

The Smithfield Board of Historic and Architectural Review held its regular meeting on June 16th, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Members present were Mr. Roger Ealy, Chairman; Mr. Trey Gwaltney, Vice Chairman; Mr. Ronny Prevatte, Mr. Gary Hess, Ms. Julia Hillegass, and Mr. Jeff Yeaw. Mr. Russell Parrish was absent. Staff members present was Mr. William G. Saunders IV, Planning and Zoning Administrator and Mr. William H. Riddick III, Town Attorney. There were six (6) citizens present.

Chairman Ealy – I would like to call the June 16th, 2015 Board of Historic and Architectural Review meeting to order. The first item on the agenda is the Town Planner's Report.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Thank you, Chairman. Administrative approval was given for 334 Grace Street to repaint the house and replace the porch decking with the same colors and materials. Administrative approval was given for 337 Main Street to repair the porch with the same colors and materials. Administrative approval was given for 330 Main Street to repaint the house and replace trim and siding with the same colors and materials. At 301 Jericho Road they will do temporary shoring of six outbuildings at Windsor Castle Park.

Chairman Ealy – Next is Upcoming Meetings and Activities. We do not have any Public Comments tonight. Are there any Board Member Comments?

Mr. Yeaw - I would like to commend the Planning department, Mr. Saunders, and Mr. Reish for their support throughout the time I have been a Board member and particularly recently. We have had a couple of signage issues on Main Street. They have been extremely responsive and helpful.

Chairman Ealy – Are there any other board member comments? Next we will move to the Rezoning Review – Cary & Main (Pierceville) Subdivision – William G. Darden, Hearndon MC Builders, LLC, applicants. We will have a staff report from the Planning and Zoning Administrator, Mr. William Saunders.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Thank you, Chairman. This project went to the Planning Commission last week for the first review of it. The Pierceville farm is approximately fifty-eight acres. There is a rezoning application to build one hundred and fifty-one single family detached homes on the property. There is also a section for the outbuildings and the Thomas Pierce's house as part of it. This is just a rezoning application. There are proffers associated with it as well as a conceptual plan. If the

rezoning is approved it will be a formal site and subdivision plan review and further details. The reason it is before you tonight is because if the subdivision is approved it will be within the historic district or at least two thirds of it. The developer proposes to make the standards the same throughout the subdivision as if the entire subdivision were in the historic district. A similar project called Commerce Condos at Wharf Hill went through a similar process where there had to be a public hearing and a recommendation at the Planning Commission level. There had to be a public hearing and a vote on the Special Use Permit at the Town Council level. The Town Council asked the Board of Historic and Architectural Review to make a recommendation due to the fact that it is within the historic district. We are bringing this subdivision before the Board of Historic and Architectural Review and the Planning Commission to make recommendations to Town Council. The Planning Commission has tentatively scheduled a public hearing on this item for their August meeting. We have sent this packet out to a number of outside agencies for review in hopes that we will have their comments back in order to compile the staff report for the August Planning Commission meeting. I would assume that we will bring you more information about this to your August meeting. Tonight is just the first opportunity to give you the resources on it because it is a lot to digest. It would allow the applicant to make a presentation and you to ask questions on the front end of the review period. This is something that relates to proffers and the historic district standards as it goes to those proffers.

Chairman Ealy – Is there anyone to speak on behalf of this project?

Mr. Jones – My name is Robert Jones. I am with Jones & Jones PC located at 1600 South Church Street. I am the attorney for the developer and the landowner, Mrs. Crocker, who is bringing this subdivision and Comprehensive Land Use change application. This is not a public hearing. We will have a full presentation at that point. Mr. Saunders has provided a packet of information with the conceptual plan, drawings, and the proffers. We are awaiting the same information from the various outside agencies such as Virginia Department of Transportation, police, and fire. I think tomorrow Mr. Bill Frasier is supposed to examine the Pierceville house. He will try to establish what can be done with it. Hearndon Builders are not in the business of knowing how to restore a significant historic structure like the home and barns. We are trying to find the right entity to take care of or assist us in that the home will be conveyed without charge to those people that can take care of it and keep it in the

