

**BAR MINUTES
CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW**

Regular Meeting

December 17, 2024 – 5:00 PM

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: Ron Bailey, Carl Schwarz, Roger Birle, Jerry Rosenthal, Breck Gastinger, James Zehmer, Cheri Lewis, David Timmerman

Staff Present: Patrick Cory, Kate Richardson, Jeff Werner, Remy Trail

Pre-Meeting:

There was discussion surrounding on 200 West Main Street. Staff asked whether the BAR wants shade on the Downtown Mall. Mr. Birle stated that he is not Ok with the proposed height. Mr. Schwarz did say that there are other tall buildings on the Downtown Mall, mostly on the north side of the Downtown Mall. Those buildings have a much smaller footprint. No application for demolition has been submitted for 200 West Main Street. There was discussion surrounding a pre-application meeting and pre-application conference.

Staff did present proposed building shadow heights scenarios to the BAR. There was discussion surrounding the 4 different scenarios presented by staff.

There were no issues with the 128 Madison Avenue.

The BAR discussed the project for 1609 Gordon Avenue.

The chairman called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

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. Meeting Minutes – November 19, 2024

2. Certificate of Appropriateness Application

BAR #24-12-02

128 Madison Lane, TMP 090139000
The Corner ADC District
Owner: Omicron Chapter House Society
Applicant: Greg Koehler
Project: Paved terrace at front yard.

Motion to Approve Consent Agenda – Mr. Gastinger – Second by Ms. Lewis – Motion to Approve Consent Agenda passes 8-0.

C. Deferred Items

3. Certificate of Appropriateness Application

BAR # 24-10-02

1609 Gordon Avenue, TMP 050063100

Rugby Road - University Cir - Venable ADC District [non-contributing]

Owner: Brice Craig / 1609 Gordon Avenue, LLC

Applicant: Kevin Schafer, Design Develop

Project: Three-story apartment building

Jeff Werner, Staff Report – Request CoA for construction of a three-story apartment building with internal parking. Specifically note items 7, 8, and 9 summarized on sheet 14 of the submittal. *See a side-by-side comparisons in the attached. (* Items 1 through 6 were modifications shown in the October submittal.)

7. New entry element and doorway into a common lobby space.

8. Stairway and balconies facing Gordon Ave less visible.

9. Rooftop screening of mechanical units.

Mr. Zehmer – I have Design Develop doing some design work for me. I am going to abstain from this.

David Timmerman, Vice-Chair, took over running the meeting during this CoA application.

Kevin Schafer, Applicant – I am the Charlottesville Studio Director for Design Develop here in Charlottesville.

Next Slide

The substantial changes that have been made since we last saw this project in October are twofold. The entryway that we are referencing is now street facing on Gordon Avenue. It is a full glass door with a covered area. We are emphasizing the entryway by pulling forward the glazing bay that is above it by about a foot to emphasize that main entryway, which is covered by about a 4-foot overhang. In addition, we have recessed the balconies. These balconies were sticking proud of the front façade and the front elevation. They have now been recessed behind that façade to deemphasize that sort of circulation route while still maintaining a very strong, decisive void to make these 2 building forms very legible in their nature.

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You can see this deemphasis of the balconies. Instead of having the landing, the stairs come out of the building. They are now entirely recessed behind the front façade of the building. We have the 4-foot overhang that extends from that walkway over to the main entrance. We have reconfigured the first floor so that the main entrance now opens into a common space lobby. Previously, that was a 2-bedroom unit. We have since broken it up in that first floor and done units on the right side and common space to the left. It will open into a common space lobby, a mailroom, and behind there is bike storage. As you work your way back towards the garage, this is several layers deep into that building all in an effort to deemphasize the circulation path in that

main open area and provide that front entry element. The other zoning comment that staff mentioned was the new screening that is required on the roof to hide the rooftop units.

