Historic District Review Board

Regular Session Agenda

October 16, 2012

4:30 P.M.

2 Plum Street, Cape Charles, VA

1. Call to Order; Roll Call

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

3. Consent Agenda

    A. Approval of Agenda Format
    B. Approval of Minutes

4. New Business
    A. 711 Tazewell - Accessory building modifications

5. Old Business
    A. None

6. Announcements

7. Adjourn

DRAFT
HISTORIC DISTRICT REVIEW BOARD
Regular Meeting
Town Hall
September 18, 2012
4:30 p.m.

At approximately 4:35 p.m. Chairman Russ Dunton, having established a quorum, called to order the Regular Meeting of the Historic District Review Board. In addition to Chairman Dunton, present were Bob Sellers and Jan Neville. Dianne Davis and newly appointed board member, Terry Strub were not in attendance. Also in attendance were Town Planner Tom Bonadeo and Assistant Town Clerk Amanda Hurley as well as David Gammino, owner of the Hotel Cape Charles and approximately six (6) members of the public.

Chairman Russ Dunton waived the invocation as Dianne Davis was absent then proceeded to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion made by Bob Sellers, seconded by Jan Neville, and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as presented.

The Historic District Review Board reviewed the minutes of the August 21, 2012 Regular Meeting.

Motion made by Jan Neville, seconded by Bob Sellers, to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2012 Regular Meeting as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. *235 Mason Avenue – Hotel Cape Charles Balcony Modification:*
Tom Bonadeo gave a brief summary on the Hotel Cape Charles stating that the Board had reviewed plans for the hotel in March and April of 2011 and negotiated with the architect and owner to save a few parts of the building including the brick on the front from the last renovation and to add a new parapet wall with molding to look like the original McCarthy Hotel as well as the rest of the surrounding buildings in accordance with the ordinance. Tom Bonadeo informed the Board that there was a list of about nine (9) things that were done. The hotel had a Certificate of Appropriateness in April 2011 and construction lasted through spring of 2012 at which time the railings went up and the hotel was ready for occupancy. The Building Department passed them on their building code issues, however Tom Bonadeo did not sign the Certificate of Occupancy because it did not substantially meet the Certificate of Appropriateness that was originally submitted. Tom Bonadeo stated that David Gammino had submitted a modification in accordance with the ordinance and went on to state that Mr. Gammino would make that presentation.

David Gammino thanked everyone for allowing him to come here tonight and revisit his original plans and modifications and hoped that everyone had received the correspondence that he had sent to Tom Bonadeo as well as the Board, explaining the reasoning of where the project ended up, but recognizing that they were not in compliance with the original elevations. Mr. Gammino stated that they submitted a revised elevation indicating that there would be additional metal added to the steel façade that would be consistent with the rest of the architecture and hoped that the Board would allow these additions to suffice in order to receive the Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Gammino went on to add that he would be glad to answer any questions about the process of the project.

Russ Dunton gave a brief history of the hotel and explained that the first renovation was actually started before the Historic District Review Board was formed. Tom Bonadeo described the hotel during this time period recognizing that there were no porches or second floor balconies, just windows with awnings across the top. Russ Dunton noted that the ordinance stated that buildings must conform with the surrounding architecture, and the basic design of the hotel did not conform with anything on either side. Russ Dunton commented that the Board thought that adding the wrought iron railings would help to make it blend in with the rest of the street. However, the new plan did not seem to address that issue. Russ Dunton referred to the Historic District Guidelines and explained that exterior alterations, additions, or new construction must be compatible with existing, surrounding architecture; it should not look out of place. There was much discussion regarding the Historic District Guidelines.

Mr. Gammino went on to state that he had a glass rail system and he could not add metal or drill into the powder coated aluminum newel posts. Mr. Gammino also felt that it defeated the purpose of the statement it made of a natural light-filled property, and adding a retrofit of architectural elements would cage it in. Mr. Gammino made note that there was no indication of wrought iron ever being on the building. Russ Dunton suggested that wood railings were an option.

Bob Sellers commented on the second floor of the hotel and how modern it appeared and how extremely different it was from everything else around it.

Tom Bonadeo discussed the pictures he had taken of the hotel and remarked that the third floor rail and balcony seemed to disappear. Tom Bonadeo agreed that railings could not be attached to the glass, but recommended that they could be put in front of the glass on the Mason Avenue side. He suggested the Board ask the applicant to review this proposal.