condition that it should be. We have met with Smithfield 2020 and other agencies trying to establish a working relationship there just to be able to do that. The actual drawings are there for your review. Once you have had a chance to digest those we will answer any questions. We look forward to working with the Board of Historic and Architectural Review, Planning Commission, and the town staff to try to draft a subdivision that meets everyone's approval. As Mr. Saunders said about seventy percent of this is in the historic district. We are proffering all of the property so it will be treated as if it is in the historic district. We have proffered development standards, material standards, and given conceptual drawings of the buildings at this time. We want to build a community that meets the requirements and the town is proud of. Some of the proffers go more to the planning phase as opposed to the architectural and historic phase. It is the screening items to hide the main entrances. I mean to make them attractive from the standpoint of when somebody rides by. We have a representative from the engineering firm to answer any questions regarding architectural issues.

Chairman Ealy – Is there anyone else who would like to speak?

Mr. Jones – The next meeting is in July but the information may not be back in time so we agree to wait until the August meeting. If the information is not back then we can address it at that point. It takes two weeks prior notice for advertisements to be in the newspaper. We would concur with the idea of having this on the August meeting schedule at this point.

Chairman Ealy – Do any board members have any comments? I think the main responsibility of this Board is to preserve the house and the outbuildings. I am not asking for a restoration but at least a stabilization of the roofs on the buildings until it passes into the correct hands. I am not saying it has to be an appropriate roof for the period of the house just one that would stabilize it for a short period of time. A blue tarp does not cut it.

Mr. Yeaw – The idea of conveying the property to a suitable entity is good idea but what happens if you do not find a suitable entity.

Mr. Jones – We really do not have an answer to that question at this point. We are seeking that entity. If we do not find that entity I think we will have to come back to all of the boards because we have said this is going to happen in a time schedule. We cannot sell houses until that is done. I think the developer will come back to the town to see if there are other remedies that can be made. I think the dilemma of not being able

to convey homes is going to be finding that right entity. We are trying to work with state agencies to find out who the appropriate person is. We will work with anyone that you suggest to try to find that person. The profit to the developer is tied to making that happen.

Chairman Ealy – It is my main concern. If you locate the right entity it could easily take two years for them to implement getting this house on its way that is why I would like to see the roofs stabilized so it will not deteriorate any more.

Mr. Jones – Yes sir.

Mr. Hess – If I am reading the maps right it looks like the only entrance to the development that is planned is off of Cary Street.

Mr. Jones – No sir. There is an entrance that leads to Main Street.

Mr. Hess – There is a second entrance. What is the impact this development will have on the historic district and tourism? I realize that it is probably not appropriate for this Board but I think it must be taken into consideration. It will have an impact on tourism on Main Street to get around if not properly managed. We are talking about one hundred and fifty-one homes. We are probably talking at least three hundred automobiles in addition to regular traffic. I think we need to look at have they done everything they can do to soften the impact of the additional people moving to the area.

Mr. Jones – I think that is something you have to take into account as the Board of Historic and Architectural Review Board. In the planning phase Virginia Department of Transportation will provide the traffic impacts. The minimum standard is whether the traffic flow will be within VDOT standards. We know we have to address more than that. Part of the idea with this development with the tie-ins is the proximity of these homes to the businesses on Main Street. It is walkable as opposed to drivable.

Mr. Hess – Thank you.

Chairman Ealy – Are there any other comments?

Mr. Yeaw – The proffers on page one you use the terms homeowner's association and property owner's association are they the same or interchangeable?

Mr. Jones– They should be the same. I realized there was a typographical error because a paragraph was added. They are not numbered correctly.

Mr. Yeaw – I see the different fonts. It is germane to this Board as we get into paragraph four with the Architectural Review Committee. Would you or the board see

this Architectural Review Committee delegated authority from the Board of Historic and Architectural Review?