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We went back and we listened to the previous February hearing and October hearing. We tried to ‘tease’ out what was successful about the project in the eyes of the board members. One of the things that was said repeatedly was the contextual appropriateness in nature. I like this slide because it shows the roof forms that are very much in keeping with the adjacent residential scaled buildings and the broken-down nature. If we could anticipate the discussion points that might happen, it is the continued move of the breaking down the intentional and explicit into the 2 forms and turning the roof gable. As we come back, with that alley, we get a 3rd gable form as we go down. It is a recognizable form for the neighborhood/for this district. It is a to-scale when you start to look at the widths on the street and the overall massing. It felt important to reduce the visual mass of this building. As we are one of the early ones in with the new zoning to make a concerted effort to break down the building façade and the building mass. In doing this, we took this strong approach with the void.

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In elevation, it starts to read as these 2 different buildings in the rotated gable as it comes around with the brick background building. This slide also helps emphasize the front main entryway, the canopy that can provide some signage opportunities for our main entrance and for building identification. It is a recognizable building form. It is a recognizable material palette as well.

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This is another example of how the 2 distinct building forms help reduce the overall visual mass and the visual scale. That is what we heard from initial preliminary hearing. The success lies with the contextual approach.

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The second part is, not only just a recognizable mass, a recognizable scale and form, but a material palette that is very recognizable. If you draw a 4- or 5-block radius around our site, stucco or EIFS is a very common building material. It is not just any stucco. It is a light-colored cream or white stucco. You couple that with a red brick. That is a pretty traditional color palette with a cream stucco. It becomes very contextual, recognizable, and familiar from a material palette and a building form perspective.

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There was discussion and debate amongst the board members at the October hearing regarding EIFS and the appropriateness of EIFS. Building technology changes. I don’t know if this is ‘a hill that I want to die on.’ What EIFS has changed over the past 15 years is very favorable from an architect’s perspective. We get 2 inches of rigid insulation outside of our structure. The thermal bridging that is happening through studs is no longer a concern. Building code and energy code is starting to push towards continuous insulation on the outside of our building. The second thing we like about it is that improvements in the finish coat and how the finish coat is applied is that it is finished the same way as a stucco. It comes down what is the backer behind it. We can now do fine finishes that are very similar appearance to stucco. We can control the joints, which is something that we have talked a lot about. We can control the joints and have less joints than would be typically required particularly if we were using a panelized system. The third thing that we like about it is that improvements in our WRBs (water resistant barriers) have dimpled drainage mats. We have fluid applied water barriers. We double up our water barriers here. The idea of EIFS trapping in moisture and rotting is not a concern as much anymore in these mechanically fastened high quality systems.

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Previously, a board member had used the word ‘cheap.’ If we were going for the cheapest building material, it would be a 4-by-8 sheet of panel. From a cost-per-square-foot perspective, it does not get any cheaper than a 4-by-8 material. There are challenges that we have seen and talked about in terms of the panelized system. There are more joints. The joints are harder to control where they land. The flashing on them is questionable. It starts to muddy the waters of the party a little when we start to consider that as a system. We did not like going to that as a system despite that being perhaps the most cost-effective method.

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We think about contextual in an ADC district perspective and what is adjacent. We also think from a Charlottesville City perspective and what is familiar and recognizable from a multi-family perspective in this area. Two of these examples, not only use a stucco, but they use a very deep recess into a circulation area. That hallway is glass behind it. If that hallway was not glass and it was a railing or a balcony, would we think that project is any less successful? I don’t think it would. What is successful about the project is the legibility of the forms and how it breaks down on the street. I often reference South Range Apartments. A similar approach is an open circulation and an open staircase that helps break down a building form in such a way that it feels appropriate from a pedestrian perspective. On South Range on JPA, it allows it to bend the corner around Emmet Street in a successful way. These are projects that are recognizable in their materiality but also employing similar approaches to breaking down the mass and addressing the street in successful ways.