David Gammino read an excerpt from an article in USA Today which commended the architecture of the Hotel Cape Charles and Mr. Gammino asked that the Board take into consideration the 1,500 people from 40 different countries that the hotel had brought in this year.

Russ Dunton asked David Gammino what the reasoning was for not following the original plan and why he did not resubmit plans to the Board. Mr. Gammino responded with an explanation of the historic preservations that were done adding that when he bought the hotel, he anticipated spending $500K on the renovations, however he recognized that the property was not a marketable property in the sense that it would bring people to Cape Charles. Mr. Gammino pointed out that this property was bringing people to downtown Cape Charles and explained that if they made the property unique, the hotel would become a destination. Mr. Gammino remarked that the hotel must generate $30K a month in revenue to support the project and pointed out that the Washington Post and the USA Today gave the Hotel Cape Charles great reviews and went on to read phrases and comments about the hotel. Mr. Gammino stated that he could not go back and tell his partner to take $60K worth of glass down and put up wrought iron just to create the illusion that it was a historic property and declared that there was nothing historic about the property when he bought it, recognizing that it had vinyl windows and plastic doors however, he understood that those features were added before the Historic District Review Board was created. Mr. Gammino stated that he heard what the Board was saying and regretted that he did not come back and propose the new designs, explaining that he was not trying to subvert the system.

Jan Neville stated that he had heard other people in Town comment on how nice the building looked, but he felt that it looked so much different from the rest of the buildings that it stood out and was not sympathetic to the other store fronts. Mr. Gammino responded with the description of the details and accents on the hotel and stated that he could not disassemble all the glass and put wrought iron in its place. Jan Neville suggested that there must be some way

to incorporate something across the glass railing and asked if it would require disassembly if Mr. Gammino were to attach wrought iron structures to the plate in the floor in front of the glass. Mr. Gammino responded by stating that it would ruin the look of the building.

Bob Sellers commented that he was in agreement with Jan Neville's statement that it looked too open and lacked the aesthetic aspect.

David Gammino questioned if it comfortably co-existed with the rest of the streetscape and if they endeavored to create a property that was a significant asset to the community.

Jan Neville stated that he didn't think anyone could disagree with the fact that most were grateful and it was a beautiful property, but he felt that Mr. Gammino was asking the Board to go against their principles. Mr. Gammino stated that he understood that the Board had to ensure that each building looked historic.

Russ Dunton went on to read an excerpt from the Historic District Guidelines regarding the style of the surrounding buildings and how the modifications of one must conform to that. He explained that if the Historic District Review Board denied the plans, Mr. Gammino could appeal to the Town Council. He explained that if the Board approved this plan, it would set a precedent for everything in the future and he could not see how he could vote in favor of it for this reason. Russ Dunton reiterated the fact that the glass railing was not what the Board had originally approved.

David Gammino stated that they did not have enough money to modify the railing due to the fact that they were already $800K over budget and added that he felt it was very difficult to reconcile the efforts and investments with the need to throw a couple of elements on the railing that would do nothing but ruin the look of the building as it was designed. David Gammino stated that he did not feel that he was setting a precedent if the Board approved the project because the Board reviewed on aesthetic merits and he felt that this hotel was designed and built beautifully. Mr. Gammino stated that he succeeded in his vision of creating something completely different than anything else on the Eastern Shore.

Mr. Gammino apologized for creating this controversy, however he took pride in knowing how well received into the community this building was.

Tom Bonadeo suggested to Chairman Russ Dunton that there was opportunity for compromise and referred to the McCarthy Hotel and how the first floor of the hotel now was very reminiscent of the first floor of the McCarthy Hotel. Tom Bonadeo pointed out that the third floor glass seemed to disappear and made note that the second floor plan differed from the original one and suggested an alternative design for the second floor to make the glass look more like railings. Tom Bonadeo recognized that the goal was to make it compatible, not make it look like some point past in time and suggested the architect find a compromise between the two for the second floor.

David Gammino agreed that he could put a custom made wood cap and handrail on top of the glass. Tom Bonadeo commented that the horizontal handrail would give it a closed in balcony feeling.

David Gammino asked if the Board would defer this application until next month so he could have the architect look at adding a horizontal piece of metal as well as add a handrail to the top of the glass. Russ Dunton stated that he would give more time to allow for a compromise.

Tom Bonadeo asked the Board if they thought the third floor needed anything. Russ Dunton replied that he agreed the third floor should be modified in the same way as the second floor.

