



## SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

### Architectural Review Board

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

#### CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Cotter, Vice Chair, called the Special Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the April 17, 2024 Architectural Review Board. He stated that the meeting could also be accessed at the City's website. Public comments on the cases are welcome from meeting attendees and from those viewing from the City's website. He reviewed the meeting procedures.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Cotter led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### ROLL CALL

Board members present: Michael Jewell, Martha Cooper, Hilary Damaser, Sean Cotter  
Mr. Alexander arrived at 6:35 pm.  
Staff members present: Jennifer Rauch, Bassem Bitar, Sarah Holt, Rati Singh  
Consultant present: Greg Dale, FAICP, McBride Dale Clarion

#### ACCEPTANCE OF DOCUMENTS

Ms. Damaser moved, Ms. Cooper seconded acceptance of the documents into the record.

Vote: Mr. Jewell, yes; Mr. Cotter, yes; Ms. Cooper, yes; Ms. Damaser, yes.

[Motion carried 4-0]

Mr. Cotter stated that the Architectural Review Board (ARB) is responsible for review of construction, modifications or alterations to any site in the Review District or area subject to ARB under the provision of Zoning Code Section 153.170. The Board has the decision-making responsibility on these cases. The Chair swore in staff and applicants who planned to address the Board on any of the cases on the agenda.

#### CASE REVIEWS

- **Case #23-081ADMO – Alternative Materials**

A document intended to supplement the *Historic District Guidelines* and serve as a guide for property owners, staff, and the Board regarding the appropriate choice of alternative building materials within the Historic District and Appendix G properties. Alternative

materials refers to the use of a non-traditional, synthetic material in place of an original material or modern materials used on new construction.

### **Staff Presentation**

Ms. Singh stated that this is a request for adoption of the Alternative Materials document, which will serve as a resource for Historic District and Appendix G properties. The project was initiated in 2021 in conjunction with a resource for Pre-approved Paint Colors. Later, a separate document was compiled for Alternative Materials. The Alternative Materials project goal is to provide owners, staff, and the Board with more specific guidance for the use of non-traditional, modern construction materials within the Historic District. Staff presented a draft at the February ARB meeting and requested the Board's comments and feedback prior to its adoption. The Board reviewed this document last year on August 23, September 27 and December 13, and this year on February 21, 2024, and a final draft was presented at the Board's March 27 meeting. All previous comments, plus formatting changes, have been included. Based on the Board's reviews and feedback, the document is now a concise document including only alternative materials that have been approved in the past by the ARB via waivers. [A detailed description of the document contents was provided.] The document will be updated annually, incorporating any additional alternative material approved via waiver by the ARB. Staff recommends the Board adopt the document to serve as a learning resource for Historic District and Appendix G properties. Once adopted, the document will be posted as a resource on the City's Historic District webpage.

### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments related to this case.

### **Board Questions**

Ms. Cooper suggested minor typographical changes, including verbiage regarding building materials once approved, but no longer recommended for approval.

Discussion continued regarding the proposed language.

A majority of the Board determined that if the material has been approved in the past, it would continue to be listed; however, no future waivers for use of the material would be approved.

Mr. Damaser moved, Ms. Cooper seconded approval of the Alternative Materials Document with the minor typographical corrections as noted.

Vote: Mr. Cotter, yes; Ms. Cooper, yes; Mr. Alexander, yes; Mr. Jewell, yes; Ms. Damaser, yes.  
[Motion carried 5-0]

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- **Case 24-012ADMC HD Code & Guidelines Update - Phase II, Administrative Request – Code Amendment**

Proposal for Amendments to the Historic District Zoning Code and Amendments to the *Historic District Guidelines*.

### **Staff Presentation**

Ms. Holt stated information was provided in the meeting packet for proposed amendments concerning Background Buildings, expansion of Administrative Approvals and Extension of Final Development Plan timeframes.

Background Buildings:

There is a public desire to review these buildings with much less focus on architectural details; staff wants to ensure that compatible scale, massing, and site design features are maintained. Initial discussions with the Board indicated support for Background Building projects that do not include an increase in volume, footprint, or height to be approved by staff. Staff suggests a new section within Chapter 4 of the Guidelines to address Background buildings related to scale, massing, and guidance for additions.