Mr. Jones – I do not know that you can delegate to a private entity. I think they can certainly govern themselves for the purpose of not having you all have Mr. Saunders write letters that they can preemptively enforce your guidelines on their homeowners. If they see a violation of our rules which is a violation of the town rules then they tell them to fix it. They are not looking to take the place of your Board.

Mr. Yeaw – That is right because in paragraph “B” on page two I see a number of items some of which might be homeowners association type items. I circled four that certainly the Board of Historic and Architectural Review always deals with such as buildings, fence, deck, and signage.

Mr. Jones – Anything that would be in your providence will still be in your providence. If there is a mailbox or fence that needs to be approved they will have to do that. Assuming it gets Town Council approval and the subdivision is approved then we will get into the more detailed site plan review. What we are asking is to have some fashion to be able to approve certain homes with these materials and colors. It will be built in phases. If we come in with thirty requests to build homes we could easily overwhelm staff and the board with all these line items but that is down the road.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – Based on phasing as described in the packet with each phase taking multiple years and only two or three spec units at the beginning if we had to review everyone individually that is in the historic district it could be done. You are going to have so many different materials and combinations we probably will have to do them individually. I do not think it will be too much of a burden on either party.

Mr. Jones – We will do what you say.

Mr. Yeaw - My concern was more on the follow-up to that and the additions.

Mr. Jones – They will need your approval. They may be well within the town requirements. However, the homeowners association may say they will not let you do it but they cannot do the opposite.

Mr. Yeaw – It is not clear in the proffers at least to me.

Mr. Jones – We are in the process of going through these. I do not want to say it is a work in progress but we do have some things to do. Mr. Saunders is going to get his comments back to us on the proffers shortly. We will be addressing those as well.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – This is a very similar situation to what is in Wellington Estates. They are not in the historic district so they do not require architectural review from the town but their homeowner's association has an Architectural Review Board. Any shed, fence, and addition to the home has to be approved by their Architectural Review Board before they come to the town to get a permit for it. The only difference to this is that there is a review board at the town level for this area also.

Chairman Ealy – I really do not have any big objections to the elevations you have furnished.

Mr. Prevatte – These houses are very attractive.

Chairman Ealy – There are one or two points I would like to make. I notice that you are calling for two and one half inch trim around the windows. We have been requiring four inch trim around windows and doors for the past eight years. It is a minor detail but it does make a big difference in looks.

Mr. Prevatte – I was looking at the Smartside siding. I do not think that is quite as well made as hardi board.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – I have some samples here if you want to pass them around.

Mr. Prevatte – Is it not similar to wafer board?

Chairman Ealy – It is up to the builder and Smartside to warranty that. They have a good warranty behind it. Would you know how long that product has been on the market?

Mr. Prevatte – You can get Hardie board that is pre-painted.

Mr. Bengston – My name is Jon Bengston. I am with Land Planning Solutions at 5857 Harbourview Boulevard. It has been around for at least eight years. It is all about warranty as you have said. The last thing anybody wants is to be working on their house all the time. You want to build a house with materials that are sustainable. The other part of being sustainable is that you are not ripping it down and replacing it every ten years. The other half of the game with any product is to have a warranty and installed correctly.

Chairman Ealy – It is close to the Hardie board warranty.

Mr. Bengston – Yes sir. It also has to do with workability. Hardie board is more of a fiber cement product which has a dust issue. I do not know if any of you have ever

tried to hang because it is very difficult. This is a lasting material. It is comparable to Hardie board and offers more colors. Just like Hardie board it can be painted. The one difference with hardi board is that it is a fiber cement board. Painted concrete does not last very long. Concrete is an acidic based material. When you paint wood it expands and contracts then the paint flakes off. The composite product does not have that acidity. It does not react like Hardie board does to paint unless the paint is specially manufactured then you have a longer lasting exterior finish.

