



## HISTORIC DISTRICT REVIEW BOARD

Regular Meeting

Town Hall

May 21, 2013

4:30 p.m.

At approximately 4:30 p.m. Town Planner Tom Bonadeo, having established a quorum, called to order the Regular Meeting of the Historic District Review Board. In addition to Tom Bonadeo, present were John Caton, Joe Fehrer, David Gay, Terry Strub and Ted Warner. Also in attendance were Assistant Town Clerk Amanda Hurley and Architectural Historian Paige Pollard of Commonwealth Preservation Group. There was one member of the public in attendance.

The Board observed a moment of silence which was followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

### CONSENT AGENDA:

There were no changes to the agenda.

**Motion made by Terry Strub, seconded by Joe Fehrer, and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as presented.**

The Historic District Review Board reviewed the minutes of the February 19, 2013 Regular Meeting.

**Due to the fact that this was the first meeting for all the members of the Board, with the exception of Terry Strub, the minutes of the February 19, 2013 Regular Meeting were approved as presented by unanimous consent.**

### NEW BUSINESS:

A. *Introduction of New Board Members:*

Tom Bonadeo announced that there were four new Historic District Review Board members and asked each to introduce themselves.

B. *Introduction of Materials to Board Members:*

Tom Bonadeo briefly reviewed the materials that were distributed to the Board, beginning with the Historic District Review Board By-Laws which outlined the powers of the Board. Also reviewed was Article VIII Historic District Overlay of the Zoning Ordinance which stated who the Board was, what they could do and how. Tom Bonadeo explained there were two parts of the Historic District. The Town was designated as a National Historic District and an inventory of homes had been conducted many years ago when there were few historic homes and several empty lots. Later, a Historic District Overlay had been designated to protect homes that were not included in the inventory. A home could be classified as a contributing structure even though it was not included in the inventory of the National Register of Historic Places. The Town of Cape Charles was one of the first Planned Unit Developments in the state of Virginia in the 1800's and currently had the largest relatively intact collection of architecture of that period. The Historic District Guidelines was essentially the "Bible" for Historic District Review. Tom Bonadeo explained that the goals of the Board were to save the look of Cape Charles, save the buildings and encourage re-use.

C. *Training Session - Consultant:*

Tom Bonadeo introduced Architectural Historian Paige Pollard of Commonwealth Preservation Group. Paige Pollard presented the State Enabling Legislation and explained that only the Historic District Review Board had regulatory review over properties because it was authorized under state code. The Board was to be treated as a design/review committee, not a design committee and when reviewing applications, the Board needed to keep in mind the treatment of a building and whether the modifications were appropriate for its time and character. Everything the Board did set a precedent for the next application. The main focus was on the Secretary of Interior Standards for

Rehabilitation because these were the same standards that were used to evaluate Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit applications. The goal of the Town was to promote preservation and retention of historic properties, but ultimately cause no further harm to the buildings. The main question to ask was what was the existing historic fabric that remained? Paige Pollard explained that the Board needed to know when to pick their battles and added that decisions of the Board could always be appealed. Paige Pollard gave a few examples and noted that buildings created the streetscape that attracted people to the community.

David Gay asked what would happen if someone were to buy an empty lot and build a new structure. Paige Pollard stated that the goal of new construction was to build something that was contemporary, yet compatible and identified that the modern evolution of the Town was just as important as the historic evolution recognizing that the idea was to be able to identify when a home was built and never try to replicate a historic building out of modern materials because it created a false sense of history. Paige Pollard informed the Board that it was important that they understood or had staff who understood new materials that were currently available and the effect those materials had aesthetically and functionally. Examples included siding and vinyl windows. There was much discussion on styles and types of homes and Paige Pollard explained the importance of the evolution of homes and building styles, giving the example of craftsman style homes.

Paige Pollard encouraged the Board to join the membership of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions because they worked specifically with architectural review boards. Paige Pollard shared two articles from that website, emphasizing on a decision tree matrix that assisted in giving a structured analysis for building materials.

There was much discussion on flood elevation in Town.

The Board reviewed the Design Guidelines and Tom Bonadeo explained that the Planner worked with the homeowner during the design phase. The Historic District Review Board would then review the plans and modifications based on the recommendation the Planner gave from the Design Guidelines.

