

Spotsylvania County Historic Preservation Commission

10304 Spotsylvania Avenue, 4th Floor, Fredericksburg, Virginia 22408

June 21, 2007 Minutes

Call to Order: Ms. Beals called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Members Present:

Anne Beals	Livingston
Caroline Hayden	Battlefield
Kira Fredenburgh	Chancellor
Brenda King	Salem
Betty Bazemore	Berkeley

Members Absent: Cristine Lynch Lee Hill

Staff Present: Paulette Mann, Commission Secretary
Wanda Parrish, Development Services Manager
Andrew Deci, Planner I

Determination of Quorum: A quorum was present.

Certificate(s) of Appropriateness:

HP07-02—Jarrell Properties: Requests a Certificate of Appropriateness for modifications and upgrades to the 1810 Spotswood Inn Building (Jarrell, Hicks, & Sasser Building). The building is a contributing resource to the Spotsylvania Court House Historic District. Proposed modifications to the building include the installation of brick steps and replacement of the wooden decking on the east elevation. The building is located on a 0.69 acre parcel, Tax Map # 47A(4)B2, and located within the Spotsylvania County Courthouse Historic Overlay District. Livingston voting District.

Mr. Deci presented the case. He explained that the applicant is proposing a two-part project to replace the decking of the front porch and install a brick façade to the concrete porch steps of the Spotswood Inn, a contributing resource to the Spotsylvania Court House Historic District.

The applicant is proposing to remove the existing 3” tongue-and-groove planking (located on the south elevation) and replace with 3” tongue-and-groove Tendura Plank material. The underlying porch support structure is not to be replaced or disturbed.

He explained that the applicant wishes to replace the existing material because of its condition. The current material is warped from water damage and has peeling paint. The deck is currently a ‘faded green’ color. It is likely that the decking material present on the building is non-historic.

Tendura Planking (the proposed replacement material) is a composite material made from 40% polypropylene plastic and 60% hardwood sawdust. The manufacturer’s intended application for this material is a covered porch/portico situation, where the material is semi-protected. The

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applicant is seeking to use an alternative material because of its long lifespan, compared to wood.

The applicant is proposing to add a brick façade over the existing concrete steps on the southern elevation. These steps are non-historic and likely added within the last thirty years. The concrete steps are not proposed to be removed.

The current concrete steps are irregularly shaped, with varying tread depths and riser heights. The application of the bricks to the outside of the concrete steps seeks to limit this irregularity and provide a more uniform series of steps. The applicant proposes that there will be an aesthetic benefit to the building with the application of this material.

The bricks proposed to be employed in this application are standard sized bricks, which match the greater courthouse brick type in color and surface texture.

Mr. Deci discussed that Sec. 5.1.1 and 5.1.2.5 of the *Spotsylvania Courthouse Area Historic Architectural Guidelines*, the *U.S. Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation"*, *briefs 16, and 17* provide guidance for this proposed project and can be summarized as follows:

- Institutional buildings are visually prominent structures that provide a unique community identity and should retain their distinctive features.

- When replacement is required, new features shall match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.

- Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

- Four circumstances warrant the consideration of substitute materials: 1) the unavailability of historic materials; 2) the unavailability of skilled craftsmen; 3) inherent flaws in the original materials; 4) code-required changes.

The prominence of the project, both on the building and within the district makes the proposed project especially important.

Three issues plague the proposed decking project; first, should the material be repaired or replaced? If replaced, is the proposed composite material appropriate for this application? Thirdly, is the proposed color an acceptable choice within the district?

Mr. Deci explained that both local and federal guiding documents emphasize the importance of the retention of any original materials. The proposed project asks the commission to determine if the replacement of the deck is the best treatment for the building and district. The Spotswood Inn is a building that represents many periods of development and modification, including the

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continuous maintenance, repair, and replacement of materials. The decking that is proposed to be replaced is non-historic, likely a replacement conducted in the recent past.

Unfortunately, guiding documents do not assist in the determination of whether a non-original material that mirrors a historic architectural feature should be treated as an original material should. As such, the condition and quality of the present material should be reviewed to determine whether replacement or repair is the most appropriate action. Substantial portions of the current porch have water damage, which causes individual planks to warp, curl, and discolor. In addition, rotten planks have weakened the overall strength of the porch, and may contribute to an unsafe surface to walk on.

The applicant has proposed the use of Tendura Plank Composite Decking as a replacement material for the current hardwood planks. Both federal and local guiding documents outline a clear methodology to determining the material type of a replacement project; generally, the material that is to be replaced must not be available, craftsmanship necessary for an appropriate installation is not available, the original material has substantial flaws, or that a building code would dis-allow an original material. If a substitute material is warranted, the material should mimic the original material as much as possible.

No element of this project meets the established requirements for approving a replacement material. The material choice should be as similar to the original as possible, mimicking the presently installed materials.

Exterior colors are not reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission—therefore, color choice is a decision to be made by the applicant.