Expansion of Administrative Approvals (AAs):

There has been a significant increase in AAs over the past years. A list of administratively approved cases are presented to the Board each quarter enabling the Board to monitor AA activities and ensure transparency and trust in the process. Staff suggests the following type of applications also be administratively approved:

- Modifications to Background buildings where no building volume/footprint increase is requested (materials replacement, reconstruction of decks, window replacements), with appeals to the Board;
- Single sign approvals that meet Code criteria for Background and Landmark buildings;
- Residential hardscape features less than 3 feet tall (patios, low walls) for Background and Landmark buildings;
- Installation of awnings (residential and commercial) for Background and Landmark buildings
- Lighting for residential and commercial projects, Background and Landmark buildings;
- Commercial exterior furniture for Background and Landmark buildings; and
- HVAC and trash screening for Background and Landmark buildings.

Extension of Final Development Plan Timeframes:

Staff suggests the opportunity for a time extension of one year for larger projects. If the Board has no objection to this option, would the Board prefer to review these applications, or would they prefer that they be handled administratively?

Ms. Holt noted that questions have been provided to guide the Board's discussion on the proposed amendments. In the next several weeks, additional feedback will be requested from the Board with the intent of providing a draft document to the Board in June for a recommendation of approval by PZC to City Council.

**Board Questions**

Mr. Alexander inquired if staff is also administratively approving paint color applications in the District.

Ms. Holt responded that staff is reviewing and approving applications using colors from the list of pre-approved colors. Recently categorized Background buildings could be considered administratively, regardless of color.

Mr. Alexander inquired if the proposed administrative approval of landscape would include pavement.

Ms. Holt responded that residential landscape projects, hardscape only (not plants), would be administratively approved. These would be structures that do not extend above ground more than three feet, such as outdoor kitchens or pergolas. Currently, staff reviews commercial landscape projects but believes they should be reviewed by the ARB.

Greg Dale, FAICP, McBride Dale Clarion, stated that following the Board's guidance, his firm would be making the changes for a final draft of the Code and Guidelines amendments.

### **Board Questions/Discussion**

Mr. Dale directed the Board's review to the first two discussion questions:

- 1) *Does the Board agree with delegating authority to staff to approve certain Minor Project Reviews (MPR) for Background buildings?*
- 2) *Does the Board support the expansion of Administrative Approvals (AA) as proposed?*

He noted that to clarify question 1, the qualifier would be that the MPR building footprint or volume is not increased in any way. If it would increase either, the application would need to come before the ARB. He noted that he facilitated 2 of the public meetings where members of the public and property owners indicated the desire for the process to be simplified/expedited, and he believes what is proposed tonight is responsive to those concerns.

Mr. Alexander referred to question #1 and stated that "certain" is very vague. Is the suggestion that the Board agree with delegating the authority to approve applications administratively, if it would not change the volume in any way?

Mr. Dale responded affirmatively. If the property owner expands either the footprint or the volume, or potentially retaining the same footprint and adding additional square footage above – those items would come before the Board. It would not be approved administratively.

Mr. Cotter inquired if administrative approval authority would be extended to Minor Projects.

Ms. Holt responded that might include siding, window, roof and deck replacements. They would be cosmetic items or items applied to the existing house.

Mr. Cotter stated that N(2) refers to adjustments up to 10% being approved administratively, including substitutions, redesigns and fencing. Should all of these items be included under Administrative Review items?

Ms. Cooper inquired if the applicant has an issue with the Administrative Review decision, is there an appeal process available for them?

Mr. Dale stated that either staff or the property owner could determine/request that the application be "bumped up" to the ARB for review.

Board consensus was that they had no objection "to delegating authority to staff to approve certain Minor Project Reviews (MPR) for Background buildings," if the word "certain" is replaced with a more specific term.

Mr. Dale directed members' attention to Question #2: *"Does the Board support the expansion of Administrative Approvals (AA) as proposed?"*

Ms. Cooper indicated that she had no objection to the list of AAs, except for awnings. Awnings contribute to volume and aesthetics. If it is replacement of existing awnings, she would have no objection, but new awnings should come before the Board for consideration.

