



HISTORIC DISTRICT REVIEW BOARD

Special Meeting
Cape Charles Civic Center
via Electronic Communications
January 19, 2021
2:00 p.m.

This Special Meeting of the Cape Charles Historic District Review Board was held by video conference in accordance with Code of Virginia § 2.2-3708.2, subsection A.3, resulting from Governor Northam's March 12, 2020 declaration of a state of emergency for the Commonwealth of Virginia arising from the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. It was deemed impractical and unsafe to assemble physically due to the highly contagious nature of COVID-19.

The purpose of this meeting was to review thirteen applications to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness. An audio recording was made of the meeting, and the meeting was also live-streamed on Facebook, as well as video-taped for viewing from the Town's website after processing. Public comments were accepted in writing prior to the meeting. Viewers could also submit their comments via Facebook Live and emails to the clerk and the planner.

At approximately 2:00 p.m., Chairman Kerry Shackelford, having established a quorum, called to order the Special Meeting of the Historic District Review Board (HDRB). Physically present at the Civic Center were Edward Wells, Town Planner Allyson Finchum, and Planning Technician Tracy Outten. In attendance via Zoom were Martin Mayer, Michael Strub, Herb Thom, and the applicants. There were no members of the public physically in attendance, but there were 17 viewers on Facebook Live.

AGENDA:

Kerry Shackelford approved the agenda as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY):

Tracy Outten read comments submitted in writing from David and Pat Cobb, Joe and Lori Wagner, Jim Granger, Eva Noonan, and Lynna Polizos.

There were no public comments to be heard nor any additional comments submitted prior to the meeting.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

- A. *Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demo and reconstruct a rear addition on a single-family detached dwelling at 212 Randolph Avenue – tax map #83A3-1-640.*

This application was deferred until a representative was in attendance to answer questions.

Allyson Finchum informed the board there were some zoning issues that needed to be resolved.

- B. *Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace a front porch on a single-family detached dwelling at 220 Jefferson Avenue – tax map #83A1-1-209.*

Mike Hoag, applicant, read a statement. (Please see attached.)

Allyson Finchum informed the board that there was a zoning violation on the property due to work being started without an approval from the Zoning Administrator; and without a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) being obtained. She said that zoning would be approved once the COA was issued.

Discussion and questions were as follows: (i) Edward Wells referenced page 44 item 3 and page 45 of the Cape Charles Historic District Guidelines (CCHDG) pertaining to porches. He asked the applicant

if using wood for the steps was an option; no. Michael Strub recalled that “Sears” homes had brick steps; (iii) Edward Wells said there were many different styles and profiles of handrailing to know which one would be approved without physical samples being provided; (iv) Kerry Shackelford thought the “Sears” home had a variety of porches and steps and there was not evidence of different material used for these steps other than would. He said the CCHDG were clear and other sections could be open to interpretation but not the porch section.

Motion made by Edward Wells, seconded by Herb Thom, to approve the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 220 Jefferson Avenue to replace the front porch on the single-family detached dwelling with the conditions as follows: (1) the porch flooring would be azek; (2) a sample needed to be provided of the railings; and (3) step material would be wood or wood composite material. The motion was approved by majority vote with Michael Strub and Martin Mayer opposing.

Roll call vote: Kerry Shackelford, yes; Herb Thom, yes; Edward Wells, yes; Martin Mayer, no; Michael Strub, no.

- C. *Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to extend an existing porch and to add screening on a single-family detached dwelling at 416 Randolph Avenue – tax map #83A3-1-596.*
June Pearlberg, applicant, summarized the project.

Allyson Finchum informed the board that a zoning violation was currently on the property due to work being started without approvals from the Zoning Administrator, Code Official, and HDRB.

There was some discussion on the roof pitch.

Motion made by Michael Strub, seconded by Herb Thom, to approve the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 416 Randolph Avenue to extend the existing porch and add screening on the single-family detached dwelling as submitted. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Roll call vote: Martin Mayer, yes; Kerry Shackelford, yes; Michael Strub, yes; Herb Thom, yes; Edward Wells, yes.