Chairman Ealy – I will have to disagree with you on that. I can show you one that was painted ten years ago and it still looks great.

Mr. Bengston – It depends on installation and who is doing it. The materials make all the difference.

Chairman Ealy – I think the barrier makes a big difference too.

Mr. Bengston – That is true too. It is required for construction these days.

Mr. Prevatte – Maintenance is a big factor with us as far as longevity. We want something that will last and keep its character.

Mr. Bengston – You hear a lot today with TV and advertisements about maintenance free products or squeak proof floors. I do not want to do crazy roofs that impact the side of the walls which creates a flashing issue or dormers that do not make any sense which cause water issue. If you can think more traditionally when you look at historic design there was a reason why they did it that way. There was no Lowes, Home Depot, and contractors on every street corner that could fix the stuff. It was up to them. The last thing they wanted to do was to fix their house up all the time. The last thing you want to do is to be painting your house every weekend.

Chairman Ealy – I did take note of that with the roofs lines. There are plenty of developments that have been put up recently that have built in disaster areas.

Mr. Bengston – I do a lot of remodel work so I completely understand. When someone gives me a box and says that is the size that I have to build a house I cut six feet off of and put a front porch on it. The next thing I do is push the garage back because humans live here not cars. The front door has kind of got to be in front of the garage door. I do that as much as I can to come up with a design that looks good from the outside because at the end of the day if nobody lives there then what is the point. I like working on my house as much as the next person but some days I just do not want to do it. I live in a brick house. The idea is to design it simple and use materials that are

going to last as long as they possibly can. I think that is the one thing that is often overlooked when they talk about sustainability. You do not want to build something that you constantly have to repair.

Chairman Ealy – You call for using stone veneer. Stone is not indigenous to this area. The only stone you can find in Smithfield is cut stone on Victorian houses. If you want to carry through with that look on the Victorian models you have then I would be okay with it. As far as a rough stone in this picture I am against it.

Mr. Bengston – The stone and the brick is going to be an option. I need to make sure from the developers standpoint that I am correct on this but stone is probably the most expensive material option. When you look at what a homeowner is going to want out of their house which is square footage, bathrooms, and bedrooms. Once all of those requirements are met then you will start to get into the cabinetry, granite countertops, and tile showers. When you finally get to the outside I have tried to fix that by designing in a way of lining up windows, proportional design, and a symmetrical type design. The stone will likely be mostly brick but I can tell the developer your concern about it only being stone on the Victorian models. It is not a problem.

Chairman Ealy – It should be a cut stone look not a random rough stone look.

Mr. Prevatte – I like the streetscape ideas and the way you designed that. It looks nice.

Mr. Hess – I have a question on the lot size. I read that the minimum lot size was six thousand square feet. What would you say the average size is?

Mr. Bengston – I mostly handle the architecture so I am not entirely sure on that point. I do a lot of custom homes too so I could say how much space we have. In an instance where it is a neighborhood and you start rounding around streets things get a little skewed. I would say that six thousand square feet is your basic box not accounting for lots that go around a corner or that type of situation. The idea is to come up with models. These are just the initial models. As we move down the road I want to develop more houses. I like drawing houses a lot.

Mr. Jones – Right now I think there are ninety-three lots that are sixty feet by one hundred and ten feet which is sixty-six hundred square feet. There are fifty-eight lots that are fifty-five by one hundred and ten feet which is six thousand fifty square feet. They are all about the same size.

Chairman Ealy – There is one other item that was not mentioned which is handrails and balusters. What type of material would be used on the handrails and balusters?

Mr. Bengston – By code, if the house is only so far off the ground you are not required to have them. However, it does say that there would be an optional vinyl handrail. It would be Certainteed vinyl guardrail that they would be using for that.

Chairman Ealy – What about the porch floors?

Mr. Bengston – They would be a concrete slab.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – On the front of most of the houses the windows look as I would think they would look on this style of house. Is there a reason the sides particularly on model number 460 it shows little square windows?