Ms. Holt noted that awnings are not a permanent installation.

Mr. Jewell stated that if the awnings were not part of a larger project, but limited to installation of awnings only, he would have no objection.

Ms. Damaser inquired if the Administrative Review would include awnings for commercial buildings.

Ms. Holt responded that it would be for either residential or commercial buildings.

Mr. Dale inquired the Board's preference.

Ms. Cooper responded that if it is a replacement awning, she has no objection to Administrative Approval for either commercial or residential. If it is a new awning, she believes the Board should review the proposal for both residential and commercial awnings.

Board members expressed agreement.

Ms. Cooper stated that she has a similar concern for AA screening of trash receptacles. That also can impact building footprint, volume and aesthetics, particularly commercial trash receptacles. If it is replacement of fencing that currently exists, it is not a concern.

Mr. Dale responded that in many communities, not necessarily Historic Districts, the trash enclosure is a detail determined by staff. Would the Board want staff to have the flexibility to refer projects considered greater in size or impact to the Board for review? This item could have a "bump up" provision, based on certain factors, such as changes in materials or locations or additional massing.

Mr. Alexander stated that HVAC screening and screening of dumpsters for commercial projects are often much taller than three feet; therefore, they are an important component of the architecture. They cannot be isolated from the buildings themselves and are an important part of the site. He does not believe those items should be subject to the standards for decision-making in the other categories.

Mr. Dale concurred; they change the building volume. Perhaps a definition could be added that where a trash or HVAC enclosure is being modified and would materially change the architecture of the building, that proposal also could be "bumped up" for ARB review.

Board members expressed agreement.

Mr. Dale inquired if there was member feedback on the opportunity for Final Development Plan (FDP) extensions.

Ms. Damaser inquired the purpose of the deadline.

Ms. Holt responded that deadlines are a typical part of all development applications. If finances were to become an issue for the applicant, the project could not remain inactive for years, then be started several years later. Other jurisdictions often provide extensions for projects on which progress is being made but not yet completed. Typically, criteria must be met to obtain that extension.

Mr. Jewell inquired if an extension were to be granted, at what point that extension would end.

Ms. Holt responded there is a question as to how many extensions may be granted.

Mr. Alexander inquired if an FDP extension is granted and the standards for that approval subsequently change, should the language qualify that the extension would be granted with the condition that the pertinent Code remains unchanged.

Mr. Dale agreed that the condition for consideration of the extension would be that the Code has not changed, making it essentially a legal nonconformity. The extension would not be automatic. The applicant would need to submit the request, and the request would need to be approved. Appropriate conditions could be considered for that extension. One of them would be that there have not been changes in the regulations that would cause said project to be treated differently.

Mr. Dale indicated that language would be drafted for the Board's review.

Mr. Alexander directed the Board's attention to Question #3: *"Does the Board support minor edits to both the Code and Guidelines that place more emphasis on scale and context for Background buildings and less emphasis on the architectural details appropriate for Landmark buildings?"*

Mr. Dale stated that many comments from the public were heard about Background buildings. Since the last Code and Guidelines update, more buildings now are identified as Background buildings than previously. On Franklin Street, for example, there is now an entire row of Background buildings. The property owners indicated that they did not want their homes to continue to be treated as Landmark buildings in regard to required architectural details. They do agree that context matters, including scale, massing, building orientation and site design. He would recommend that the Guidelines and Code, if needed, be edited to clarify that when the Board is reviewing a Background building application, particularly in the context of other Background buildings, that the Board's focus will be more on scale, massing and siting and less on the architectural details that are reviewed with Landmark buildings.

Mr. Alexander stated that being the only design professional on the Board, there is a dilemma with that. The details cannot be removed from a review of scale. For example, if there is no window trim or grids, it can completely alter the scale and apparent mass of a structure. He does not believe it is possible to completely remove the details from consideration and address the scale very well. He agrees that the details do not need to be the same as they would be on a Landmark building. The Board has seen some contemporary buildings where having window trim and some traditional elements was important, although the detail was completely different than for a Landmark building. The Guidelines should not indicate no trim would be needed, although more flexible language would be appropriate.