- D. *Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct an addition on a single-family detached dwelling at 623 Jefferson Avenue – tax map #83A1-1-14A.*
William Manning, contractor, summarized the project and added that the previously issued COA had expired.

Allyson Finchum said there were some zoning questions that needed to be answered pertaining to the proportion and grid pattern of the new windows and the roof pitch.

Kerry Shackelford was comfortable with the proposed windows since this was an addition and the roof pitch if it matches.

Motion made by Edward Wells, seconded by Herb Thom, to approve the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 623 Jefferson Avenue to construct an addition on the single-family detached dwelling as submitted. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Roll call vote: Martin Mayer, yes; Kerry Shackelford, yes; Michael Strub, yes; Herb Thom, yes; Edward Wells, yes.

- E. *Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a two-story rear addition and first floor rear porch; and restore the front porch on a duplex at 426/428 Randolph Avenue – tax map #83A3-1-589.*

Allyson Finchum stated that the application did not meet setbacks and needs a variance approval from

the Board of Zoning Appeals before this board can approve the application.
The application would be deferred until all zoning issues were resolved.

- F. *Pre-Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a sign on a commercial building at 325 Mason Avenue – tax map #83A3-1-610.*

Allyson Finchum said though the past application for this commercial building was approved by the Town Council after the applicant appealed the board's decision, the sign was not listed.

Meredith Lusk, applicant, described the proposed sign.

Motion made by Herb Thom, seconded by Edward Wells, to approve the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 325 Mason Avenue to install a sign on the commercial building as submitted. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Roll call vote: Martin Mayer, yes; Kerry Shackelford, yes; Michael Strub, yes; Herb Thom, yes; Edward Wells, yes.

- G. *Pre-Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to enclose a deck on a single-family detached dwelling at 6 Randolph Avenue – tax map #83A3-2-2-82.*

Allyson Finchum needed to see a plat before signing off on zoning for this project. She added that the roof pitch and windows were inconsistent with the existing roof and windows.

After some discussion, the following information was requested:

- Actual size, type, and details on the windows was needed.
- The roof pitch needed to be clarified in relation to the house size.

- H. *Pre-Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace a roof at 504 Monroe Avenue – tax map #83A3-1-375.*

Allyson Finchum was satisfied with zoning for the proposed roof replacement.

Jeb Johnson, contractor, described the proposed roof replacement and read a statement prepared by Jim Drebes, owner. (Please see attached.)

Discussion and questions were as follows: (i) Michael Strub asked the rating on the proposed shingles; 50 years; (ii) Herb Thom wanted to know if the zoning ordinance mentioned slate roofs; no; (iii) Kerry Shackelford said guidelines did not specify roofs but, the intent was to retain the original material; (iv) Edward Wells thought the applicant nailed it with the age of the roof and added that the slate had lasted its life span. Herb Thom agreed that the existing roof was beyond repair; and (v) Kerry Shackelford suggest using synthetic slate.

Motion made by Herb Thom, seconded by Michael Strub, to approve the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 504 Monroe Avenue to replace the roof on the single-family detached dwelling as submitted. The motion was approved by majority vote with Kerry Shackelford abstaining.

Roll call vote: Martin Mayer, yes; Michael Strub, yes; Herb Thom, yes; Edward Wells, yes; Kerry Shackelford, abstained.

- I. *Pre-Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace siding, add windows, and renovate the front porch on a single-family detached dwelling at 2 Monroe Avenue – tax map #83A3-2-6-7C.*

Allyson Finchum read Cape Charles Zoning Ordinance Section 3.2. pertaining to the request to adding a sliding glass rear door.

Kerry Shackelford and Herb Thom suggested a glass panel door be considered.

Bobby Montgomery, applicant, gave an overview of the proposed modifications and informed the board that wood railings would be installed.

Discussion and questions were as follows: (i) Edward Wells asked when the house was built; 1950; (ii) Kerry Shackelford clarified that the applicants would like to replace the existing siding with hardie plank; and (iii) Michael Strub would like information on the cupula.