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We have a spec on our rooftop screening; architectural louvers are the name brand we are specifying with 4-inch-deep vertical blades (black) to match our adjacent trim colors. In the location shown in red, we have the luxury of having these gable roof forms that help us terminate these screening elements nicely. It is a smart use of a screening system to hide our condenser farm on the roof.

Next Slide

We had some additional housekeeping items on our specifications. Working with Deb Brown at Cheney to specify a brick that seemed appropriate and felt appropriate on the street. It is not too red or too brown. It is the Buckingham Tutor brick. I have brick and grout samples available here if anybody would like to look at those. We also have the pack clad standing seam metal roof in matte black. We have those samples available as well. Ultimately, we went back and listened. We tried to ‘tease’ out the specifics that were ringing true in terms of a success and how we could emphasize those and ensure that the board’s comments were heard and addressed, and the positives were able to remain.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Questions from the Public

QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Timmerman – Do you have samples of the stucco that you plan to use?

Mr. Schafer – I don’t have a physical sample. It is a fine finish. It is a mechanically fastened EIFS system in a fine finish that is field painted.

Mr. Timmerman – Sometimes those have different finish names. Sometimes they call them limestone. Is it a specific manufacturer that you are using?

Mr. Schafer – We do have a specific one.

Ms. Lewis – With the detail on the new front door entrance, I did not see any detail on it.

Mr. Schafer – It would be part of the Pela series. Imperia does not make a door that is in that size. It is the upgraded. It is an aluminum clad wood glass door with side lights on either side of it.

Ms. Lewis – You said that there will be mailboxes and bike parking.

Mr. Schafer – Bike parking would be towards the rear at the parking garage. The front entrance is a common lobby space that can serve as a gathering space for residents.

Mr. Birle – I have a question about the entry sequence. If you go into the recess to the right of the front door, does that lead you to the stairs?

Mr. Schafer – You do not have to go through the front door. That would also be the common space and the mailroom.

Mr. Timmerman – With the windows, are they clad? What is their exterior material?

Mr. Schafer – The Imperia is a fiberglass product. It is the same product that was used at Virginia Avenue. It has a profile that is like a storefront.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Comments from the Public

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Mr. Schwarz – There are definitely some improvements. I realize that the door is superfluous. What you have done to the front entry has helped a little bit. Pulling back the stair balconies and pushing out that big window has helped. One of my main concerns from this project was that it is austere. It seems like it is lacking residential details. I need to keep reminding myself that it is not that big. It is 3 stories. It is little house sized pieces. We have seen this 3 times. I am hesitant. I don't think that is going to hold me back from voting to approve it. The vine species that you have chosen is something that sticks. I would be worried about getting near the stucco. It seems like a solution to trying to prevent headlights from shining through those garage windows. It would be better if there was something more permanent like a louver system. I don't know if that is something that I could vote approval on this, and you work with staff to come up with something. You are going for contemporary design. Shutters are not contemporary. That is my primary concern. This has progressed and it has gotten better. I can finally vote for approval on it.

Mr. Birle – You have made some good improvements. I have 2 comments. If you are trying to emphasize the front door and get people to use it, why not have the stair from the exterior sidewalk go to the front door? I questioned the fine texture of the stucco. If you closely looked at stucco in the neighborhood, you would find that it is pretty textured. That might play into that stark feeling that Mr. Schwarz is talking about. If this is fine, it is going to feel very stark. The massing is really good. The massing works in this neighborhood. We have said that in previous meetings. I can vote for this with that stipulation of the stucco finish.

Ms. Lewis – Why put the door where the window was? Why not put it where the stairs and the entry to the parking are?

