

**BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
TOWN OF FRONT ROYAL, VIRGINIA**

September 10, 2019

**Regular Meeting
Town Hall**

Present: Angela Toler, Chairman
Gary Vaughan
Nancy Lehew
Andrea White

Absent: Michael Whitlow, Vice Chairman

Staff: Jeremy F. Camp, Planning Director/Zoning Administrator
Matt Farace, Planning Technician
Connie L. Potter, Sr. Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Toler called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- June 11, 2019
- July 9, 2019

Ms. White moved, seconded by Chairman Toler to approve the meeting minutes as written.

**VOTE: Yes – Toler, White, Vaughan, Lehew
Absent - Whitlow**

NEW BUSINESS

- **FRCOA001599-2019.** Certificate of Appropriateness Application for exterior renovations to the “Balthis House” Kitchen Dependency Outbuilding located at 55 Chester Street.

Mr. Camp welcomed members of the Heritage Society to the meeting. They are proposing renovation work to 55 Chester Street which is the Balthis House. According the Historic Survey it is one of the oldest structures in the Town, Circa 1770. The building was modified in the 50s. It is a contributing structure in the historic district and is zoned commercial. Most of the work is in the back-kitchen building. The applicant submitted several photos of the proposed renovation work. The application was brought to the Board of Architectural Review because the foundation changes will have some impact on the exterior appearance and because of it being one of the most historic structures in the Town. Mr. Camp explained that the proposed renovations seem to be needed. He has not seen any signs that the proposed repairs are not appropriate for restoration of a historic structure. The applicant included a Structural Engineer Report from Dan Hotek. Staff recommends approval of the application provided everything checks out for the work to be done by the contractor.

PJ Stanley, contractor for the project, explained that the needed repairs are a condition that has been ongoing in direct result of the alleyway beside the south wall. Water is getting into the structure from the south wall and south alley and the drainage is very poor. There is probably a two-foot grade difference between the top of the alley and where the floor of the Balthis House is located. The drawing provided in the staff report shows a waterproofing remedy that in his opinion will solve the problem. Mr. Stanley and the Heritage Society want the end result to look exactly the way it looks currently. They are determining if the old bricks are stable enough to reuse in the wall. Because they have not yet gotten into the exploratory issues, they are unable to answer that question at this time. He does some historical remodeling and restoration and can obtain old building materials. Mr. Stanley said his plan is to replace as much as possible, other than the bricks, and mimic the way the house looks now and reconstruct it as such. The main thing is to stop the water from coming into the house. If something isn't done soon it will be much worse. They have to create a drainage area where the water will be diverted naturally onto the property. The goal of everyone involved is to keep it dry and in the historical manner it is now.

Mr. Camp asked Mr. Stanley if he was doing the siding and framing replacement.

Mr. Stanley answered, saying there is a frame structure, which he is assuming is saw-milled lumber of the period and does not know it had been added or was always there. The framing is exposed on the inside of the structure but not on the outside which is covered by siding. There are brick panels in between each of the framing members which is rotted out where it is below grade. He does not know if there is a footer system. Their intention is to put a footer 24" below grade, 2' wide. The only thing that will not be period correct would be that footer. This will be done to code to keep the water issue at bay. The engineer offered what he believes needs to be done and provided that information in the stamped drawings. The metal he shows on the plan is as old of metal as you can get. German lap siding is not hard to obtain. Mr. Stanley noted thatb he has several resources for that product. The brick on the inside is irregular and the method of how the brick is laid is what they call a "French Bond". Mr. Stanley showed the brick

that he would like to replicate and the framing members that he would use inside the structure. The brick and beams will be visible from the inside.

BAR member's asked Mr. Stanley to explain the engineer drawings and where the ground level was shown on the drawing. BAR member's expressed concern with the proposed metal roofing.

Mr. Stanley explained the drawing and explained that the main water barrier will be a platon membrane dimpled material to be between the block and brick, allows the wall to breathe but creates an impenetrable water area. The drain tile will be on the outside of the 2 courses of block sitting on top of a 2' by 8' footer that is 24" below grade. All the bricks on that wall will have to be removed.

BAR members held some discussion about the metal roof with Mr. Stanley and expressed their concerns and asked him to explain how far up the wall the metal roof would run and the possibility of some different roof options.

Mr. Stanley said that in terms of the grade it was probably 8" to 12" above the grade. A Heritage Society member explained that where this is located it is in an alleyway between their property and Silek's property. It is located where it is not seen by the public unless your standing directly in front of it. Art Saffelle looked at the kitchen four years ago and said the first thing needing to be done was to shore up the structure. At that time someone came in to shore up the structure and take the weight off the bricks. Mr. Stanley noted that the floor system above that supports the second story has been shored up so that it is not bearing on that any longer.

After additional discussion about the metal roof, BAR members agreed the applicant could move forward with the proposed renovations noting that the proposed metal roofing was recommended by the engineer.

Mr. Vaughan moved, seconded by Chairman Toler to approve the application as submitted.

**VOTE: Yes – Vaughan, Toler, White, Lehw
Absent – Whitlow**

OTHER

BAR members agreed to wait until all BAR members were present to discuss the BAR Guidelines.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no additional discussion.

Ms. White moved, seconded by Ms. Lehew to adjourn the meeting.

**VOTE: Yes – Lehew, White, Toler, Vaughan
Absent – Whitlow**

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 PM.

Connie L. Potter
Sr. Administrative Assistant