

Historic Yorktown Design Committee

Minutes

September 18, 2019
East Room
York Hall
301 Main Street
Yorktown, Virginia

Members Attending: Carolyn Weekley, Chair
Belinda Willis, alternate – voting member
Jose Longoria, alternate – voting member

Staff Attending: Earl W. Anderson, AICP

Ms. Weekley called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Minutes

The minutes of the October 17, 2018 and February 20, 2019 meeting were approved unanimously.

Old Business

None

New Business

Application No. HYDC-163-19, Grace Episcopal Church, 109 Church Street

Mr. Anderson stated that this application, submitted by Grace Episcopal Church, with applicant representative Elizabeth Wash, seeks review of the facing of the interior existing driveway and approval of a new front yard deck railing, new gutters, the house paint color, the deck material, and the roofing material at 109 Church Street.

The applicant has requested that the facing requested for the interior facing retaining wall be closed as the wall has been lowered and the gaps between the bricks are no longer visible from Church Street. Staff agrees that the gaps are not visible from Church Street. Additionally, the removal of the vinyl rail along the top part of the wall has brought the visibility down. The vinyl was replaced with a wood material.

Mr. Anderson stated that staff agrees with the applicant and recommends the HYDC close out the continuing review of the interior existing driveway gaps between the bricks. The

wall has been lowered and the gaps are no longer evident from Church Street. Additionally, with the removal of the white vinyl railing on the top of the wall, the wall has become much less visible. It is only visible when you approach the driveway and see the slope down that the gaps would be visible which is very minimal.

The previous approval by the HYDC to require the deck railing to have a picket style fencing feature was to make sure the deck was not visible from Water Street. The Guidelines specify that decks “should be screened from public rights-of-way by appropriate landscape materials”. The HYDC was not only concerned with viewing the deck itself, but seeing the people congregating on the deck. Staff agrees that the deck should be hidden from view, which could be accomplished with the extension of the existing picket fence on the adjacent neighbor’s property across the frontage or with landscaping along the frontage. This screening would allow the deck railing to not have the picket fence style and hide the deck from view. With the removal of the pickets the staff is concerned by the material type requested by the applicant for the deck railing. The applicant has proposed a white powder coated metal railing, which is not consistent with the materials allowed by the Guidelines. The applicant has noted in the narrative that metal railings are allowed in the Guidelines section for Commercial, Civic, and Institutional Construction; however, this structure has been considered residential with a minor institutional use and has fallen under the residential use classification predominately. As such, staff feels the materials should be consistent with the Guidelines for New Residential Construction and “be constructed of wood or wood-like synthetic or composite material that is painted”.

The proposed LeafGuard gutters are boxy shaped with a square downspout, rather than a half round gutter and round downspout that the Guidelines identify. Other gutters are allowed by the Guidelines, if the gutter is consistent with the style of the structure. The LeafGuard gutters do appear to blend in with the fascia and do not appear to be as visible as other gutters and could fit in with the style of the home. A rounded downspout should be considered rather than the square downspout as required by the Guidelines.

The other proposed changes for the house color, deck material, and roofing material are consistent with the Design Guidelines.

Staff recommends that the Committee find the proposal consistent with the guidelines and that the application be approved, subject to the following condition:

1. The proposed changes shall be installed in accordance with the features as depicted on the “Detailed Description Attachment” presented with the application and received on August 28, 2019, except as noted below.
2. The deck railing shall be constructed of wood or wood-like synthetic or composite material.
3. A white picket fence of equal height to the adjacent picket fencing at 105 and 107 Church Street shall be constructed across the frontage facing Water Street, supplemented with landscaping, to block views of the deck.

4. The gutter downspouts shall be rounded.

Mrs. Willis asked if staff was recommending landscaping in lieu of fencing.

Mr. Anderson opined that either would be good, but both would provide screening. The plantings should be evergreen, so it provides year round screening. The view of the deck will be limited, but when you have people standing on the deck it will be evident from Water Street, so some kind of screening is recommended.

Ms. Weekley asked the applicant their thoughts on the screening recommendation.

Mrs. Elizabeth Wash stated that they preferred the landscaping, as they felt the way the lot line runs along the property would prevent a fence from being constructed in a way that would benefit the screening. They feel that plantings along the bluff would be beneficial in many ways.

The Committee agreed to allow the railing to change and to require landscaping for screening.

Mrs. Wash opined that the railing materials are similar to the handicap rail on the front of Grace Episcopal Church. They want a long term product that will stay fresh and this type of railing has precedent. Additionally, the black railing will disappear from view at Water Street. Therefore, they would prefer the metal to the wood.

The Committee agreed to allow the railing to be outside the guidelines, since it would not be visible and would be a safer material over time. The railing would be painted black.

Mrs. Wash stated that their concern is that the gutter contractor for LeafGuard has never done a configuration where the gutters go into a rounded downspout. The system is a whole piece and is not easily broken up. The setback and angles are such that from the distance you would not be able to tell.

Mr. Longoria stated that he felt the contractor could easily cut and install the rounded downspout.

Mr. David O'Brian questioned what is gained by going round, since the house is set far back from the street. The LeafGuard system is a whole piece system and the downspouts would run along the corners and would blend in. He does not believe it will be unpleasant to look at from a distance.