Mr. Dale responded that he believes the key is to form verbiage that clarifies context matters. It would be discretionary language that permits the Board to say, "In this case, the windows are important because they affect the sense of scaling context." This issue was the one most expressed by the property owners. We are attempting to be responsive to what we heard.

Mr. Alexander stated that the idea is good, but how that is actually incorporated and still ensures those important items are addressed is important. They still need to be addressed, although perhaps in a less literal manner.

Mr. Dale stated that what we are contemplating is not unlike how the City reviews planned developments. PZC looks at architecture with a Planned Unit Development (PUD), but it is with a different lens than with a Landmark building.

Mr. Cotter stated that it is important to find a way to manage the expectation. The architecture appearance remains important, but perhaps in a more straightforward manner.

Mr. Jewell stated that the language should clarify that the Board's review lens is different in terms of architecture for Background versus Landmark buildings.

Mr. Alexander stated that the Board would need to look at the drafted language and discuss how the standards would apply. Is the drafted language something with which the Board can work?

Mr. Dale stated that staff was not interested in a Code amendment that could take a year. The intent is to determine how to micro edit the existing language, perhaps with a new section, or by editing the language in the purpose or Background statements.

- 4) *Does the Board support the potential to grant a one-year extension for previously approved FDPs; if so, should the Board have this responsibility or staff?*

Mr. Alexander noted that Item #4 was discussed earlier in the conversation.

Mr. Dale stated that preliminary draft language would be provided to the Board for review before a final draft is compiled.

Mr. Alexander stated that it needs to be made clear to the property owners that the City's regulations are similar to homeowner association (HOA) guidelines. Most Dublin neighborhoods have HOA guidelines. Historic District homeowners are asked to comply with design standards similar to the rest of Dublin with their HOA regulations.

Mr. Cotter inquired if Interim Land Use Principles, which currently are used in reviewing Concept Plans, would be going away when the new Community Plan is adopted.

Ms. Rauch responded that the intent of the Interim Land Use Principles was that they be used for the development process during the gap between the existing Community Plan and the adoption of the new Community Plan. Many of those principles are being incorporated into the new Community Plan in a more robust way, and the Interim Land Use Principles will go away.

**Public Comment** (received via email)

David Venne, 56 S. Riverview Street, Dublin:

"Good evening, Board members. I am a resident of the Historic District. I have suggestions and questions concerning the Historic District Code and Guidelines Update. First, I recommend that gas lamps be prohibited for all future use cases for failing to meet the required efficiency standards of Table 153.173(i), as listed in Section 153.172(j). While visually beautiful, these fixtures are incredibly inefficient at light production. If Dublin is serious about sustainability, should not be permitted in any setting, be it commercial or residential. Companies such as American Gas Lamp Works have developed efficient LED alternatives that replicate the appearance and intensity of gas mantel lighting for those who desire the aesthetic. Second, I recommend the addition in the Code covering surveillance devices. Security cameras are a modern ubiquity, but how should they best be handled in the Historic District? For example, can cameras be prominently installed directly to the façade of historic structures, such as the three cameras mounted to Dublin Bridge at the river level of Dublin Springs Park. Do we want to further draw attention to the cameras by posting warning signs of their usage? Finally, the pre-approved paint color standards are not equitable and should be revised. The Historic Paint Colors document shows five eras possessing a pre-approved color list ranging from 53 to 122 color options for one era and seven color options for another era. It would be welcome to have the color choices for the latter timeframe increased to be more consistent with the others."

Mr. Alexander noted that security cameras are not an issue that the Board has the purview to address. Perhaps the cameras on the bridge were installed by Dublin Police as a public safety measure.