The following information was requested:

- A detailed sketch of the cupula.
- Locations and size of the windows.

- J. *Pre-Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new second floor, an addition, and a rear porch; and to renovate a single-family detached dwelling at 616 Strawberry Street – tax map #83A1-9-A.*

Allyson Finchum said the proposed project needed a variance for setbacks.

Jessica Colburn was available to answer questions.

After some discussion, more information was requested on the following:

- Clearer drawings and dimensions of the addition
- Specification on the roof pitch
- Existing structure condition and photos

- K. *Pre-Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace windows on a single-family detached dwelling at 208 Bay Avenue – tax map #83A3-2-6-11.*

Allyson Finchum said zoning was approved.

Dan Alperin, applicant, was proposing to replace windows on the two-story home and asked if there were any questions.

Motion made by Edward Wells, seconded by Herb Thom, to approve the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 208 Bay Avenue to replace the second-floor windows on the single-family detached dwelling as submitted. The motion was approved by majority vote with Kerry Shackelford abstaining.

Roll call vote: Martin Mayer, yes; Michael Strub, yes; Herb Thom, yes; Edward Wells, yes; Kerry Shackelford, abstained.

- L. *Pre-Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a two-story garage at 208 Bay Avenue – tax map #83A3-2-6-11.*

Allyson Finchum needed to check the zoning again.

Darin Alperin explained the proposed garage.

The following information was requested or suggested:

- Remove the fireplace from the application.
- Final application supporting documents needed to accurately reflect the garage.
- Details were overdone for an accessory building. It should not overshadow the main structure.
- Zoning needs to be approved

- M. *Pre-Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to rebuild a chimney on a single-family detached dwelling at 202 Madison Avenue.*

Allyson Finchum informed the board that there was a zoning violation on the property due to the chimney being removed without an approval from the Zoning Administrator and Code Official; and without a COA being obtained. She said that zoning would be approved after a COA was issued.

Fiona Godwin, applicant, apologized for doing work without proper approvals and permits. She continued by stating the condition of the chimney was bad and it would be replaced. Fiona Godwin would try to reuse the brick.

The application was deferred until a brick sample could be provided.

Motion made by Herb Thom, seconded by Edward Wells, to adjourn the January 19, 2021 Historic District Review Board Special Meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

Roll call vote: Martin Mayer, yes; Kerry Shackelford, yes; Michael Strub, yes; Herb Thom, yes; Edward Wells, yes.

Chairman Kerry Shackelford

Planning Technician

**Comments submitted in writing
January 19, 2021 Historic District Review Board Special Meeting**

David and Pat Cobb

Subject: 220 Jefferson Avenue

January 3, 2021

Allyson Finchum
Town Planner and Zone Administrator
Town of Cape Charles
2 Plum Street Cape Charles, VA 23310

Dear Ms. Finchum,

We are writing in support of Mike and Betty Hoag in their desire to reconstruct the rotted front porch and to replace the front steps at 220 Jefferson Avenue. We wholly agree with their selection of Azek tongue and groove porch decking, vinyl railings and brick steps. As you are probably aware, many of the residential buildings in town, and in particular, in the historic district, have brick steps. We live directly across the street at 217 Jefferson Avenue and have vinyl railings and brick steps. These materials are architecturally compatible with the houses in our area.

Anyone who lives in Cape Charles knows that wood does not hold up here. The Azek and vinyl will have the same appearance but with more durability and will require less maintenance. We are in complete agreement with the need to keep the aesthetic of this wonderful house, but common sense must prevail.