D. *621 Jefferson Avenue – modification to rear dormer, window and door with stoop replacement with small deck:*

Tom Bonadeo gave a brief overview of the property and went on to explain the photos included in the packet, stating that the homeowners were proposing to replace the roof and siding, extend the dormer, remove the filled in porch walls, remove the chimney, remove the side window in the rear addition, replace the rear window with a sliding divided lite door and replace the rear stoop with a deck. Tom Bonadeo explained that window, door and roofline modifications were automatically directed to the Historic District Review Board. One photo depicted neighboring homes to demonstrate similarities and compatibility in the surrounding area. The replacement of the vinyl siding was required to be Double 5 vinyl. The shutters would be removed as they were not compatible with the craftsman style. The existing stoop and the exposed electric wires did not currently meet code and would be removed and a 7' by 8' deck would be added. In order to meet the wind load, architectural shingles would replace the existing roof. The chimney was a danger, not a value and was proposed to be removed.

Ted Warner asked whether the home was a Craftsman style or a bungalow style and Tom Bonadeo explained that the home was referred to as a bungalow style in the historic inventory. However, bungalow style did not exist and Paige Pollard commented that this style originated as a British Empire design in India and they purposely had no hallways to allow air flow. Bungalow was a type of house, not a style, but non-branded homes were referred to as that since they did not have a designated name. Tom Bonadeo stated that he chose to look at neighboring homes to make recommendations as to whether requirements were met or not.

Ted Warner asked if the Board was to exert the same scrutiny for the front of the house as the back. Tom Bonadeo explained that the HDRB reviewed only the exterior of the home, but the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines and Historic Tax Credit process analyzed the front, back, inside and whole house. Paige Pollard stated that it was crucial the Board clarified to the homeowner that even if the

modifications were approved by the HDRB, it did not mean that they would be approved by the Historic Tax Credit. Tom Bonadeo stated that the Board looked at the whole house with emphasis on what was seen from the street and was more lenient on the back of the house. The idea was to encourage re-use and restore the home to today's lifestyle or the homes would not get saved. Part of the Planner's job was to work with the applicant on designs that were not compatible and achieve the same look to meet the criteria. Ted Warner noted that he was not in agreement with the chimney removal, pointing out the photo of the home and two neighboring homes and the symmetry of their chimneys. The existing chimney could not remain and would have to be rebuilt if the Board's decision favored keeping the chimney. One recommendation was to replace the existing chimney with a false one that would be compatible and there was much discussion regarding the options of removal and replacement. Tom Bonadeo recommended that the Board table the modification or approve everything except for the chimney, keeping it as a requirement. The applicant could then appeal the decision if they so chose.

**Motion made by Terry Strub, seconded by David Gay, to approve the modifications to roofline, window, rear door and porch restoration at 621 Jefferson Avenue with the exception of Item 3- Removal of the chimney. The motion was unanimously approved.**

Tom Bonadeo suggested that the Board make a recommendation to the applicant to repair or replace the chimney with matching material.

**Motion made by Joe Fehrer, seconded by David Gay, to accept repair or replacement of the chimney in its existing configuration and materials above the roofline only at 621 Jefferson Avenue. The motion was unanimously approved.**

Joe Fehrer asked how modifications on the back of a house were handled when there was an alley behind the house. Tom Bonadeo explained that alleys were not public thoroughfare and gave a brief history about the alleys and went on to state that people shouldn't be driving through the alley criticizing the back of a house since it wasn't a public road.

E. *Election of Officers (Chairperson and Vice Chairperson):*

Joe Fehrer nominated Terry Strub for Chairwoman. Terry Strub declined and Ted Warner nominated David Gay.

**Motion made by Ted Warner, seconded by Joe Fehrer, to elect David Gay as Chairman of the Historic District Review Board. The motion was unanimously approved. Motion made by John Caton, seconded by Ted Warner to elect Joe Fehrer as Vice Chairman of the Historic District Review Board. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

There was no Old Business to discuss.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Tom Bonadeo reported the following: i) He was pleased with the new Historic District Review Board and thanked them for applying; ii) He would be retiring in a couple of weeks and Rob Testerman had been hired as the new Planner. He had a degree in urban planning and had worked for Accomack County for seven years.

John Caton requested consideration in moving future HDRB meetings to 5:00p.m. instead of 4:30p.m. since he worked across the bay. There was some discussion regarding this matter.

**Motion made by Terry Strub, seconded by Joe Fehrer, to adjourn the Historic District Review Board Regular Meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.**

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Chairman David Gay

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Asst. Town Clerk