

The Smithfield Board of Historic and Architectural Review held its regular meeting on Tuesday, August 17th, 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

Members absent:

Staff present:

William H. Riddick, III – Town Attorney

Tammie Clary – Community Development & Planning Director

Press: Stephen Faleski of The Smithfield Times

Citizens: 5

Chairman Gwaltney welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Community Development & Planning Director's Report:

Tammy Clary reported that Summit Design & Engineering Services, PLLC, the 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. The Town consultants have also posted a draft Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies for citizen feedback. At the Tuesday, July 20th, 2021 meeting, Vice Chair Hillegass inquired about the windows located at 330 Main Street. A Notice of Violation/ Stop Work Order was mailed to the resident. As of the drafting of this report, Town staff are yet to receive a BHAR application for after-the-fact approval. Staff spoke with the property owner yesterday. She indicated that she would be submitting an application soon for the windows as well as a fence.

Upcoming Meetings and Activities:

Monday, August 23rd, 3:00 PM – Town Council Committee Meetings

Tuesday, August 24th, 3:00 PM – Town Council Committee Meetings

Tuesday, September 7th, 6:30 PM – Town Council Meeting

Tuesday, September 14th, 6:30 PM – Planning Commission Meeting

Tuesday, September 21st, 6:30 PM – Board of Historic & Architectural Review Meeting

Tuesday, September 21st, 7:30 PM – Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting

Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

Board Member Comments:

There were no Board Member comments.

Accessory Structure (Sign) – 111 South Church Street – Landmark – Christ Episcopal Church c/o Bill Egan, applicant:

Tammy Clary reported that the applicant is seeking approval to replace the existing detached forty-eight-inch (48”) by eighty-four-inch (84”) sign panel currently located on the property. The new sign will feature a smaller nine inch (9”) by thirty-six inch (36”) hanging sign. The new sign panel will also feature revised lettering, and the existing post/frame will be painted black to match the existing signpost and light post currently on the property. The sign will also have the 911 address numbers “111” vertically placed on the left side post. Town staff recommended approval as submitted and defer to the BHAR for architectural discretion.

The applicant, Bill Egan, resides at 205 Clipper Creek Lane in Smithfield, Virginia. He explained that the sign is being refurbished since the plywood is rotting. Ernest White has been contracted to do the work. He came up with the design to match the church’s other signs. Mr. Egan stated that the Town had approved a replacement but the current application was submitted due to the color change and lettering changes. Mr. Egan felt the new sign would be more consistent with the other existing signs. He explained that the post is still in good shape. The sign will be made from a PVC composite material with a longer life and will not rot.

Mr. Hornback stated that he had noticed the sign deteriorating.

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

On call for the vote. 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.

Mr. Egan thanked the Town for being supportive over the years and expressed the church’s appreciation.

Discussion Item – (Luter Acres) – 240 James Street & 223 Washington Street – Non-Contributing – Jacob Williams, applicant:

Tammie Clary reported that the applicant is seeking an Special Use Permit (SUP) to facilitate the construction of four duplex residential dwellings located on TPIN: 21A-01-184A, on the corner parcel of Washington Street and James Street, in accordance with Smithfield Zoning Ordinance (SZO) Article 3.D.C.3. which permits duplex residential dwellings (one (1) dwelling per subdivided lot), as a use permitted by an SUP, in the Downtown Residential District (DNR). As part of the same project, the applicant plans on constructing four (4) single family detached dwellings, which is a by-right use through SZO Article 3.D.B.1. And, the construction of thirteen (13) parking spaces for the Veteran of Foreign Wars building located at 233 Washington Street, which is also permitted by right through SZO Article 3.D.B.2. This parking lot will connect Washington Street to Clay Avenue. Finally, the proposed project contains the extension of Clay Avenue, connecting to it James Street. Along Clay Avenue the applicants will connect a six-inch (6”) water main to the existing four-inch (4”) water main. And, connect an eight-inch (8”) sanitary sewer main to the existing eight-inch (8”) sanitary sewer main. A new fire hydrant will also be added to the site on Clay Avenue. The applicant is aware that they will have to go to the Board of Zoning Appeals for approval of a Special Yard Exception for the approximate sixteen-foot (16’) front yard setback encroachment for Lot 1. Additionally, the applicant will have to submit colored illustrations and elevations, including proposed materials, for BHAR review and decision. Town staff recommended the applicants include the following statement in their Declaration of