The non-historic concrete steps that provide access to the first floor of the Spotswood Inn are in an acceptable condition for continued usage. The applicant has proposed to modify these steps in order to improve the aesthetic value of the building and to regularize the tread and riser depths and heights (currently the steps vary in size).

The addition of a new element to the building is a decision that should be carefully reviewed and analyzed in order to determine appropriateness. The proposed brick encapsulates the existing steps and hides them from the public view. This is the most substantial change proposed by this application—this is the most prominent feature, located in a very noticeable area within the district.

Local guiding documents stress the importance of retaining original porches and steps. Unfortunately, the original steps on the Spotswood Inn have been removed, and replaced with the current material. As such, the repair/replace debate is harder to involve than in the issue of the decking. Instead, the overall ‘feel’ of the architecture and surrounding buildings must act as a guiding force.

The construction of the Spotswood Inn is of brick construction. Surrounding buildings and other

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buildings in the district have had their steps treated in a similar method, providing a consistent treatment. This new element is consistent with the local district guidelines.

Mr. Deci stated that while standards do not support the use of Tendura Planking, staff recommends the approval of the decking replacement with conditions dated June 14, 2007.

He stated that staff recommends the approval of the brick step installation with conditions dated June 14, 2007.

Ms. Beals inquired if there was water damage to the joists.

Mr. Deci stated that there did not appear to be any damage to the joists.

Ms. Hayden stated that there is an entire list of hardwoods that would be acceptable in the 21st century.

Ms. King stated that she visited the site and was surprised to see that there were planks and brick already in place. She also stated that she believes the red brick takes away from the building. She suggested that perhaps the bricks be painted white or beige.

Ms. Fredenburgh stated that the painting of brick would require a lot of maintenance.

Ms. Hayden asked staff about the pattern of the brick proposed for the courthouse sidewalks.

Ms. Parrish stated that she doesn't recall what pattern the bricks would be laid.

Applicant, Mr. Hetrick: He stated that the porch area does not have a drainage problem, but it is always moist. He stated that the wood planks that are there presently will not hold paint. He stated that they are looking to replace the planks because of the constant maintenance required.

Ms. Hayden inquired whether the applicant would consider using a rubberized underlayment.

Mr. Hetrick stated that they are fighting the threshold and the slope to the porch for draining.

The Commission inquired to what type of warranty the Tendura planks came with.

Mr. Deci stated that it has a 50-year warranty.

Ms. Hayden stated that no product is 100% maintenance free.

Mr. Hetrick stated that as far as the masonry is concerned, they have a fabulous mason.

Mr. & Mrs. Cooper, tenants of the building stated that they have a problem with termites in their offices and would like to see the Tendura Plank approved.

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Motion and vote: Ms. Fredenburgh made a motion, seconded by Ms. King to approve the brick proposal. The motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Hayden stated that this building is one of the most significant in our district and would hate to see a synthetic material used. She suggested that the applicant look into the moisture problem. She also suggested the use of cypress or another very hard wood.

Ms. Beals stated that she is very sympathetic to the termite issue. She stated that the proposed planking looks good, but it is not supported by the guidelines.

Ms. Fredenburgh agreed.

Motion and vote: Ms. Hayden made a motion, seconded by Ms. King for approval of the replacement of the wood decking with 3” tongue-and-groove planking material. The motion passed 5-0.

Other Discussion

Campus Masterplan

Ms. Becky Golden introduced herself as the Director of Capital Projects, as well as staff member David Breedin. She stated that Mr. Tony Bell, with Mosley Architects would be presenting the latest plan to the Commission.

Mr. Bell stated that the goal is to meet the needs of the County and citizens of Spotsylvania and create a campus feel. He displayed several picture boards and displays.

Ms. Hayden inquired about the massive roof lines and what materials would be used.

Mr. Bell stated that the roof would be like that of the judicial center.

He stated that presently he has been meeting with the users of the proposed buildings and has met with the Planning department staff.

Ms. Hayden inquired about the parking deck and whether it has been eliminated.

Mr. Bell stated that it has and Mr. Hap Connors suggested the minimization of asphalt and the use of LID.

Ms. Golden briefly discussed her career background and that pervious asphalt is folly. She stated that they would be employing environmental features wherever possible. She stated that she would be working with Richard Street on LID techniques.

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Ms. Hayden informed Ms. Golden and her staff to contact the Department of Historic Resources for their input. She stated that they would provide great input.

Ms. Fredenburgh inquired about the type of bonding that would be used.

Mr. Bell stated that running bond would be used.

Mr. Bell also informed the Commission that they are going to bid one year from today with an expected completion of Fall 2010.

Section 106 Consultation: Wilderness Tower Alternatives Analysis

Ms. Jane Reeve with Information Services stated that she is before the Commission to present information on the public safety radio communications tower needed in the Lake Wilderness area. She also introduced Doug Boggs with Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Management, and Mike Christie, with the Sheriff's Office, representing the first responders affected by this tower

As noted in the documentation sent out yesterday, the County has been working since 2001 to identify a site to construct a radio communications tower in the Lake Wilderness area. She stated that this tower is critically needed to resolve poor public safety radio communications in that area of the County.