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

- **Envision Dublin Community Plan Update and Historic District Special Area Plan**

## **Staff Presentation**

Ms. Rauch stated that she would like to provide an update on the Community Plan. Mr. Alexander serves on the steering committee working on that update. A memo providing a detailed update was provided in the Board's packet materials. What the Board is seeing is the version the Steering Committee reviewed at the end of March. Additional revisions are being made and will continue until a final version of the Plan is submitted for official adoption. The Envision Dublin Community Plan Update began at the end of 2022. Several consultants were involved in the work, as it is a very technical document. There was collaboration with City-wide initiatives that were either recently adopted or in process. These include the Dublin Housing Study, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Economic Development Strategic Update, which have been adopted. The process has also looked at the City's Sustainability Framework, Metro Center, the West Passenger Rail Study and East Bridge Street Corridor. The process is not just an update to the Land Use Plan, it also makes sure that the City has the infrastructure from a mobility and transportation network to support that. A travel demand model has been completed to identify stress links. It also includes a Utilities component to ensure the City's water and sewer service can serve those land uses adequately, particularly in areas of new development. The Plan update also involved fiscal modelling, ensuring that all the components can be built and still provide the level of service to which the City and its residents is accustomed. This phase also included the creation of the Envision Dublin Steering Committee, which held its first meeting on April 18, 2023. The Steering Committee is a vital committee that is a steward of the Envision Dublin process. The Committee provides feedback and assists in pivotal decision making throughout creation of the Plan. The committee has representatives from City Council, the City Manager, Planning and Zoning Commission, the ARB, Dublin and Hilliard School Districts, business community, development community, a Historic District representative, resident at-large, and a youth representative. The Steering Committee has met seven times; its final meeting will be at the end of the month.

The process has involved eight significant tasks and has now reached the last step, the Preliminary Draft and Final Plan. One of the key features of the Plan is its Special Area Plans. Previously, the City had nine Special Area Plans; now there will be six, including the Historic District Special Area Plan. The Historic District has a Future Land Use designation of Mixed Use Village. That is the only place in the City in which that land use exists to ensure that the character of the area is maintained. The process included an Envision Dublin public meeting two weeks ago to present the new Special Area Plans and obtain public comment. A detailed presentation was provided to the Planning Commission last week. The Commission will be reviewing the final draft Plan on May 23 and potentially making a recommendation for adoption to City Council.

Ms. Rauch reviewed the updates that have been made to the Historic District Special Area Plan. Each Area Plan identifies what is important, the key factors and provides area recommendations. For the Historic District, that is preservation, scale of development, maintaining S. High Street as a vibrant area, and associated recommendations. Many of the recommendations were developed by the Historic District Task Force a couple of years ago. In this Plan review process, updates have been made and additional items, such as the Micromobility Corridor have been added. Each Special Area Plan includes key sites and opportunities for potential redevelopment. The Special Area Plan provides guidance for potential redevelopment, such as the N. Riverview area and Riverside Crossing Park West. Each Special Area Plan also provides design recommendations. The Historic District existed before the Envision Dublin process, and many of the previous recommendations remain relevant and are retained in the updated Plan.



## Board Questions

Mr. Alexander inquired the reason it was decided that there would be two gateways into the Historic District. The real boundaries of the District are not very clear.

Ms. Rauch responded that staff has identified that as an item that needs to be further highlighted, particularly the West Bridge Street gateway.

Mr. Alexander inquired if the multi-modal landscape path through the community is depicted on any of the drawings.

Ms. Rauch responded that the Signature Trail extends from the West Innovation District, through the City and to Sawmill Road. Details on the Trail are being developed in a separate study, but it is a key component of the Community Plan. In the Historic District, the Trail potentially could run along Indian Run.

Mr. Alexander noted that not many modifications were suggested for the Historic District, as it is more established.

Ms. Rauch stated that there is a chapter in the Plan that addresses natural resources, and tree canopy is a significant item. The Signature Trail will capitalize upon that, providing a green ribbon connection throughout the City.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Holt stated that an ARB project tour is tentatively scheduled for May 15, 2024, which would be before the new ARB appointee's first Board meeting on June 26, 2024. She inquired if members would prefer to reschedule the tour to enable the new ARB appointee to participate.

Consensus of the members was to reschedule the tour to a Fall 2024 date.

Ms. Holt indicated potential fall dates would be forwarded to the members for consideration.

Mr. Cotter inquired if there is a proposed plan for the previous Oscar's building.

Ms. Holt responded that no application has been filed to date.

Mr. Cotter observed that the streetscape there is empty.

The next regular ARB meeting is scheduled for April 24, 2024, 6:30 pm.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

  
Chair, Architectural Review Board

  
Assistant Clerk of Council