

**FAUQUIER COUNTY
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD**

Meeting Minutes

March 1, 2017

4:00 p.m.

Warren Green Building, 1st Floor Meeting Room
10 Hotel Street, Warrenton

Attendance:

Mary Root, Chair (Citizen-at-Large)
Reta Rodgers (Cedar Run District Representative)
Bob Lee (Planning Commission Representative)
Jack LaMonica (Marshall District Representative)
Virginia Gerrish (Center District Representative)
Bryan Jacobs (Lee District Representative)

Absent:

John Toler (Scott District Representative)

Staff:

Wendy Wheatcraft, Preservation Planner
Maureen Williamson, Staff

1. Ms. Root called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
2. The February 1, 2017 meeting minutes were reviewed. Ms. Root made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Mr. LaMonica seconded the motion. The motion carried 6 – 0.

Ms. Root shared her proposed updates to the County Demolition Permit Application. Her edits contained the addition of verbiage to the front page of the form including “Year Building Was Constructed _____” and a yes and no checkbox question “Would you like to have the building documented for posterity before it is removed (no fee involved)?” She placed these proposed additions directly above the Type of Contractor section. Regarding the latter addition to the application, Ms. Rodgers asked that if the applicant marked the box “yes,” would Ms. Wheatcraft be notified. Ms. Wheatcraft said that if Zoning agrees to the changes and modifies the existing review process, someone in the Building Department would more than likely notify her of the applicant’s request.

Ms. Wheatcraft reminded the ARB that at the January meeting, ARB members discussed requiring a current photograph of a building at the time of a demo permit application submission to document the structure. Ms. Root thought this requirement may be perceived as an effort to delay a demolition, as current demolition procedure allows a permit to be issued “over the counter” if the application is complete at the time of submission. Ms. Root expressed her desire that a demolition brochure be developed and on the Demolition Permit Application, a sentence could be added to say, “See our demolition brochure.” She described the brochure as including information on the benefits of rehabilitation, the repurposing of materials, and the documentation of the structure before demolition.

Ms. Gerrish highlighted language pertaining to demolition in Loudoun County's Chapter 9, Development Review policy that she felt was similar to verbiage the ARB has been discussing. She said the language pertaining to demolition can be found on page 50, under Land Use Policies, policy #6.

Mr. Lee commented that the ARB has talked about having Ms. Johnson come to a future meeting of the ARB to discuss the demolition process and at some point, to discuss the Marshall Code, as it proposes there be a separate Marshall Review Board that would review applications for projects within the proposed Marshall historic and corridor district. He commented that property owners want to be sure that those sitting on a review board would have a level of expertise as the County's ARB, but believes that they may be hard to find within the area proposed in the draft ordinance.

Mr. Lee said that if the Marshall Code is approved, Marshall would have the first Fauquier County historic overlay zoning district, and it would require more consideration and review before a significant historic building is demolished. He told the ARB that the Planning Commission had an initial work session on the Marshall Code in February and at a March work session, staff plans to introduce the historic overlay district concept. He added that as additional historic overlay districts may be proposed by citizens throughout the County, he would not feel comfortable with the fact that each one might propose its own local review board. This might result in having several review boards in the County, which may not be the most efficient way of reviewing applications.

Mr. LaMonica asked if the Marshall Code is proposing its own set of architectural guidelines. Ms. Wheatcraft said that as the draft Marshall Code is currently being presented, the guidelines are a part of the Code. She said although the guidelines are a section of the ordinance, the contributing property inventory and the historic context are separate from the Code and would act as guidance for application review.

Mr. LaMonica asked if the Marshall Review Board would be restricted to the Code when reviewing an application or would they have discretion as to what is aesthetically pleasing. Ms. Wheatcraft said that reviewers would be restricted to justify decisions using the provisions of the Code and the guidelines therein. She noted that using aesthetic perception for any review board is problematic and is not legally defensible. She reiterated that review boards should *never* use their own aesthetic when reviewing applications. Mr. Lee suggested that the review process could be handled administratively by the County Zoning Office with the assistance of the County's Preservation Planner, as opposed to requiring review of a citizen board.

As the Marshall Code will be subject to numerous public hearings, Mr. Lee hopes that ARB members who feel that Marshall deserves to have a historic district of some description would be willing to attend to get a sense of the dynamic.

Ms. Wheatcraft informed the ARB that the last revised draft of the Marshall Code is online and can be found on the County's website on the Community Development Department webpage.

