

**HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURE REVIEW BOARD
BELLEFONTE BOROUGH
MEETING MINUTES**

January 28, 2020 - 8:30 a.m.
236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823
www.bellefonte.net

CALL TO ORDER:

The January 28, 2020 regular meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Historical Architecture Review Board (HARB) was called to order by Mr. McGinley at the Bellefonte Borough Municipal Building at 8:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sam McGinley
Walt Schneider
Gay Dunne
Pat Long
Maria Day
Robert Lingenfelter
Megan Tooker

STAFF MEMBERS: Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager
Don Holderman, Assistant Borough Manager

GUESTS: Joanne Tosti-Vasey
Lexie Orr
Debbie Cleeton
James Dunne

ADDITIONS /CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

The Dunne property on North Allegheny Street received an administrative approval at the end of last year for work on their carriage house.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None.

DECLARATION OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATION: None.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

Ms. Long moved to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2019 HARB meeting.

Ms. Dunne seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

PROJECT REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENTS:

208 South Spring Street – Install a new hanging sign

The property owner appeared before HARB relative to installation of a new sign. The same bracket will be used. Pictures were provided to HARB members.

Mr. Schneider moved to approve the sign as presented.

Ms. Tooker seconded the motion.

Mr. Schneider remarked that the sign is a good addition to the structure and very appropriate.

Motion carried.

The project will go before Council for final approval on February 3, 2020.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL:

Ms. Dunne spoke about the December 18, 2019 submission for replacing the roof on the carriage house at her residence at 222 North Allegheny Street. They also submitted for gutter work on the home and the carriage house, in-kind repairs to the peach bottom slate roof, some brick on the body of the house and painting those areas of repair. The garage roof will be replaced with a standing seam metal roof in charcoal gray.

All of the projects were approved administratively.

Mr. Schneider recommended pictures before and after the project was complete to use as a positive example for a case study.

Borough Council's moratorium on metal roofs was discussed. The appropriateness of the materials are reviewed on a case by case basis, per Mr. McGinley no matter what the project.

The administrative position was discussed briefly. Due to budgetary restrictions, staff will sit in as HARB administrator for 2020. A consulting position for the prior administrator was discussed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND CHAIR

Ms. Long moved that officers and Chair remain the same from 2019.

Mr. Schneider seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS: Nothing presented.

OLD BUSINESS: Nothing presented.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion of HARB staff, HARB process, and administrative approval, etc.

Mr. McGinley discussed the administrative approval criteria briefly and opined that the sign approved at this meeting fit into that category. Mr. Stewart stated that he would be amenable to putting a hold on administrative approvals for the time being and just have applications come through the HARB Board.

Administrative approvals were started a number of years ago for the convenience of the applicants. If HARB does not feel comfortable with staff doing these approvals and would like to see the applications and discuss them as a Board, that would be acceptable to staff. This should be made clear to Council members that this is HARB's recommendation to avoid any tension between an applicant and Borough staff.

Mr. Schneider offered that he did not have any issue with Mr. Holderman's or Mr. Stewart's judgment. There may be times that they may wish to send something on to HARB due to a conflict or because of the nature of a project.

Mr. Stewart stated that he researched other municipalities with HARB Boards and some had a listing of administratively approved projects e.g. a sign or gutter. Mr. Stewart suggested preparing a listing for the next meeting packet so that everyone is on the same page.

Ms. Dunne discussed her own projects and discussions she had with Ms. Wright at the time she administratively approved them. There are some categories of items that should be approved and some that need to go through the Board. If Board expertise is needed, staff would absolutely defer the project to HARB members for review and recommendation.

Mr. Stewart discussed enforcement e.g. contractor does something that they were not supposed to do, the homeowner does something array. Staff met with Mr. Schneider and the Bellefonte inspector to make confirm the chain of who does what to stop work in the event that that action is needed. Mr. Stewart stated that it is important to staff that what is approved is what ends up being done with the project in the field. Mr. Stewart encouraged HARB members to let staff know if they see anything unusual or unapproved going on in the historical district and staff will make sure to let the ordinance enforcement officers know and stop orders will be issued.

The projects that were started without HARB approvals and finished, to the point of irreversibility, were discussed. Mr. McGinley mentioned the roof on Spring Street that was almost completely installed without HARB recommendation or Council approval. Ms. Dunne also encouraged Council members to keep an eye out on what is going on in their individual wards. Mr. Stewart stated that this can be discussed at the next Council meeting to ensure that it a collective effort to keep on top of the projects in the historic district.

HARB certifications and permits were discussed relative to expiration. Mr. Stewart stated that projects will be monitored.

Ms. Long discussed the CLG status. She offered that she remembered a few other things needed to be done to achieve the status. One of the items was showing that the inventory needed to be updated. A grant opportunity to fund the inventory update is being considered. An intern is also an option. Seminars will be researched to meet the certified training requirements.

Mr. Schneider also asked Mr. Stewart to inquire of the PHMC office relative to resources for Code on historical structures. They would be willing to do that. May 2021 there will be a historic building and code symposium reaching out to the Mid-Atlantic region as a whole due to the location. There are a group of code officials from Pennsylvania that have historical districts with issues on interpretation.

Mr. Stewart asked HARB members to present comments on presentation formats, and how things are done to pick up where the administrator left off. Improvements and tweaks of the process are open for discussion. Packets will be distributed as in the past and power points will continue.

The approval process was discussed and the steps that projects need to take or are able to be streamlined. The duties of Planning Commission and HARB were discussed, relative to recommendation for approval as it related to the waterfront project and a few other projects that came through for approval.

The more stringent process as it applied to new construction was discussed. Ms. Tooker stated that it is important to have the materials available to discuss when a new project or plan does come through the Borough.

Mr. Schneider stated that a good way to move forward may be education for the applicant. In some cases, based on schedule and based on their actual timeline for the project, there will be times when going before Planning Commission may make more sense than coming to HARB first, etc.

UPDATE ON PROJECT

Joanne Tosti-Vasey spoke before HARB about her porch. A few years ago, HARB recommended approval for her to put the original porch back onto her home. It took two years as the project was bigger and more expensive than they thought. It was finished in October. Time and money were factors. (She showed a picture of the porch at present).

She stated that the old gutters are still on top and they will need to be replaced. The asbestos tile was pulled and the window that was approved is too short for the completion of the project. She inquired if they needed to come back through HARB again to get the gutters and the window done.

HARB members concurred that this would be an administrative approval. As a side, her project was featured in a 2020 calendar for the shutter company.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no other business to come before HARB,

Mr. Schneider moved to adjourn.
Ms. Long seconded the motion.
Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:16 a.m.