Mr. Bengston – Yes. When I design a house I do not like having nothing on the sides but just siding all the way down. The solution to that is to add a window. When you add a window you take away wall space whether it is in a dining room, living room, or a bedroom. In most instances those little squares are in between a bed and two night stands with the windows above or a hutch would fit between the windows in the dining room. If there is a fireplace on the inside you could do built- ins below it with the TV or however you wanted to do it. To be quite honest it is also my little calling card. I put that on all of my houses. It is a little idea I came up with.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – It is interesting that the model number is 2020. I thought that was kind of fun.

Mr. Bengston – The architectural way to call out a window is 2020 which means it is two feet by two feet.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – I find it to look a little odd from the outside which is what we are here for. I have a couple of odd windows in my house and a wall with nothing on it.

Mr. Bengston – The other thing is that you do not want to be sitting in your living room and see your neighbor because the windows are full size. In other instances I have put panels below the windows to occupy more wall space. Typically, I would do that on the front to kind of address that sort of siding, window, or other material kind of balance. The reason is to just get wall space for beds or furniture.

Chairman Ealy – When you are looking at houses that are going to be in close proximity to one another I would not want to look out of my bedroom window into someone else's bedroom window.

Mr. Bengston – The other purpose is another window that brings sunlight into the room.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – I do not object to having windows for the multi-purpose of windows. Looking at the picture from the side it looks like portholes.

Chairman Ealy – I am guessing that these houses will be within eighty foot of one another on the sides at least.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – The lot size is sixty feet wide.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – The side setback is only ten feet which is twenty feet between them. Those are valid points for the windows. Unless I have overlooked it I do not see any chimneys for the fireplaces.

Mr. Bengston – That is correct.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – I think that is too bad.

Mr. Bengston – I have a chimney at my house. I love it. They are also very expensive. The developer did not want to put them in. If they put them in they would be inside the house. Brick masonry fireplaces add to the cost of the house. They look lovely. I will put them in if they tell me to.

Chairman Ealy – You are looking at five to six thousand dollar for a one story masonry chimney.

Mr. Bengston – The other thing you have to address is that you have the common weights and materials such as increased footer cost and other things. There is maintenance on fireplaces such as tuck pointing the brick, keeping it in order, and swept yearly. I love them too. I have an insert. I spend a lot of time chopping wood.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – I do not use mine. I don't want the expense of having to reline it after two hundred years. I love the way it looks when looking at the top of a house. I know one of the big concerns that we have is making the look of the neighborhood fit in and connect to what is already there. I have not counted chimneys recently in the area but I would be willing to bet there is more than a handful. I totally get the cost factor.

Mr. Bengston – I read in a book about pretending to be historical and misleading people. I look around at houses done in the 1980's or 1990's and they have chimneys but they have vinyl siding on them.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – It is not what I consider a chimney. It is not what I am talking about.

Mr. Bengston – It is the last thing you want to present. In my mind if you internalize a chimney and brick it then there are some structural issues that need to be dealt with. If the developer wants to go that route I will figure out how to make it work. As far as heating and cooling your house from a historical standpoint I think the iron stove was probably more popular than the chimney. Masonry and bricks cost a lot comparatively from back then until today.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – So it is pretty much just a cost issue.

Mr. Bengston – Yes and a marketability issue. A lot of people are not going to chop wood to use it. Basically when you put a tunnel in your home that goes up towards the sky you have actually increased your heating and cooling costs thereby making the house less efficient. It is a hard sell to some people especially if they are not planning on owning or buying for thirty years. Some people look at a house as their forever house. They do not care as much about cost.

Mr. Prevatte – They can have a ventless fireplace. It is still popular. It saves on energy.

Mr. Bengston – That is true.

Mr. Hess – I am assuming that the plans will be two story houses.

Mr. Bengston – Model number 470 is a single floor plan. It is actually a story and a half. The second floor is under the roof. At this time there is not a single floor plan.