3. Ongoing Business

Revision of Fauquier County Historic Resources Preservation Plan

- Review of Loudoun County Preservation Policies

Ms. Wheatcraft asked the ARB for their thoughts and/or recommendations for an archaeological policy. For use during the discussion, the ARB referred to Chapter 2 of Loudoun County's Comprehensive Plan, Archaeological Resources policy subsection. She reminded the ARB that the Fauquier County policy would be worded differently since Loudoun County already has an archaeology ordinance in place that requires applicants to conduct a Phase I study for some types of development applications. She commented that by establishing a policy first, Fauquier County would have a justification for creating an ordinance, if the ARB chose to move forward and recommend an archaeological ordinance. Ms. Wheatcraft said the ARB could use the developments of Mintbrook and the Arrington as examples of larger-scale development applications that chose to complete a Phase I study. She knows of only two Fauquier County applicants who have done this in the past.

Ms. Wheatcraft recommended that the first part of the archaeology policy should explain the need and benefits for study before land is developed. After land is disturbed and graded, any potential of discovering archaeological sites and learning something about them is gone. Although listing the types of applications appropriate for archaeological study may be more-detailed, she believes that the ARB would not need to be that specific in the policy. Types of applications requiring study would be specified in an ordinance. Mr. Lee said that it has been his experience in government that policies are developed first and then after you have good experiences with voluntary policy compliance, you are in a better position to go forward with an ordinance. Ms. Wheatcraft said that she has had experience reviewing archaeological survey reports while working in Stafford County. While Stafford County does not currently have an archaeological ordinance, because this county has so many development applications and in most cases, study is recommended, it has become a matter of course for developers to voluntarily do a Phase I study.

Mr. Lee asked if Loudoun County has a staff archaeologist, and Ms. Wheatcraft replied that Loudoun and Prince William Counties have a dual-role position of preservation planner/archaeologist.

Ms. Rodgers asked if there is language in the County's current zoning ordinance to prevent a developer from dismantling or destroying a historic structure. Ms. Wheatcraft said that there is nothing in the County's current zoning ordinance that prohibits the destruction of historic structures, nor is there language that requires a developer to conduct archaeological survey prior to the demolition of structures. Mr. Lee said that if a structure is in an established historic overlay district, there would be language in the zoning ordinance regarding demolition. He feels that sooner than later, the County will create a historic district where the community will care enough about the history and choose to protect structures from willful demolition. Ms. Wheatcraft said that if something of a historic importance is found within a project area, the County would attempt to work with the developer to preserve the site by requesting the applicant to redesign the project around the site or incorporate the site into the project, but it is up to the developer as to how/if they wish to do this. Mr. Lee said that with the Arrington development, a Phase I study found archaeological evidence of 18th century domestic sites and the developer agreed that they were worth preserving and rearranged the project design to preserve the sites.

Ms. Root asked if there had been any updates made to the draft outline of the Historic Resources Preservation Plan. Ms. Wheatcraft said that there have been no changes made to the draft outline since the February ARB meeting.

The ARB discussed the Plan appendix that would outline the history of the smaller communities in Fauquier County. In regard to researching the history of hamlets, Ms. Rogers agreed to field check and research the histories of Frogtown and Double Poplars. Mr. Jacobs agreed to field check and research the history of Weimertown. Ms. Gerrish agreed to field check and research the histories of Broad Run and Little Georgetown. Ms. Wheatcraft referenced the Broad Run-Little Georgetown Rural Historic District to be used as a source and said the NR nomination can be easily accessed on the Department of Historic Resources (DHR) website. Ms. Wheatcraft said a short paragraph about each location would suffice. Mr. Lee suggested to Ms. Root that she may want to share the list of hamlets with Mr. Toler, as he may have already researched some of them.

In regards to Section 2 of the Preservation Plan update, Ms. Wheatcraft stated that she is finding it difficult to discern what to include and not include in the summary historic/prehistoric development section. She suggested removing the summary and simply adding a fuller historic context as an appendix. She felt that the summary may not be needed, as having two may present redundant information. Ms. Root agreed with Ms. Wheatcraft and commented this format would be consistent with the way the 2001 version of the Historic Preservation Plan is structured. She noted that DHR has established time periods that the ARB could adopt for the summary. Ms. Wheatcraft agreed to email Ms. Root the DHR time period for her review.

Mr. LaMonica shared a copy of Loudoun County's Historic District Design Guidelines written in 1987. He said that he feels this is one of the better written guidelines as it is thorough and concise, provides design guidelines for each district, and has effective graphics to describe architectural features.

At the April 5 meeting of the ARB, the Loudoun County Design and Preservation Guidelines Policy will be reviewed.

4. New Business

- May 2017 Public Preservation Workshop

Ms. Wheatcraft told the ARB that she has tried several avenues in securing a speaker for the May event but is having difficulty finding a speaker for the chosen topic. She said that Ms. Julie Bolthouse of Piedmont Environmental Council mentioned having someone in mind. Ms. Wheatcraft said that if she hears something from Ms. Bolthouse before the April ARB meeting, she would email the details.

5. Announcements

- No announcements were made at the meeting.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

7. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 5, 2017.