Russ Dunton stated that the Board was going to table the modification and the owners were going to submit a revised proposal.

Motion made by Russ Dunton, seconded by Jan Neville, and unanimously approved to table the Hotel Cape Charles Balcony Modification on 235 Mason Avenue.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business to review.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

There were no announcements to review.

Motion made by Jan Neville, seconded by Bob Sellers, to adjourn the Historic District Review Board Regular Meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Russ Dunton

Asst. Town Clerk

DRAFT

Historic District Review Board Staff Report

From: Tom Bonadeo

Date: October 16, 2012

Item: 4A – 711 Tazewell Avenue – Accessory Building modification

Attachments: Application, Wall modifications with pictures

Application Specifics

A complete application has been received for a modification to a large accessory building in the rear of 711 Tazewell Avenue. This building is larger than 200 square feet and requires a building permit for the modifications being made. The applicant is removing windows, replacing windows and adding windows in various walls. A door will also be covered over.

Discussion

Each wall is pictured "as is" and also shown with the window and door modification. This building is not inventoried separately in the National Historic District.

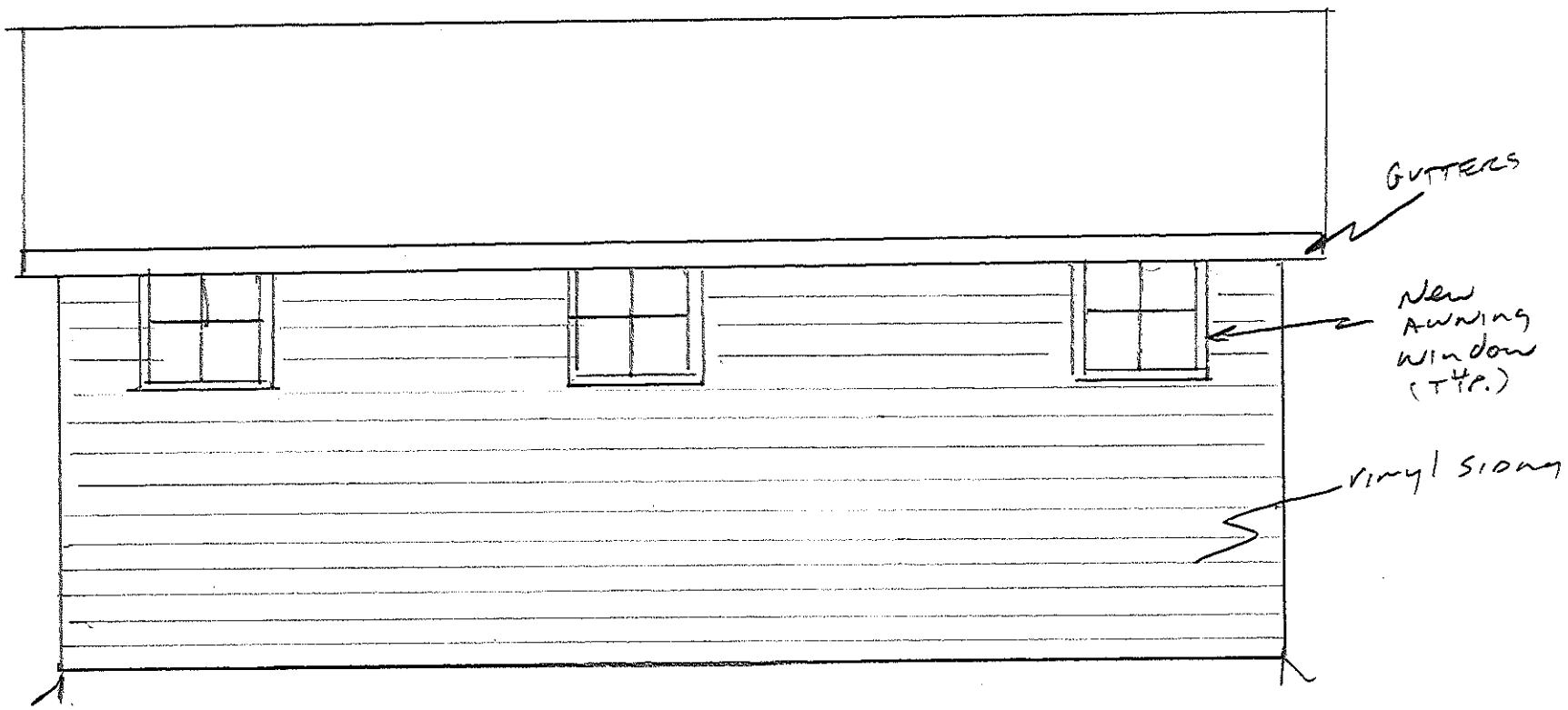
The building footprint, roof and siding will not be changed. Only the areas where window openings are closed, door openings are closed and new window openings are created will the siding be repaired to match. The new windows will be divided light as in the existing buildings on the property.

