mr. Hornback voted aye, Mrs. Brown voted aye, Vice Chair Hillegass voted aye, and Chairman Gwaltney voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

**Accessory Structure (Stairs) – 334 Grace Street – Landmark – Paula Cole, applicant:**

The Community Development & Planning Director reported that the applicant is seeking approval to erect a set of stairs and three (3) landings/ catwalks, along with railings on the rear of the house that will provide access to an existing second story rear porch. The stairs, landings/catwalks and railings will all be constructed from treated lumber painted a light grey color to match the existing trim, along with matching the color of the current porch. The proposed railings will match the style of the top and bottom portions of the current railings but will not feature the decorative center. Town staff recommended approval as submitted and deferred to the BHAR for architectural discretion. Town staff suggest that for continuity reasons, the proposed railings match the currently railings located on the rear and second story porch.

Paula Cole resides at 334 Grace Street in Smithfield, Virginia. She was available for questions from the Board.

Chairman Gwaltney asked about the two types of railings.

Mrs. Clary explained that the railing in the top photo is what is currently located on the property. The applicant is proposing to create a newer railing which is shown in the bottom image for the stairs and landings.

Chairman Gwaltney asked if he should assume doing the simpler version is because it is simpler, cheaper, and it will not be seen.

Ms. Cole stated that was correct. The pickets are very ornate. It would be quite expensive to have them duplicated.

Chairman Gwaltney asked about visibility of the railings.

Ms. Cole stated that the only area seen from the front would be the last landing going over the generator and those few stairs with railing. The corner of it would be visible from the sidewalk. The stairs go straight down to the driveway.

Mrs. Lally asked if it would be the entrance to the second floor and if it would be an entrance for an apartment?

Ms. Cole stated that she was working on getting that done. The stairs will go to the second-floor porch which used to have stairs from the second floor to the first floor. The stairs took up most of the very small porch. The first-floor porch was previously expanded. The only other way to get to the second floor is through the front door. She is trying to arrange it so that would not be necessary.

Mrs. Lally asked if it was needed for fire escape.

Ms. Cole stated that it was not.

Mrs. Lally asked if the posts supporting the catwalk/stairs would have footings.

Ms. Cole stated that the posts would have footings.

Mrs. Brown asked what the gap would be on the railings since the plans did not specify that information. She believes there is a gap requirement of four inches.

Ms. Cole stated that would be adjusted to meet any requirements.

Mrs. Lally stated that not much would be seen from Grace Street but would be seen from James Street.

Mrs. Hillegass stated that if someone was walking or driving from the YMCA or library then it would be seen. It is a landmark property.

For clarification, Mr. Hess asked if the pickets with the design would be removed and replaced or if they would remain with the new stairs and landing having a different style.

Ms. Cole explained that the decorative pickets that exist now will remain. The decorative pickets are on the second-floor porch and the first-floor porch. The front porch has a different railing.

Vice Chair Hillegass stated that she was not ready to bend on landmark homes.

The Town Attorney explained that he did not think the BHAR could turn downstairs which are functional. The BHAR could condition the appearance of the stairs but not deny them. He believes that the BHAR does not have the authority to deny the applicant stairs which were there in the past.

Chairman Gwaltney clarified that the discussion revolves around the design of the railing and not the stairs themselves.

Mr. Hess stated that his concern is for the inconsistency of the two patterns and how they will look together.

Chairman Gwaltney agreed. He asked if the design with the tiered landings and stairs was necessary to make it spaced out or if the code requires it.

Mrs. Cole stated that she does not think there is with the upstairs. It is just a top rail and pickets. For the downstairs, it had to be made bigger and taller. Extra wood was added to make the railings the height that was required. The boards were plain, and she asked the contractor to cut holes to make it look more ornate with the pickets. The upstairs pickets do not have the extended board with the holes cut out.

The Town Attorney stated that it might not be functionally possible for the stairs and landings due to the angles.

Mr. Hill stated that they can be on the angled railings as long as they are cut long enough to make the angled cut.

Chairman Gwaltney stated that if the cost of the ornate pickets was the issue, he suggested considering some complementary designed railing that might not be as expensive as cutting out the ornate pickets.

Mr. Hess stated that it is a landmark property which has to be treated a little differently. He feels that there should be some consistency with the beautiful woodwork that is there now. He explained that there would be two options: get rid of the beautiful woodwork that exists and have different railings that match throughout or use the same decorative pickets that exist on the new stairs and landings. He felt that it should be consistent from the ground up to the second floor.

Ms. Cole understood Mr. Hess's opinion. She asked if it would look better to have vertical straight pickets versus the horizontal rail that looks like a fence. She also asked if she could relocate the decorative pickets to the area that would be seen when she puts in the porch.

Mr. Hill made a motion to approve the drawings as presented with the condition of using the ornate pickets which exist instead of the horizontal board railings. Vice Chair Hillegass seconded the motion. Chairman Gwaltney clarified that the motion is to accept the design of the staircase and its location to include railings and balustrades that match the existing railings on the top porch. With no further discussion, Chairman Gwaltney called for the vote.

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Mrs. Lally voted aye, Mr. Hess voted aye, Mr. Hill voted aye, Mr. Hornback voted aye, Mrs. Brown voted aye, Vice Chair Hillegass voted aye, and Chairman Gwaltney voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Gwaltney stated that he hoped everyone understood that the general idea would be for all of the railings to look like the existing railings now.

Ms. Cole stated that she understood and had one question. She asked about the height of the railings.

Chairman Gwaltney stated that her contractor or the building inspections office would have to answer that question. The railings will have to meet the code requirements.

#### **Approval of the Tuesday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Summary Meeting Minutes:**

The Town Attorney recommended the minutes for approval as submitted.

Vice Chair Hillegass made the motion to approve the minutes and Mrs. Lally seconded the motion. Chairman Gwaltney called for the vote.

On call for the vote, seven members were present. Mrs. Lally voted aye, Mr. Hess voted aye, Mr. Hill voted aye, Mr. Hornback voted aye, Mrs. Brown voted aye, Vice Chair Hillegass

Board of Historic and Architectural Review  
July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021

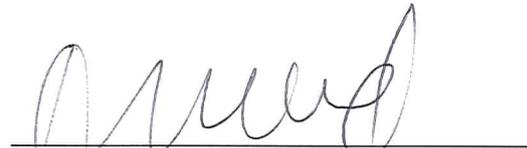
voted aye, and Chairman Gwaltney voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.



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Mr. Trey Gwaltney – Chairman



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Mrs. Tammie Clary – Community  
Development & Planning Director