Mr. Schafer – We felt that it is important enough to break down the building form in such a finite and decisive way. You have a building here that is a gable. You take that building form, you rotate it, and there is a void in

between. When we start to put the glass in between it, it becomes a singular mass. We looked at it. We tried to address the concerns and comments we had previously heard. When we considered the context and the initial comments that we had heard, it was important enough to hang on to it in terms of that void, that shadow line, and that distinct breakdown in the building forms. I have 2 responses. The configuration of the entry sequence is to get an ADA ramp onto the site. That is what aligns the stairs and the location that they do need all that square footage to get up in terms of an ADA ramp. The location of the front door is tied together with the overhang. With the finish, that is a great point. Some tactility would be appreciated here. Maybe we go look at adjacent textures and try to match it. We used a sand pebble finish before. I was upset at the time that I did not get the fine that I wanted. It does have a certain tactility to it that we could explore. The louver system is a great suggestion. We have tried to find the vine species that worked. We are on our third vine species. We are still not hitting it. Let's go to louver system or some more permanent way of screening those headlamps. That is what it is.

Why not shift the door over? It is important to have those 2 buildings.

Ms. Lewis – Is the building overhanging the top 2 stories four feet? You have an additional opening over the door. How much protection from the weather would I have if it was raining?

Mr. Schafer – That trimline that is in that wrap is the difference between the proposed brick and the proposed EIFS. That sticks out 4 feet from that door.

Ms. Lewis – You have a slightly covered part over the door.

Mr. Schafer – That canopy extends over the door.

Mr. Timmerman – I tend to agree with your argument on EIFS stucco. It is advantageous over some of the other examples that you showed. While it is minimal, minimal can be good. The massing works with the neighborhood. You have broken down the scale to match some of the other residential houses on the street. I appreciate that. With stucco, the next question is what the finish is. There is a wide spectrum. I would love to see a sample. There are better quality ones and lesser quality ones. The lesser quality ones have more of a plastic look to them. It would be interesting play with the contextual nature of this scheme and try to find something that ties in if you do a closer dive. Look at if there is a pattern of stucco textures. Try to find something that more matches the traditional materiality. That can be a nice material, something that has less of a plasticized look or shiny look and something that has more of a richer finish. I know they are out there. There are different levels that I have looked at. I would encourage the deeper investigation on that and understand what those differences are. I like the entry sequence of the upper image. It is a cleaner circulation pattern. It is less ambiguous. It helps support the building rather than detract from it. I agree with Mr. Schwarz about the louvers. It depends on the screens that you use. Whether it is stucco or brick, you don't want a vine attaching to that material. I like the idea of a landscape growing up a building. I understand Mr. Schwarz's opinion. It makes sense, especially when you think of it at night and the lights are coming on in the cars. You don't want to see that. Blinding that from view and putting a blind into the parking garage, you don't see that it is a parking garage. I support the project.

Mr. Gastinger – My comments are similar to the last meeting. I appreciate and support the massing of the project. That is a deft way of approaching the site. I still have concerns about the EIFS. I don't find the way that it is being deployed here compatible with the neighborhood. The other examples of light-colored stucco in the neighborhood are fundamentally different. There are smaller planes. There is more architectural articulation. The combination of the lightness of the stucco or EIFS and the way it is elevated in the building and the flatness of the surfaces. It does feel like a lot of those large student housing projects that are in other parts of the city but not in this neighborhood. I retain those concerns.

Motion – Mr. Schwarz – Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including the ADC District Design Guidelines, I move to find the proposed apartment building at 1609 Gordon Avenue satisfies the BAR’s criteria and is compatible with this property and other properties in the Rugby Road - University Circle - Venable ADC District, and that the BAR approves the application with these conditions:

