

Sullivan's Island Design Review Board Meeting
18 October 2006

The 18 October meeting, as previously announced, convened at 5:30 PM at 1752 Central Avenue, Sullivan's Island. Chairman Pat Ilderton called the meeting to order at the site.

The purpose of the site visit was for board members to review first hand work proposed in an application submitted at the previous board meeting and deferred until a site visit could be made.

Members attending at the site were Pat Ilderton, Steve Herlong, Duke Wright, Betty Harmon, Cyndy Ewing and Fred Reinhard, a newly appointed member of the DRB. Billy Craver did not attend. Randy Robinson and Kat Kenyon also attended.

The board reconvened at Town Hall after the site visit. Kent Prause and Trenholm Walker joined the meeting.

Pat Ilderton reviewed what had been presented by the owners architect at the site then asked for public comment.

Bobby Thompson, a member of the Sullivan's Island Planning Commission said that this was one of the most historic houses on the island, constructed around 1894, and the proposed addition would affect both the front and rear of the house. He hoped the board would take this all into consideration before voting. Susan Middaugh said that she was concerned about the affect on the streetscape of removal of the double shed look and construction of a large addition on the rear of the house.

Tim Reese stated that he was the realtor for the property at 1752 Central Avenue. He said it was owned by the Baptist Church across the street, had been on the market for two years, and was difficult to sell as a family residence because of its small size and functional layout. He said church members respected the historic value of the house but supported the addition because they were pleased that the house was not being bought and enlarged to be resold as a spec house.

Pat Ilderton asked for comments from Kent Prause and Randy Robinson. Randy said that the proposed addition was obviously large and the design made it look very similar to the existing historic structure. He suggested the architect consider revising the design to make it more dissimilar to the existing house, not like it.

Pat Ilderton asked board members for comments.

Steve Herlong said that there had been very little development or changes to the row of these similar historic houses (originally junior officer quarters at Fort Moultrie). He said that the addition as proposed is the right way to enlarge the house but it compromises the open space in the rear yard even though it is not usable space. He said the detailing of the

proposed addition mimicked the original historic house and thought removal of vinyl was good.

Pat Ilderton said that removing vinyl siding and opening up the porches was good and that the proposed design orients living space to the rear of the house. He further stated that it was not the role of the DRB to micro-manage design.

Duke Wright said that approval of the design as submitted would set a precedent and change the character of the neighborhood. He said that opening up the porches was good but that the design needed further study.

Betty Harmon said that she lived in a similar house down the street and appreciated the problem of small rooms but was overwhelmed by the size of the proposed addition and wished there was a way to reduce the mass of the addition.

Fred Reinhard said that he came from downtown Charleston and had been on the Charleston Board of Architectural Review two times. He further stated that he owned one of seven identical 12 foot wide historic houses downtown and that the architecture was the most valuable component of the properties. He went on to say that the junior officers quarters and other quarters on I'on Ave were the crown jewels of Sullivan's Island historic properties and that the zoning ordinance is very specific regarding preservation of these and other historic properties on the island. He said the proposed addition obliterates the scale and mass of past relatively small additions to the rear portion of the houses.

He further said that it was the duty of the DRB to preserve and protect historic properties on the island. The issue was about architecture and preservation not real estate and the sale of property. This could be one of the most important votes since creation of the board.

Cyndy Ewing said that she agreed with Fred Reinhard and felt the same way about the board's responsibility to focus on historic preservation rather than real estate matters. She further said that the board needed to decide what to use as guidelines to preserve historic properties. She further said that she had been searching for original blueprints of these structures.

Pat Ilderton said that there were obvious differences among board members and that the owner may want to review design alternatives that may be acceptable.

Fred Reinhard said that with proper restoration work the structure could become a valuable property without destroying its architectural integrity. He commended the architect for such items as work on the porches and removing vinyl siding. He felt there were ways to increase the square footage with separate structures without destroying the silhouette of the historic house. Betty Harmon echoed these thoughts.

Pat Ilderton said that the application most likely would not be approved as submitted. Options were for the board to vote on the project as submitted, defer the application, or the owner could withdraw the application, redesign the project, and resubmit.

Julie O'Connor, the owner's architect, said they were trying to restore the porches and exterior siding while adding square footage that was previously approved by the board. She was under the impression they were given conceptual approval for a 1,000 SF addition but the board did not like the original concept so they redesigned to respect the form of the original structure. She believed they have complied with comments from the September 2006 meeting in terms of incorporating the new with the old.

Pat Ilderton read the motion from the September 2006 meeting and said that the minutes as written did not address square footage. Duke Wright said he had prepared the final minutes and that if there was a discrepancy the transcript needed to be reviewed.