Covenants and Restrictions: *The appearance of the exteriors of the single family detached dwellings and duplex residential dwellings will be consistent and in conformance with the current version of the Historic District Guidelines.*

Jamie Weist, of Kimley Horn and Associates, stated that they were working with Mr. Luter to plan development on the property. He explained that it is a small 2 acre development on the corner of James and Washington Streets. There will be a mixture of single family dwellings and 2 duplexes. He explained that there are 2 different layouts being considered. The Planning Commission gave feedback on the application about the style of the homes. Mr. Weist stated that he spoke to Mr. Luter and talked about alternative finishes and layouts which might be more attractive than what was presented at the Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Luter wanted everyone to know that the exterior finishes would be in accordance with the historic guidelines for the district. There will be no vinyl siding. Hardie board and Hardie wood planking would be on the exteriors. All the homes will be placed on crawl spaces. Mr. Weist presented a slide showing the layout. He explained that Clay Avenue would be extended to James Street. There is already a right-of-way that extends along The Children's Center and part of it is already paved. There would be approximately 200' of new roadway added. He said that 8 lots have been created on the 2 acre parcel between the VFW building and The Children's Center. *Another slide was shown of the proposed single family dwellings.* The Planning Commissioners did not like the look of the duplexes so Mr. Weist changed the plan to have the duplexes facing James Street. The single-family homes will be located closer to the VFW building. The 2 large trees on the corner of James Street would remain at the request of Mr. Luter. The houses would sit back quite a bit from James Street with the trees in the front yard. Mr. Weist stated that he wanted to hear opinions from the BHAR members for feedback, guidance, and what might be recommended by the BHAR. He said that there are no firm site plans as yet since the SUP process has to happen first. Full design and construction plans will need to come back before the BHAR once completed. He was available for questions from the BHAR members.

The Town Attorney asked which direction the duplexes would face.

Mr. Weist stated that they both face James Street. The entrances will be off of Washington and Clay Street because of the garages; but the main front of the house will face James Street. There are no entrances off of James Street.

Mr. Hess asked about the parking for the VFW building.

Mr. Weist explained that they will be adding parking. There will be a parking lot with an entrance on Clay Street and an entrance on Washington Street.

Chairman Gwaltney asked if there was a plan for Lot 3.

Mr. Weist stated that there was not. He explained that it is too small to put a home on due to the setback requirements. It will be a green space which will provide a buffer between the existing neighborhood and the new development.

Mr. Hornback asked what the inspiration was for the design choices on the structures.

Mr. Weist explained that Mr. Luter provided the plans and suggested the bungalow style with 2 - 3 bedrooms which fits the area. The units will be approximately 1,300 square feet.

Mr. Hornback stated that only Lot 2 appears to have a garage. He asked if it was due to the size of the lot or the selected house plans.

Mr. Weist stated that it was due to the selected house plan. The others will just have a driveway coming in. He reiterated that the plans have not been completed and are only schematic level drawings using GIS and aerial photography.

Mr. Jacobs stated that Lot 4 would have a garage too. Lot 4 is the old Lot 6 from the previous plan.

Vice Chair Hillegass stated that the Planning Commission heard the application last week. The application was tabled but she felt that Kimley Horn really heard their comments and acted very quickly to get something else of a higher quality.

The Town Attorney asked if there was stone on the chimney.

Mr. Weist stated that there is stone in the drawing. It could be substituted for brick if it is recommended. He would discuss it with the owner.

Chairman Gwaltney stated that he was reviewing the architectural elements. He asked the BHAR members their thoughts about metal roofing versus shingles. There are many metal roofs in the Town of Smithfield. Chairman Gwaltney felt the metal was trendier.

Mr. Hornback stated that it looks more like a modern farmhouse.

Chairman Gwaltney felt the horizontal siding and the asphalt shingles look more in keeping with what exists in the neighborhood. When building new structures in the historic district, he felt that the existing homes in the area should be considered so that they blend together.

Mr. Hornback stated that one of the designs looks like it's from a new development and more like a track home style with the garage prominently out front. The historic district lacks prominence of garages and encourages parking in the rear. Most are in the back or kept to the side.

Chairman Gwaltney felt that at least it was not just a rollup door. It is an attractive garage.

The Town Attorney stated that there are 3 elevations for single family homes but there are 4 lots.

Mr. Weist stated that there are 3 different models that they want to construct. They will likely have a fourth plan or build one design twice. He will clarify with Mr. Luter as to which lot has which style home. If a fourth design is chosen, it would definitely be brought back to the BHAR for review.