Mr. Hess – I am not sure how a single floor plan would fit. Most of the historic district is multi stories.

Mr. Prevatte – They are nice looking designs.

Mr. Bengston – Thank you.

Chairman Ealy – Are there any other questions or comments? It would be nice to come up with a selection of colors that you would like to use.

Mr. Bengston – Okay.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – I am not familiar with that siding product. Does it come in pre-painted selections?

Mr. Bengston – Yes. They will prime and paint the siding. If you are familiar with Culpepper Landing it is a walkable neighborhood. I write the letters for the review board on that. Everything comes through me. When I am not drawing houses I am reviewing them. They use Hardie board. Hardie has twenty colors. Everybody wants five of them. If you have five houses in a row that are blue of some nature then you can paint it a different color. It is not ideal to have the same color in a row. If we can gauge tones and change it up a little bit versus only having those twenty selections it makes it a little bit difficult.

Mr. Prevatte – Will there be guidelines for the association about what colors they can use?

Mr. Bengston – Yes.

Mr. Prevatte – I would think it would be more cost effective to put up prefinished siding. It would definitely last longer.

Town Attorney – It is a business decision.

Mr. Bengston – I have seen Hardie boards get damaged by the sun especially the red color. The factory finish is damaged if you sit anything outside long enough.

Mr. Prevatte – They use different ground pigments which are much stronger. They are factory colors which is the point I was getting at.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – I have Hardie plank on my house. The first portion was done ten or twelve years ago and it needs to be repainted. At that point hardi plank only offered primed siding. Five or six years ago I did the rest of the house and they offered sixteen colors I think. Fortunately they offered a color very close to what I already had. The pre-painted stuff has held up well for five or six years. The stuff we painted needs help after ten or twelve years. The material itself has held up well.

Mr. Bengston – It was a business decision for them to paint. I just draw the plans.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – I think what you are saying is probably right though. If you have twenty colors to choose from there will only be four or five that everybody is going to like. It ends up with everybody wanting it and somebody has to say no. Will the builder provide something that is primed and painted with the color of their choice?

Mr. Bengston – There were color choices provided in your packet.

Planning and Zoning Administrator – There is a whole bunch of them.

Vice Chairman Gwaltney – Is the plan to buy the house, pick your model, pick your color, and they do it all for you?

Mr. Bengston – Yes, as far as I know.

Chairman Ealy – If you look at Gatling Pointe you are probably looking at about the same density for this project.

Mr. Bengston – When you have a lot of spec houses in other neighborhoods that are not regulated like this you end up with the same colors. It is generic. I understand the regulation about colors.

Mr. Prevatte – It is good that you have an association.

Chairman Ealy – Are there any other comments or questions?

Planning and Zoning Administrator – I would like to ask the board members to hang onto all of the materials for future meetings. If we have anything that has changed or been updated we will get it to you. Maybe we could save the applicants some trouble and save a couple of trees by hanging on to all of this stuff.

Chairman Ealy – We sure can. Our next item is Approval of the April 12th, 2015 Meeting Minutes.

Town Attorney – I recommend the minutes be approved as presented.

Ms. Hillegass – So moved.

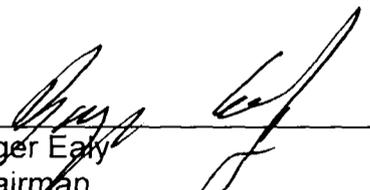
Mr. Prevatte – Second.

Chairman Ealy – A motion has been made and properly seconded. All those in favor signify by saying aye, opposed say nay.

On call for the vote, six members were present. Chairman Ealy voted aye, Vice Chairman Gwaltney voted aye, Mr. Hess voted aye, Mr. Yeaw voted aye, Ms. Hillegass voted aye, and Mr. Prevatte voted aye. There were no votes against the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman Ealy – Is there any other business? We are adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.



Roger Ealy
Chairman



William G. Saunders IV
Planning and Zoning Administrator