Since 2001, the County has performed two major and extensive 800mhz radio system evaluations through two separate county-wide radio system analysis. Both analyses have indicated that the sole alternative to resolving poor public safety radio communications in the Lake Wilderness area is to construct an additional communications tower.

To address this issue, the County submitted a preliminary National Environmental Protection Act document to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in 2004. In the state's response to our submittal, the County was directed to coordinate directly with the National Park Service to identify potential sites that would minimize the impact on historical properties in that area of the county. The County subsequently worked with the NPS for over the next two years to identify potential sites, evaluating multiple sites, at significant cost to the County.

In January 2007, the County resubmitted to the state a revised and detailed NEPA study, but failed to reference the prior submission to the state, which led to a complete re-review of the proposal without benefit of the prior submitted information.

Ms. Reeve explained that between 2004 and 2007, Section 106 requirements changed in 2005, with more stringent guidelines for evaluation of historic resources. Additionally, in 2005, the County entered into an agreement with the Department of Historic Resources, which qualified the County as certified local county government. Unfortunately, these new requirements were not included into the overall evaluation of the proposed tower in our resubmission in 2007, and as a result, she is before the Commission to remedy that situation.

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In response to the County's 2007 NEPA study submission, the state has identified four key areas that need to be corrected.

Early collaboration with the state, per Section 106, at the earliest stages of the process.

This has been resolved through the clarification of our original submission to the state in 2004, as well as our efforts to work with them to ensure that they are included on all correspondence to consulting parties, and other information related to the project.

Ms. Reeve explained that in response to the preliminary report from the state in 2004, the County did as directed by the state by contacting and coordinating directly with the National Park Service. The County did not maintain close communications with the state, however, during this process, this has now been remedied.

The County, through our consultant Stokes Environmental, has publicly solicited, per Section 106 requirements, for all interested parties to participate in this project as consultants. As a result, we have approximately eight parties involved, to include the National Park Service. All consulting parties will receive the information that the Commission has received, in addition to any comments received from this commission.

The County's first alternatives analysis was developed in coordination with the sites identified by the National Park Service over a two year period, as well as additional sites identified during the same time period.

Per a request from the National Park Service and the state at a meeting on May 17, 2007, the alternatives analysis has been expanded to evaluate all possible sites, and is also presented to you tonight in a preliminary report.

A final report to the state and the FCC will be prepared, again including comments from this commission, the National Park Service, and all other consulting parties, to include:

- Expert identification of the area to be served (Attachment C)
- Identification of all historic properties in the area to be served – already covered in the visual impact analysis, but we will make sure this is clear in our final report.
- A review of any potential collocation options

In response to the conflicting information identified on the last two balloon tests/visual impact studies performed, the County conferred with the state and agreed that a 3rd test would be appropriate.

Although the treeline in these areas block the visual impact from the majority of the tower, this evaluation clearly identifies a visual impact from three primary sites

- Elwood
- Wilderness Tavern

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- Several touring stops from along Rt 3.

The County has preliminarily determined that the sites available for a public safety radio communications tower in the Lake Wilderness area are limited due to elevation requirements, acreage requirements, and coverage area needed. It is acknowledged that the sites identified as potentially viable sites will each present some type of visual and/or physical impact on important County historical resources.

Ms. Reeve asked for any comments from the Commission for inclusion in preliminary reports to consulting parties and in a final report to the state and to the FCC.

She displayed several maps and discussed locations. She stated that they are extremely limited because the towers cannot bleed over into Orange County, it cannot be located too close to the Chancellor tower, it must be on five acres or more, and it must be on a ridge of 400-feet or higher to achieve the most effective coverage.

Ms. King stated that she appreciates staffs work on this.

Ms. Hayden asked if the County has discussed mitigation with the Department of Historic Resources. She suggested working with Ethel.

Ms. Beals stated that this is frustrating but sees now that the County is trying to remedy the situation.

Ms. Reeve suggested that they submit any comments or suggestions to her.

Ms. Parrish stated that they could contact her by noon next Friday and she would send the comments to Ms. Reeve.

HP07-01—Mark S. Gardner & Ronald M. Maupin: Request a Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a one-story office building in the Office 1 (O-1) zoning district. The 1.26 acre parcel is currently vacant. The property is accessed off of American Legion Drive, situated south of the “Old Post Office” building. Tax Map # 48C(1)H2 is located in the Spotsylvania County Courthouse Historic Overlay District. Berkeley voting district.

Mr. Deci stated that he is consulting with Mr. Chaves regarding this case. The Commission decided it best to table the case until staff has received further information.

Motion and vote: Ms. Fredenburgh made a motion, seconded by Ms. King to table the hearing on HP07-01. The motion passed 5-0.

Review and approval of minutes: The Commission decided to carry over the vote for the May 17, 2007 minutes to the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

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_____*Paulette Mann*_____

Paulette Mann, Commission Secretary

Approved: ____*September 20, 2007*_____

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