Chairman Gwaltney asked if the original duplex design would be excluded.

Mr. Weist stated that there will be a new design for the duplexes. They heard the objections from the Planning Commission.

Chairman Gwaltney liked the idea of Lot 3 remaining as green space. He asked who would maintain Lot 3.

Mr. Weist stated that there are no plans for that yet. Originally, it was thought that the VFW could use it and maintain it. The paving there now will be removed, and the site will be cleaned up. Green space details have not been decided on as yet.

Mrs. Brown asked if there were any plans for a sidewalk along Clay Avenue.

Mr. Weist stated that there are plans for a sidewalk so there is a connection to the park, college, and the YMCA.

Mr. Hess agreed that brick would look better on the chimney instead of stone.

Chairman Gwaltney stated that chimneys are important in the historic district but most are brick. A couple of homes have granite chimneys.

Mr. Weist stated that he would be glad to let the owner know that brick is preferred.

Chairman Gwaltney also stated that the vertical siding does not work for him.

Mr. Weist stated that it makes it look like a modern farmhouse. Adding horizontal siding and a shingle roof will make the homes look more traditional. He will take all comments back to the property owner.

Mrs. Brown stated that the design in the center does not look historic. She felt it had too many front peaks for the historic district.

Mrs. Lally stated that she agreed. She felt there may be another craftsman style that would blend better in the area.

Mr. Weist explained that there are hundreds of homes to choose from. He said that feedback from the BHAR was appreciated and he will go back and look at other options.

Mrs. Hillegass stated that there is a great Victorian cottage at the end of Institute Street.

Mr. Hornback asked if the homes without garages would have to park on the street.

Mr. Weist stated that every home will have a driveway. Some would be on the side and some would be on the front depending on which property they are on.

Mr. Hornback explained that one of the guidelines that the BHAR tries to follow is to place the parking to the side and rear as much as possible in the district.

Mr. Weist stated that the lots are small and have setback requirements. He explained that he will need to go to the BZA and request a variance for the setbacks for 2 of the homes since they encroach in the front yard. The side yards are tight for driveways since there is only 10' side yard requirements. The front is 25'. The duplexes facing James Street sit farther back to preserve the trees in the front.

Mrs. Brown asked if there would be room on any of the lots for sheds to keep lawnmowers.

Mr. Weist said that there should be room in the backs. He explained that everything will be finalized once the survey was completed and the footprints of the homes are put in. The details of the designs will be tweaked as he moves forward with the planning.

Mrs. Clary stated that the setbacks for sheds in rear yards would be five feet.

Vice Chair Hillegass explained that some of the neighbors (3 or 4) had spoken against the duplexes at the Planning Commission meeting. In general, single family homes were preferred.

Mr. Weist explained that the reason behind the duplexes was the cost to build the project with a road and the necessary infrastructure. Water and sewer lines will be extended down Clay Street. The cost has to be spread out among the homes. Adding the duplexes helped make the numbers work. Mr. Weist stated that a new fire hydrant will be added also. It was requested by the Director of Public Works for the Town. He thanked the BHAR for their feedback and explained that he would tweak everything and be back in a couple of months.

Approval of the Tuesday, July 20th, 2021 Summary Meeting Minutes:

The Town Attorney recommended approval as presented.

Vice Chair Hillegass made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Hess seconded the motion. Chairman Gwaltney called for the vote.

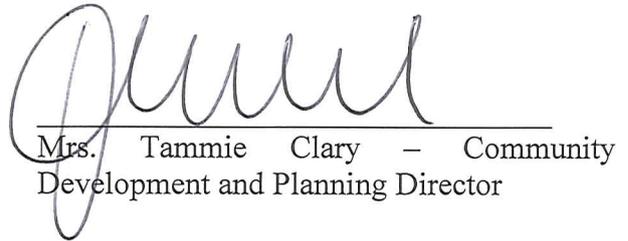
On call for the vote. Mrs. Lally voted aye, Mr. Hess voted aye, Mr. Hill voted aye, Mr. Hornback voted aye, Mrs. Brown voted aye, Vice Chair Hillegass voted aye, and Chairman Gwaltney voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Board of Historic and Architectural Review
August 17th, 2021

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.



Mr. Trey Gwaltney - Chairman



Mrs. Tammie Clary - Community
Development and Planning Director