

**BAR MINUTES  
CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE  
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
Regular Meeting  
November 18, 2025  
Hybrid Meeting (In person at City Council Chambers & virtual  
via Zoom)**



Welcome to this Regular Monthly Meeting of the Charlottesville Board of Architectural Review. Staff will introduce each item, followed by the applicant's presentation, which should not exceed ten minutes. The Chair will then ask for questions from the public, followed by questions from the BAR. After questions are closed, the Chair will ask for comments from the public. For each application, members of the public are each allowed three minutes to ask questions and three minutes to offer comments. Speakers shall identify themselves and provide their address. Comments should be limited to the BAR's purview; that is, regarding only the exterior aspects of a project. Following the BAR's discussion and prior to taking action, the applicant will have up to three minutes to respond.

**Members Present:** James Zehmer, Carl Schwarz, Jerry Rosenthal, Cheri Lewis, Katherine Tabony, Ron Bailey, Roger Birle

**Staff Present:** Patrick Cory, Kate Richardson, Jeff Werner, Remy Trail, Missy Creasy, Matt Alfele, Sarah Kim

**Pre-Meeting:**

Staff brought up that there was a complicated agenda for the meeting. Staff decided to make changes to the original meeting agenda. 7<sup>th</sup> Street will be back on the BAR meeting agenda next month. Mr. Alfele went over the changes to the procedure manual and the new zoning code and the role of the BAR within the new zoning code. Mr. Alfele did bring up the amount verticality within the new zoning code. The CoA is a check on the final site plan for projects. Mr. Werner went over the process for an applicant getting to a pre-application conference in front of the BAR.

There was discussion surrounding the role of the BAR under the new zoning code.

Mr. Zehmer called the BAR meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

There was the election of Mr. Zehmer and Mr. Timmerman as Chair and Vice-Chair. Mr. Rosenthal made the motion to nominate Mr. Zehmer and Mr. Timmerman for Chair and Vice-Chair. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schwarz. Motion passes 7-0. Mr. Zehmer and Mr. Timmerman accepted the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair respectively.

**A. Matters from the public not on the agenda.**

No Public Comments

**B. Consent Agenda** (Note: Any consent agenda item may be pulled and moved to the regular agenda if a BAR member wishes to discuss it, or if any member of the public is present to comment on it. Pulled applications will be discussed at the beginning of the meeting.)

**1. Certificate of Appropriateness Application**

BAR # HST25-0110

1314 Rugby Road, TMP 380092000  
Individually Protected Property  
Owner: Pete Snyder  
Applicant: Jeff Dreyfus / Buschmann Dreyfus  
Project: Replace pool pavilion

**Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda – Mr. Schwarz – Second by Ms. Lewis – Motion passes 7-0.**

**Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including the ADC District Design Guidelines, I move to find the proposed pavilion at 1314 Rugby Road satisfies the BAR’s criteria and is compatible with this IPP, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted.**

**C. Deferred Items**

NA

**D. New Items**

**2. Certificate of Appropriateness Application**

BAR # HST25-0112  
159 Madison Lane, TMP 090145000  
The Corner ADC District (contributing structure)  
Owner: Montalto Corporation  
Applicant: Paul Tassell / The Gaines Group  
Project: Misc. repairs/improvements to south porch

**Jeff Werner, Staff Report** – The project narrative identifies several elements that staff has determined are maintenance and repair, and therefore not subject to BAR review. The elements subject to this CoA request are as follows:

- Removal and reconstruction of the concrete (lower) stairs on the west side of the portico.
- Removal and reconstruction of the brick and concrete (upper) stairs on the east and west sides of the portico. In lieu of the concrete caps on the outside stingers, the new concrete treads will be exposed with a 1” overhang. This will replicate the original design at these stairs, which is shown on the original Makielski drawings dated February 1, 1928.
- Install a metal door and frame at the lower wall at the west side of the portico.
- The proposed work includes infilling with brick the three, basement-level windows at the front of the porch. The BAR approved that work with conditions in June 2022; however, that CoA expired.

**Paul Tassell, Applicant** – It is self-explanatory. We have the original drawings. We just want to repair what has been damaged by water over the years and neglect. We want to have a safer entry and exit out of the building.

**QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No Question from the Public

**QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD**

**Mr. Rosenthal** – I was wondering why you could not put windows back instead of infilling with brick. I understand the security issue; maybe put bar or something behind the windows. It would at least allow light into the basement.

**Mr. Werner** – The BAR had that discussion in 2022 with a couple of scenarios. This seemed like the most ideal for their situation.

**Mr. Tassell** – They continuously get broken up. The kids don't care.

**Mr. Rosenthal** – A type of plexiglass would make it difficult to break.

**Mr. Tassell** – They broke through a door in the second-floor hatch to get into the building.

**Ms. Lewis** – It is inappropriate on a historic building like this. Perhaps, we have approved in the past. It would be unusual.

**Mr. Zehmer** – There are original windows there. I don't know what you are suggesting.

**Mr. Schwarz** – The staff report said that we are calling for 1 or 2 inches of recess. The proposal calls for the brick to be recessed a quarter inch.

**Mr. Werner** – That was in the prior CoA.

**Mr. Schwarz** – I don't know if that bothers anybody up here or there is a reason that you went with a shallower inset. Is there some structural reason?

**Mr. Tassell** – No.

**Mr. Zehmer** – Would you be opposed to recessing it further?

**Mr. Tassell** – No.

**Mr. Zehmer** – It maintains a shadow line at a depth.

**Mr. Schwarz** – On the stairs that are brick, you are going to replace the cap and extend the treads over. Is the brick being reused? Is there enough brick there?

**Mr. Tassell** – We spoke with a local brick mason. He believes that he has something like what is there now. We were going to try to repurpose it as much as we could.

**Mr. Rosenthal** – I saw that you are putting drains in the concrete on that deck. Where is the water being drained?

**Mr. Tassell** – If you are facing the building, on the left-hand side at the parking area, there is a storm drain that we were hoping to pipe it down and out that way. That was the last discussion.

**Mr. Zehmer** – On the railing replacements/handrails, one thing I want to confirm is that you are not planning to replace the railings in between the columns that was not shown on the plans. Are you trying to retain those? Is that correct?

**Mr. Tassell** – We were going to replace them as they are on the original drawings.

**Mr. Zehmer** – Those did not show up on any of the plans. All the arrows were pointing at the hand stairs, but not those 3 center sections. I do want to clarify that.

**Mr. Werner** – My understanding is that the whole deck is going to be reworked.

**Mr. Zehmer** – Those are all mounted to the columns. I think there is a way you could potentially save those even if you replace the deck. You said that you are going to replace them as is. I am worried that code requirements are going to make you follow the 4-inch rule and they are going to have a different appearance.

**Mr. Tassell** – We spoke to staff about that. We were under the impression that since we were putting back what is currently there that we were Ok.

**Mr. Zehmer** – Reinstalling the existing railings?

**Mr. Werner** – There are a couple of ways to look at it. Because it is a historic structure, there are certain things that, to meet code, don't necessarily have to comply. I have not had a conversation with the code official about this. I agree with that in some. I am not comfortable when it is a life and safety issue. If there is a railing height issue, and that is why the condition is in here. It is the first bullet. If it is replaced, it would be replaced with the understanding that it might have to be a different height. I don't have an answer for that. I know that Virginia code allows some flexibility with historic structures.

**Mr. Zehmer** – I understand that. They are rounded and curved. They are not just straight railings. At a minimum, that is an important detail to match if you must replace them with new railings. I would match that curve.

**Mr. Tassell** – On Drawing A2, facing the building, on the right-hand side between the far-right column, we have a note that addresses that to match the existing. We, not only address the handrails going up, but we also hit it in the center.

**Mr. Zehmer** – Do you know how tall the existing railings are?

**Mr. Tassell** – I believe it is 42 inches.

**Mr. Zehmer** – I think the only hangup would potentially be if the code official required you to do a 4-inch spacing.

**Mr. Tassell** – We are concerned with the same thing. Everything was bringing you back to the original drawing that is shown. On the left stairs going down, they did a hodge-podge repair. It is not the greatest.

**Mr. Zehmer** – I had another question about handrails. If you look at the Stannis-Lowkelski drawing, I noticed a detail like a fidal cap. They are all missing. Were they there? I would support putting them back.