This property has been used as a pool house in the past. The old above ground pool is no longer in place.

Recommendation

Review the plans and picture and discuss the application. This application is required a the size of the accessory building is larger in square footage than the zoning administrator is allocated to approve. Staff recommends the approval of the modification in accordance with the ordinance.

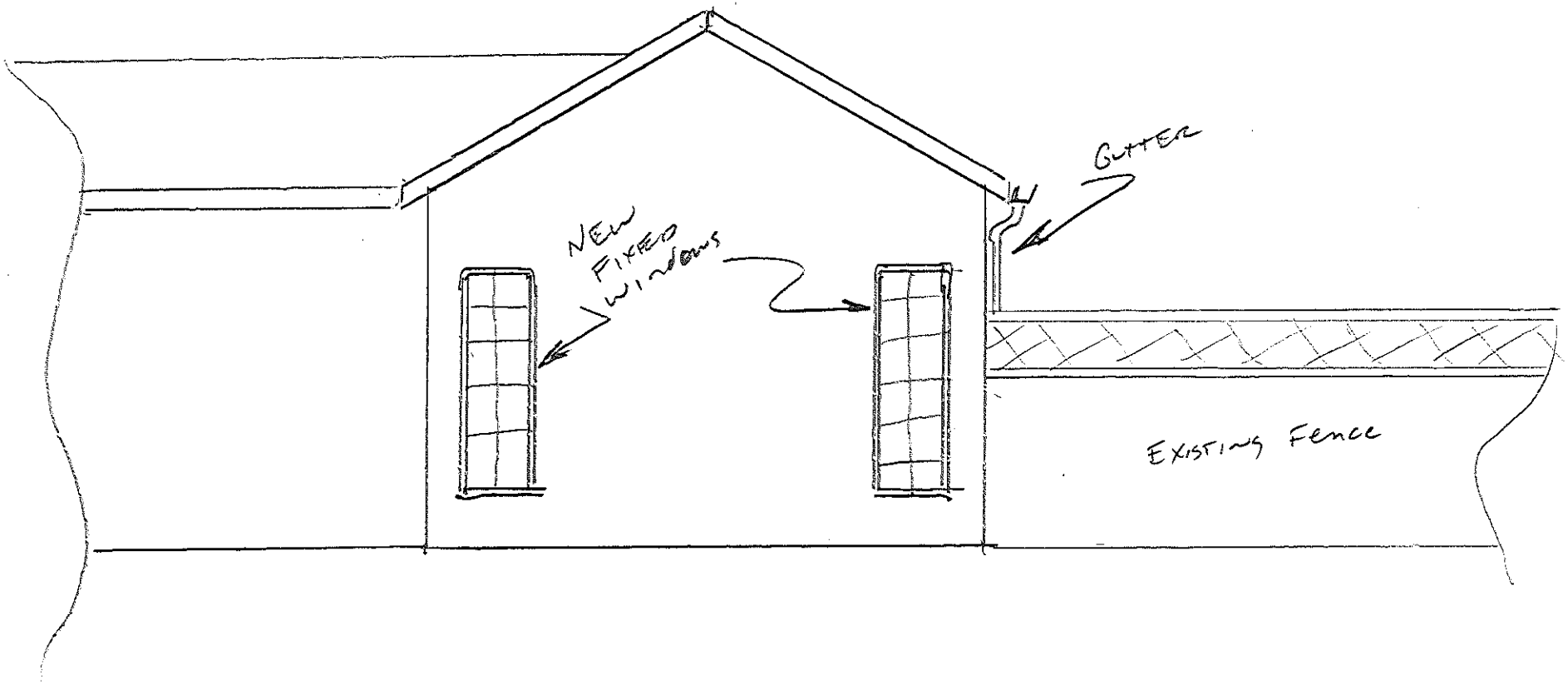
Kohler Pool House
711 Tazewell Ave



EAST ELEVATION

GUTTERS
NEW Awning
Window

Kohler Pool House
711 Tazewell Ave



North Elevation