Yours truly,
David & Pat Cobb

Joe and Lori Wagner

Subject: 220 Jefferson Avenue

January 3, 2021

Allyson Finchum Town Planner and Zone Administrator
Town of Cape Charles
2 Plum Street Cape Charles, VA 23310

Dear Ms. Finchum,

We are writing in relation to Mike and Betty Hoag's intention to reconstruct the rotted front porch and to replace the front steps of their home at 220 Jefferson Avenue. We reside at 211 Jefferson Avenue and like many homeowners in the neighborhood, we support their selection of materials and finishes, namely Azek tongue and groove porch decking, vinyl railings and brick steps. As you are probably aware, many of the residential buildings in the historic district, have brick steps. And we ourselves have Azek trim, composite decking and brick steps on our front porch. These materials are common to much of the construction of the houses in our area

Most people who are familiar with the weather conditions and salt air of Cape Charles understand the inferiority of wood and wood finishes when compared to the durability of modern construction materials. Wood requires more maintenance and lacks the performance of the materials currently available. The Azek and vinyl will have the same appearance but with more durability and will require less maintenance. While we understand the value of aesthetics, we also realize that from curbside, it is rare that one can tell the difference between the materials. In this case we believe that practicality should overrule nostalgia.

Sincerely,
Joe & Lori Wagner

Jim Granger

Subject: 220 Jefferson Avenue

All,

I support the request of Mike and Betty Hoag to repair their porch at 220 Jefferson using Azek decking, vinyl wrapped railings, and brick steps.

My understanding of the intent of the Historic District Guidelines and the Historic District Review Board (HDRB) is to maintain the character of the town. The Guidelines are exactly that - guidelines. They're not laws. The HDRB is appointed to exercise judgement in the interpretation of the Guidelines. In the mere 5 years since I moved here, I've seen consistent inconsistency on a month-to-month basis from a Board which seems to have new members every month. I see absolutely no problem with using modern materials that look the same as the old ones, and won't deteriorate into some of the eyesores we see in town. There are numerous uses of Azek, vinyl clad railing, and brick on Jefferson Avenue, and several of them on the same block!

I support the purpose of the HDRB. We don't need chrome and glass skyscrapers, or more OBX-style mini-mansions (we already approved one on Bay Avenue), things like that. We need to support people who are trying to repair their houses with cost-effective materials and techniques. The HDRB works for the citizens of Cape Charles, not the other way around. They need to support efforts like the repairs Mike and Betty Hoag have requested to make. I strongly support their request.

Sincerely,
Jim Granger

524 Jefferson Avenue
Cape Charles, VA

Eva Noonan

Subject: 220 Jefferson Avenue

To the Historic Review Board of Cape Charles

I am writing to you regarding my neighbors and good friends, Mike and Betty Hoag, in support of their request that is before you for consideration.

Three years ago, I had the pleasure to sell them their dream home and best of all I was able to make them my neighbors. Mike a retired fire Chief and his wife Betty, who also just recently retired, were finally able to make their dream come true and purchase 220 Jefferson Avenue, a beautiful "Sears" home. The reason they fell in love with the town and their home was specifically for the history and charm this town has to offer. In the three years I've known them, I've watch Mike research and study the history of the Sears home and the part it played in what makes up Cape Charles. Any and every refurbishment Mike and Betty have completed have been done with that history in mind and an effort to preserve the history of this particular house. Additionally, their efforts have freshened up the face of this block of Jefferson, leading the charge for general beautification and high standards of upkeep. Mike is always outside maintaining the home with pride to keep it nice and tidy. It always looks immaculate. I couldn't hope for a better neighbor.

As a Cape Charles realtor and resident for 30 years I understand how important it is to keep the history and integrity of our precious town. I know it is equally important to Mike and Betty. They are committed to retaining the looks of their historic home, while at the same time improving its ability to survive into the future. That's why I have complete faith that Mike's plans will not change the look but simply enhance it by incorporating the use of a more updated and, in my professional opinion, very appropriate material.

The plan is to reconstruct the porch using Azek tongue and groove porch decking, vinyl porch railing, and replacing the concrete and wood steps with brick steps. All of these materials are currently in use and visible from the street on many other historic homes in the historic district. All of the materials they plan on using are clearly architecturally compatible with the surrounding structures.