**Mr. Rosenthal** – What are you doing to ensure that you will repeat the mistake with the brick and concrete?

**Mr. Tassell** – It is hopefully installed per our specifications, and we don't have this issue anymore. We have consulted with several different 'experts' with waterproofing slabs like this that are over a finished space. We are trying to find the best solution for this application. That is our intent. We don't want this to happen again. When we were first looking at this, we went through different options. One was to discharge the water and come over the top of that brick on the front. You would have the same thing when the freeze and thaw happen again. We decided to go with the internal drain system, run it down and out. RE Lee Contracting did a building

across the street from this. We went over and saw that elevated slab and saw how they did it. They provided the drawings. We matched that with this one. That is the intent.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No Comments from the Public

## **COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD**

**Ms. Lewis** – I want to commend the applicant for trying to go back to the Stannis-Lowkelski drawings and trying to restore those aspects of the railings and front porch.

**Mr. Tassell** – The new board is going to make sure that that is handled in the future.

**Motion – Ms. Lewis** – **Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including City’s ADC District Design Guidelines, I move to find that the proposed masonry-related rehabilitation work at 159 Madison Lane satisfies the BAR’s criteria and is compatible with this district and that the BAR approves the application with the following conditions:**

- **Existing railings will be reused; however, if existing are not salvageable, the new will reasonably replicate the existing, with the understanding that dimensions might be modified to meet code requirements.**
- **Approval of the infill, with brick, of the three basement-level windows at the front of the porch must follow these parameters: the coursing, brick color and mortar be matched as closely to the historic as possible, and that the infill with brick be set 1 inch back from the plane of the brick wall.**

**The motion was seconded by Mr. Bailey and passed 7-0.**

The meeting was recessed at 5:58 PM and readjourned in the NDS Conference Room at 6:02 PM.

### **3. Staff questions/discussion**

- Update on workplan for review of design guidelines
  - Staff did bring up that the Design Guidelines are Council’s Guidelines and are adopted by City Council.
  - There was a discussion regarding the review and update of the new design guidelines.
  - Mr. Rosenthal brought up an email sent out by Mr. Timmerman to the other members of the BAR.
  - There was a robust discussion surrounding the application of the design guidelines.
  - Mr. Werner believes that the height, scale, and the massing are the easiest to apply with the guidelines.
  - Members of the BAR expressed interest in having a workflow chart and a checklist for the members of the BAR to follow with projects.
  - There was discussion about the administrative approvals without coming to the BAR for approval.
  - Ms. Tabony brought up identifying where the guidelines and zoning code come into conflict or collision.
  - Ms. Lewis did bring up that most of the neighborhoods were not that well organized during the Comp Plan and Zoning rewrite.
  - There was discussion about the project in Fifeville and Fifeville becoming a historic district. Staff did mention that there would have to be overwhelming support.
  - There was discussion about when the previous neighborhoods became Historic Conservation Districts (Woolen Mills and Martha Jefferson).

- Staff reminded the BAR that there can be no partial CoAs. All aspects of the applications need to be complete and full.
- Mr. Birle did bring up the details of the renderings that applicants submit for a CoA application.
- Mr. Schwarz did bring that each member of the BAR needs to be clear in their comments to the applicants in the feedback.
- Ms. Lewis brought up that a checklist for the 7<sup>th</sup> Street project might have been a good idea.
- There was an idea of partial CoAs for massing and scale at the beginning of projects.
- Staff stressed the difference between an IPP (Individually Protected Properties) and ADC Districts and the timing of the West Main and 7<sup>th</sup> Street projects.
- Ms. Lewis brought up the high cost of construction in offering and building affordable housing. Ms. Lewis did bring up the idea that the city should focus on renovation of existing housing.
- Mr. Schwarz suggested that the Guidelines are not too far off, except for materiality when it comes to the big projects.
- Mr. Zehmer did note that the new zoning code and ordinance is promoting bigger buildings. It is something that Charlottesville historically has not had.
- There was a discussion among the members of the BAR about the public perception of the BAR. There are members of the public who do not understand what the role of BAR is.
- Mr. Schwarz asked a question about whether the BAR tries to make projects better or projects just good enough.
- There was discussion surrounding the question asked by Mr. Schwarz.
- There was discussion surrounding the differences between contributing and non-contributing buildings.
- New development review policy. Development Review Procedures Manual

## **E. Adjourn**

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.