- All exterior lighting and fixed lighting within the garage that produces light visible outside (that is, excluding vehicle headlights), will have lamping that is dimmable, have a Color Temperature [CCT] not exceeding 3,000K, and have a Color Rendering Index [CRI] not less than 80, preferably not less than 90.
- The EIFS material will be a drainable, exterior wall covering consisting of sheathing, air and moisture barrier, insulation board, reinforcing fabric, base coat, finish coat, adhesive and mechanical fasteners as applicable, and where installed in areas adjacent to pedestrian traffic or prone to damage [for ex, at the balconies and stairwells] it will be reinforced or a Class PM system and/or a high-impact resistant system.
- Any ground-level mechanical equipment and/or utility boxes will be appropriately screened.
- Meters and panel boxes for utilities, communications, and cable connections will be located preferably within the garage; if not, then in non-prominent locations on the side elevations only and appropriately screened.
- Applied grilles are allowed on insulated glass windows, provided they have internal space bars.
- A louvered solution be provided for the garage screening in lieu of climbing plants.
- And with the recommendation that further investigation into EIFS materiality be explored, with the applicant providing staff with an option to be reviewed and once accepted, be approved, and entered into the BAR record.

Second by Mr. Timmerman. Motion passes 6-1 (Mr. Gastinger) with 1 abstention (Mr. Zehmer).

Discussion following second of Motion.

Ms. Lewis – I agreed with Mr. Timmerman that I would like to see a sample more about the EIFS. I don’t want to delay approving. I wonder for staff what we can do to bring that back. We are looking at doing a conditional CoA for another project. Do we want staff to review that? The material is the material to the building.

Mr. Werner – It is not changing from EIFS. The way that we treated things like that is for Mr. Schafer to bring something back for the record. You all accept for the record a, b, or c. With that selection, that is what goes into the archive. It is not changing the material. It is not changing the joint lines. You are looking at the texture of the coating. I don’t have a problem with that.

D. New Items

NA

E. Other Business

4. Pre-Application Conference

No formal action will be taken.

BAR # 24-12-01

606 Lyons Court; TMP 520063000

North Downtown ADC District

Owner/Applicant: Christine P. Martin, Trustee

Project: Alterations to house and site

- Staff did introduce the proposed project to the BAR.
- Applicant seeks to have a bracketed roof.
- The changes being proposed in this project are not meant to be extravagant.
- The plan is to remove the asphalt on the driveway and replace with a permeable material.
- Staff had concern about the changes to the front door.
- Mr. Schwarz did ask about replacing the windows on the house. The applicant is intending to replace the windows of the house.
- The applicant is intending to keep the storm door and all the trim around the door.
- The members of the BAR did provide feedback and suggestions on how this project and house could be improved going forward.
- There was discussion between the BAR and the applicant on improvements that could be made to the proposed project.
- Ms. Lewis did have some concerns about removing the pediment and the pilasters on the front of the house.
- Ms. Lewis also emphasized the importance of the history of the house and the neighborhood.
- Mr. Zehmer, Ms. Lewis, and Mr. Timmerman would like to see the front door preserved.
- The applicant will need to go back and speak with her architect about the design, the front door, and the pediment.
- There was a straw poll on the pediment (5 to 3 for removal of the pediment).
- There was confusion between the applicant and the staff regarding whether this being a CoA application and a pre-application conference. The applicant had originally applied for a CoA in October.
- There was some miscommunication between staff and the applicant regarding this project.
- The applicant did express frustration with the process and with staff. The applicant was under the impression that she could get an approval of CoA at this meeting.

5. Pre-Application Conference

No formal action will be taken.

745 Park Street, Tax Parcel 520051100

North Downtown ADC District

Owners/Applicants: Karen Vadja and Kevin Riddle

Project: Addition to existing dwelling

- The applicant is looking at this as an addition.
- The applicant is wanting to remove the top half of the house and replace with a full story.
- The applicant is looking to add a porch and replace the gabled roof with a new story.
- It is going to be clad in a metal siding. There is going to be a new porch with a cover over the porch.
- This project is an independent project and the priority for the applicants going forward.
- Members of the BAR asked questions and provided feedback/criticism regarding the new project.
- Ms. Lewis did go over the guidelines on additions and expressed support for the proposed addition to the current house.
- Mr. Schwarz also did go over the guidelines on porches and expressed support for this project.
- Members of the BAR did provide suggestions and feedback for the applicant on how to improve the project.
- Mr. Gastinger recommended that the ends of the joist on the stair be covered and that the white under the black is striking.