Mr. Longoria said it is not that he disagrees; however, the guidelines state that it should be round for everyone. Many on Church Street already have them, so we want to make sure we are being consistent.

Mrs. Wash said that she does not believe the gutters will be visible from Church Street. She understands the guidelines, but it is going to turn a plain system into a custom system and to hold the manufacturer to a warranty versus installing something that might not work and they have way to get it fixed.

Ms. Weekley questioned how the round would make it clog.

Mrs. Wash stated that LeafGuard does not do a round downspout, so it would need to be custom.

The Committee discussed and felt that the gutters needed to be consistent.

Mr. Longoria asked what color of shingles the applicant would prefer.

Mrs. Wash said they liked both choices and would like to have approval of both, then they could choose once the development started and it could be matched better.

The Committee agreed to approve both shingles as proposed.

Ms. Weekley asked if there were any other comments.

There being no further discussion Mrs. Willis moved approval of the application to find the proposal consistent with the Guidelines and that the application be approved, subject to the following conditions:

1. The proposed changes shall be installed in accordance with the features as depicted on the "Detailed Description Attachment" presented with the application and received on August 28, 2019, except as noted below.
2. The front deck railing shall be not be required to place pickets on the outside of the railing. The front deck railing shall be constructed of a black metal railing. Evergreen plantings shall be planted along the frontage facing Water Street to block views of the deck.
3. The gutter downspouts shall be rounded.

By voice vote, the motion was approved unanimously.

Application No. HYDC-164-19, Scott and Julie Reichle, 234 Nelson Street

Mr. Anderson stated that this application, submitted by Scott and Julie Reichle seeks approval for the design of the proposed renovations to an existing single-family detached home on property located at 234 Nelson Street.

The property was previously approved at the February 20, 2019 HYDC meeting for the numerous improvements, which have been completed. The proposed new renovations would consist of:

- Install a new white front yard picket style fence at the southwest and southeast corner of the front yard;
- Install a new six foot (6') white board-on-board with spacing;
- Repair and replace existing split rail fence between front and back yard;
- Install brick pavers around driveway; and
- Replace existing front stepping stone walkway with brick paver walkway.

In staff's opinion, the proposed renovations to the property are fully consistent with the Design Guidelines and with the character of surrounding structures and the Historic Core. Staff believes that the proposed installations will be visually appealing and that it merits approval. Accordingly, it is recommended that the Committee find the proposal consistent with the Guidelines and that the application be approved, subject to the following conditions:

The renovation shall be constructed in accordance with the narrative descriptions and submitted materials and pictures and with the supplementary information presented with the application and received August 28, 2019.

Mrs. Willis stated that the new improvements look wonderful and the new proposals will continue to improve the property.

Mr. Longoria and Ms. Weekley agreed.

Ms. Weekley asked if there were any other comments.

There being no further discussion Mrs. Willis moved approval of the application to find the proposal consistent with the Guidelines and that the application be approved, subject to the following conditions:

The renovation shall be constructed in accordance with the narrative descriptions and submitted materials and pictures and with the supplementary information presented with the application and received August 28, 2019.

By voice vote, the motion was approved unanimously.

Application No. HYDC-165-19, Yorktown Village Apartments, 311 Ballard Street

Mr. Anderson stated that this application, submitted by Yorktown Village Apartments seeks approval for the design of new shutters for the multi-family residential structure on property located at 311 Ballard Street. The proposed changes would consist of replacing the existing black louvered shutters with new black paneled shutters.

In staff's opinion, the proposed renovations to the structure are fully consistent with the Design Guidelines and with the character of surrounding structures and the Historic Core. Staff believes that the proposed new shutters will be visually appealing and that the

application merits approval. Accordingly, it is recommended that the Committee find the proposal consistent with the Guidelines and that the application be approved, subject to the following condition:

The renovation shall be constructed in accordance with the application narrative description and submitted pictures received August 29, 2019.

Ms. Weekley asked if there were any other comments.

There being no further discussion Mrs. Willis moved approval of the application to find the proposal consistent with the Guidelines and that the application be approved, subject to the following conditions:

The renovation shall be constructed in accordance with the application narrative description and submitted pictures received August 29, 2019.

By voice vote, the motion was approved unanimously.

Staff Reports

Mr. Anderson discussed the administrative approvals completed since the last meeting and he reviewed them with the Committee.

Mr. Anderson asked the Committee their opinion about the possibility of making Main Street a one way from the monument through to Ballard Street. The proposal would close a lane with landscaping down the middle and have pedestrian and bike access to the other lane. This would help bring more traffic down Main Street and give more visibility to the businesses on Main Street.

Mrs. Willis asked if there would be an effort to sit down with everyone about the closing.

Mr. Anderson said that the County would definitely want feedback from the residents of Yorktown.

Mr. Longoria asked if there would be any pedestrian markers placed down the road.

Mr. Anderson stated that those items would be considerations during the design phase, if it got that far, but that pedestrian safety would be a top feature.

Overall the Committee thought it should be something that is considered and people would like the safety of being able to walk in Yorktown safely. Families might use it more, too. They felt that a meeting with the Yorktown residents would be helpful to get everyone's opinion.

Committee Requests

None

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:09 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Earl W. Anderson, Secretary

Approved by HYDC: Earl W. Anderson