Fred Reinhard called for a point of order to note that the Charleston BAR records meetings for the record. Pat Ilderton said that we also record the minutes and the tapes from the September meeting would be reviewed to research the motion in question.

Pat Ilderton asked the applicants if they would like to defer while the research took place.

Trenholm Walker said that under the rules the board could defer one time for good cause. If the decision is made to disapprove the application that would be the formal action. The owner could reapply tomorrow. The action only denies this design.

Fred Reinhard moved that the application be disapproved. Cyndy Ewing seconded. The vote was five to one in favor of disapproval. Pat Ilderton voted against disapproval.

Duke Wright moved and Fred Reinhard seconded to withhold approval of the 20 September 2006 minutes pending review if the verbatim transcript. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Pat Ilderton called for the next application:

Kim and Tim Cook, 2708 Goldbug Avenue
Partial Demolition and Relocation of a Historic Structure

Steve Herlong recused himself from this application.

Fred Reinhard said the Guide for New Members he received when coming on the board stated that a recused person must leave the room, not remain in the audience. After considerable discussion it was decided that a recused person could remain silent in the room.

Kent Prause stated that the application included a site plan defining the location of the existing structure as well as the proposed new house, historic information, and two letters

from neighbors, Dale Snyder and Aussie and David Geer. He said there were no elevations which would give an indication of the height and mass of the proposed design.

Layne Nelson, Herlong & Associates, made a presentation for the owners. She said the owners had been before the DRB twice (May and June, 2006) regarding this property. They are now requesting a C of A for three items:

- Conceptual approval to reposition the historic structure on the property as indicated on the site plan.
- Removal of a rear porch on the historic structure that was added after initial construction.
- Conceptual approval of the design with guidance from the DRB to move forward.

Layne said the house was historic (Traditional Island Resource #50) but not in a historic district. She reviewed the previous applications and said the owners had tried to address concerns of the DRB and neighbors. She said they looked ways to attach the existing structure to the new house by incorporating the original 1,172 SF house into the main living space thereby reducing overall square footage and scale while not compromising character and integrity. She went on to describe the pros and cons of various options with emphasis on preserving the character of the lot, trees and historic house even in its relocated position perpendicular to the street.

Pat Ilderton asked for public comments. There were several. Jim Hiers, Betsy Richardson, Dale Snyder, David Geer and Billy Richardson expressed concern about how to preserve the integrity of the historic house when constructing a much larger structure on the lot, how to protect existing trees, and the affect a larger house would have on sunlight, breeze and views from other properties in the neighborhood. The general consensus of the group was opposition to the project.

The DRB discussed the project and alternative concepts with the designer.

Betty Harmon moved to deny the application for insufficient information. There was no second and the motion died.

Fred Reinhard moved and Duke Wright seconded to approve relocation of the historic structure on the property along with construction of a new house contingent on the board receiving more detailed design concepts with elevations along with proposed site work including a topographical cross section of the property. Fred Reinhard and Duke Wright voted in favor. Pat Ilderton, Cyndy Ewing and Betty Harmon voted against. The application was denied.

Pat Ilderton said that the board should make a site visit and walk through the neighborhood and that the applicant could reapply without prejudice with another design that included relocating the existing house.

Pat Ilderton called for the next application:

950 Middle Street, Smith Residence
Addition to a Historic Structure

Kent Prause stated that he had received a scope of work, site plan and photographs of the existing house along with proposed elevations. A variance is required for the rear yard setback. The DRB can approve the request on condition a variance be approved.

Beau Clowney, the owners architect, said that the board had previously approved a request to add an enclosed porch on the rear and modify the front with two dormer windows and rear with one dormer to provide for two bedrooms and a bathroom on the second floor. They determined that proposed work would trigger the 50% rule that would require the house be elevated two additional feet. The solution is to redesign the project by constructing a small addition on the side and rear of the existing house. Dormers originally proposed would not be added.

Justin Ferric, an architect with Beau Clowney, said they were asking for a 17% decrease in side setbacks and a 19 ½ % increase in principle building coverage.

Pat Ilderton asked for public comments. There were none.

Kent Prause said that there was not a side yard setback but a front yard setback because it is a corner lot. Randy Robinson said that the addition to the house was done after 1989.

Fred Reinhard moved and Duke Wright seconded to approve the application contingent on the variance being approved.

Pat Ilderton, Steve Herlong, Duke Wright, Fred Reinhard and Cyndy Ewing voted in favor. Betty Harmon voted against. The motion carried.

Pat Ilderton adjourned the meeting.

Pat Ilderton, Chairman

Duke Wright, Secretary