- There was broad support for this proposed project.

The meeting was recessed for 5 minutes.

6. Pre-Application Conference – (Continuation of May 2024 discussion.)

No formal action will be taken.

1000 Wertland Street, TMP 100038000

(1010 Wertland St; 129 10th St NW; Portion of 1105 W. Main St.)

West Main Street ADC District

Owner: UVA Foundation

Applicant: Elizabeth Chapman; Grimm + Parker Architects

Project: Multi-story residential building

- The applicant is on time for getting LI HTC by March 20, 2025, and will need to get site plan approval prior to that date.
- The applicant is proposing a 6-story building on the site.
- Most of the site is used for surface parking.
- The new zoning CX-8 and the applicant is planning for it to be all affordable housing. The applicant is planning on building up to 6 stories.
- There are some significant grade changes with this site.
- There will be a parking garage going under the building.
- The applicant did show the elevations along Wertland Street and 10th Street. The applicant also presented the changes that have been made to the project since May.
- The applicant is sticking with wood construction because that is the only way to get the tax credits.
- There are going to be 2 main entrances into the apartment building so that staff can have interactions with the tenants.
- The applicant has developed a landscape plan for this proposed project.
- There has been discussion about possibly undergrounding the utilities for this project.
- The surrounding neighborhood associations are lobbying for a small market on the ground floor.
- All the units in the proposed project will be affordable units.
- The applicant is proposing to put solar panels on the roof of the proposed building.
- Members of the BAR provided suggestions and feedback on what the applicant can do to make the project better.
- Mr. Zehmer wants to see the other 2 sides of the building and how it interacts with the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- Members of the BAR did provide suggestions and feedback on how to improve the project going forward.
- Mr. Schwarz did go over the different items and exceptions with the zoning code. The applicant is aware of the exceptions being made to the zoning code for this project.
- Mr. Schwarz did go over all the items and documents that are required for a formal CoA application.

7. Pre-Application Conference – (Continuation of November discussion.)

No formal action will be taken.

200 West Main Street; TMP 280010000

Downtown ADC District

Owner: Violet Crown Cinema Charlottesville LLC

Applicant: Jeff Levien / Heirloom Development (contract purchaser)

Project: Multi-story residential

- The applicant presented what has changed from the previous iteration of the proposed project.

- The applicant is not close to a CoA application. It is going to be at least a year before the project becomes more detailed.
- The Violet Crown Theater owner approached the applicant about developing this site.
- Office of Economic Development said that millions of dollars will come in as a result of this project.
- The goal of the project is to be a net positive. All considerations of the BAR will be taken seriously.
- The applicant did present shadow studies of The Mall on the 4 days of the season change-Winter Solstice, Spring Equinox, Summer Solstice, and Fall Equinox-to show the tree shadows.
- Applicant stated that the proposed massing is providing sunlight for the trees to thrive. Some of the trees are going to be removed.
- Mr. Zehmer would like to see more views of the building from the street level on the Downtown Mall.
- Mr. Zehmer did emphasize the importance of the pedestrian experience and human experience on the Downtown Mall.
- Mr. Gastinger did emphasize the impact of this building will be beyond the site and adjacent areas.
- Members of the BAR did provide suggestions and feedback with what the applicant can do to improve the proposed building.
- Members of the BAR are wanting to see the pedestrian experience from the Downtown Mall.
- Members of the BAR would like for the applicant to show what the pedestrian experience is like on the Downtown Mall.
- Mr. Timmerman expressed concern about the parking for this project.

8. Staff Questions/Discussion

- Update on Council's review of café design guidelines.

F. Adjourn

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 PM.