They are using a local and reputable contractor who is very familiar with the town's historic rules and regulations. The planned materials look good and they look very authentic. Most of all, these materials are very durable and will hold up for many years to come. With these materials the house will not noticeably change but will be given a new lease on life and always look properly maintained instead of rotten and peeling appearance existing before this project.

I hope you consider this letter before making your final decision.

Respectfully

Eva Noonan

Eva Noonan
Chesapeake Properties
Licensed Virginia Real Estate Agent
Phone: 757.615.8700
eva.noonan@yahoo.com
7 Fig Street
Cape Charles, VA 23310

Lynna Polizos

Subject: 220 Jefferson Avenue
January 3, 2021

Cape Charles Historic Board
Cape Charles, VA 23310

I am once again writing concerning a decision made for 2020 Jefferson Ave.'s front steps.

The front steps of this house were removed (thank god) because they were certainly (1) not safe, (2) had met any building code + (3) unsightly. Whoever put them in probably used any old lumber or concrete slabs they had around. The 1st step was 8+/- inches tall + one of the other steps had a plat of wood 3" thick + all the steps weren't deep/wide enough for a normal foot. If you are wanting historic, tell the owner to rebuild them as they were. (Bad) I always wondered why when that house was rehabbed; the town allowed those unsafe steps to remain.

The present owners would like to be able to put in brick steps that would be a correct height + depth + when I go to visit, I won't trip or fall on those steps.

Building brick steps certainly would have been a better choice when that house was built. I live across the street (219) and have wood steps which I have replaced 4 times in our 32 years + have painted or stained them every year. If I don't or can't they would be the same unsafe derelict steps we purchased with this house in 1988.

Believe me if I could have afforded brick steps they would be there now. I do love the historic character of the historic old beautiful homes but upgrading and maintaining them is a full-time job.

Adding brick steps to the front of 220 would certainly be within the historic time frame of that house + would eliminate the maintenance problems.

The present owners have done everything to make that house better within the historic time frame and the Historic Board needs to rethink their wood steps decision.

Thank you,
Lynne Polizos
219 Jefferson Avenue
Cape Charles, VA 23310

Jim Drebes, 504 Monroe Avenue

Jeb, here's some information for you if the Historic Review Board has questions regarding our roof issue.

We purchased the house in 2004. The roof was leaking then. Over the years we have repeatedly had repairs made, but the leaks now are worse than ever.

We have had most of the valleys and ridges worked on by very reputable roofing companies skilled in slate roof repair. We have had high quality copper flashing and copper nails used where needed.

We have had to have several king rafters and some underlayment/decking repaired due to damage from water intrusion.

We have had to replace individual slates MANY times. After heavy storms, we frequently find slate that has come down scattered on our lawn.

This house was built in 1918 - 1919. It is obvious that it has outlived it's "100-year" lifespan.

This has all been very expensive, and it's not easy finding competent roofers willing to tackle slate roofs. So we live with each new leak until we can find someone and get on their very busy schedule for the repairs.

Currently, we have buckets, large tubs, and towels placed all over our attic to handle the leaks we can see. Unfortunately, there are leaks we can't locate and water is making its way to the 2nd and ground floor of the house. When it rains heavily, we have to catch water in buckets in our nice, remodeled kitchen! It's one thing to have buckets in an attic, but we shouldn't have to live with that in kitchens and bedrooms.

We have invested a lot of money since 2004 in keeping this great old house in the best possible condition. We are now in our seventies, living on fixed retirement income. We can no longer afford the expenses involved in maintaining a slate roof that is over 100 years old.

I'd like to also point out that we are full-time residents who have been involved in our community for many years, in many ways. Gail is co-director of our Cape Charles Food Pantry, and I volunteer there also. We have also done volunteer work at the Historic Palace Theater, the Cape Charles Museum, and for other civic, religious and charitable organizations. We are contributing members of the Museum and the Barrier Island Center, as well. We love and respect the heritage of this very special place, and hope we can continue to live in this house and town that we love so much.

Hope this info is helpful,
Jim and Gail Drebes