

MINUTES
TOWN OF FORT MILL
HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD
March 14th, 2023
112 Confederate Street
4:30 PM

Present: Chairman Louis Roman, David Booth, Megan Brinton, Scott Couchenour, Elizabeth Leventis, Planning Director Penelope Karagounis, Senior Planner Alex Moore

Absent: Jessica Scarlett, Nikki Todaro

Guests: Kim Fisher, John Marks, Stephanie Thomas, Mark Kurowski, Lauren Miller

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Louis Roman called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Louis Roman entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the February 14th, 2023, HRB meeting. Scott Couchenour made a motion to approve the minutes. Elizabeth Leventis seconded the motion. Then, by a vote of 5-0, the minutes for the February 14th, 2023, meeting were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Request for Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)

The first item on the agenda included a request for a certificate of appropriateness (COA) submitted by Fort Mill Whitakers, LLC to change the exterior paint color on a portion of the façade, and on the rear elevation, at 215 Main Street from white to Peppercorn by Sherwin Williams.

Senior Planner Alex Moore gave a brief overview of the application and associated materials for this COA request. He noted that two other cases had come before HRB for 215 Main Street. These included the COA and Bailey Bill review and approval on April 12th, 2022, and the COA for signage on June 14th, 2022.

Moore stated that the current request for a certificate of appropriateness is to paint the trim on the façade and the entirety of the rear elevation of this building. The proposed color is Peppercorn by Sherwin Williams. According to the manufacturer, this shade is a versatile dark gray, evenly balanced between warm and cool, which can create a rich and timeless exterior.

Moore then noted that the historic photographs do indicate that the façade trim has been painted white for some time. However, the historic district guidelines state that from 1890 to 1930, which is the period of significance for this building, whites, yellows, and gray colors were in use.

Senior Planner Moore then indicated that some building surfaces within the downtown historic district have been painted which were not intended to be. Thus, the owner of 217 Main Street, Mark Kurowski, was made aware of the plan to paint the rear elevation at 215 Main Street because the proposal included a small portion of the shared wall between the two buildings. Mr. Kurowski indicated via email that he is amenable to this portion of the wall being painted Peppercorn. Moore also stated for the record that the adjacent wall at 213 Main Street would not be painted.

Megan Brinton then asked if the plan was to paint the entire rear elevation of 215 Main Street Peppercorn or just the trim.

Senior Planner Moore stated that only the trim on the façade of the building was intended to be painted Peppercorn, while the entirety of the brick on the rear elevation would be painted Peppercorn. He then indicated that planning staff recommended the certificate of appropriateness be approved with the condition that the adjacent wall at 213 Main Street not be painted and remain white, and that the shared wall with 217 Main Street may be painted Peppercorn.

David Booth then asked for clarification on the painting of the trim on the rear of the building.

Stephanie Thomas, representing Fort Mill Whitakers, LLC, stated that the trim, gutters, and door on the rear of the building were also planned to be painted Peppercorn. She indicated that this could be adjusted per the board's recommendation.

Moore asked HRB members if they had an opinion on this proposal.

Elizabeth Leventis indicated that it would be harder to say yes to all of this at once for the rear elevation without seeing how it might look, but that she did believe it would be appropriate to paint the brick on the rear.

David Booth stated that this proposal was reversing the concept from front to rear and creating conflict in design. Thus, he stated that he was not opposed to the back brick being painted Peppercorn, but he would like to see the trim on the back remain white.

Moore clarified with the HRB that they wished for the trim, gutters, and door on the rear to remain white.

The HRB concurred with this scenario for the rear elevation.

Chairman Roman asked Ms. Thomas if this design made sense to her.

Ms. Thomas agreed with this.

Elizabeth Leventis and Scott Couchenour then indicated that they remained torn regarding the front of the building since the white trim was iconic to downtown.

Mr. Couchenour stated that he would be agreeable to the front door being painted Peppercorn since the historic photo presented indicated it had once been painted dark. But he wished for the trim on the front of the building to remain white.

Chairman Roman asked if there were any further questions or discussion.

Planning Director Penelope Karagounis asked that the motion include the condition that the wall at 213 Main Street remain white.

Chairman Roman then entertained a motion from board members.

Elizabeth Leventis made a motion to approve with the condition that the brick on the rear elevation of 215 Main Street be painted Peppercorn, that all wood trim, the door, and guttering on the rear remain white. The shared wall with 217 Main Street may also be painted Peppercorn. The wall of 213 Main Street shall remain white as is. The door on the front elevation of 215 Main Street may be painted Peppercorn, but the trim shall remain white.

Scott Couchenour offered an amendment to the motion to allow the front door to remain white if the owner decided not to paint the front door Peppercorn.

The HRB agreed to this amendment.

Ms. Leventis then amended her motion to give the applicant the option of painting the front door Peppercorn or leaving it white.

Ms. Brinton seconded the amended motion.

By a vote of 5-0, the HRB approved the motion to approve the certificate of appropriateness with the conditions as noted.

2. Request for Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)

The second item on the agenda included a request for a certificate of appropriateness (COA) submitted by Casco Signs, Inc. for exterior signage at 314 N. White Street.

Senior Planner Alex Moore gave a brief overview of the application and associated materials for this COA request. The applicant is Casco Signs, Inc. He noted that the property is located at 314 N. White Street and is currently being developed as a fast casual restaurant known as Bossy Beulah's. There have been two previous requests that have come before HRB at this location. These included the original request for the COA and the request for Preliminary Bailey Bill approval on October 12, 2021.

Moore then stated that the historic district design guidelines indicate general parameters for signage. These include establishing objectives for signage, limiting impacts on character defining features, finding original sign locations on buildings, ensuring compatibility with the building and the site, considering impacts on the block, and creating graphic interest.

Senior Planner Moore then presented slides as prepared by Casco Signs illustrating the respective signs comprising the overall package.

Next, Senior Planner Moore noted the respective regulations for each type of sign the applicant proposed This included the following:

- The copy area of a monument sign must not exceed 40% of the sign area and must not exceed eight feet in height. The applicant indicates that the proposed signage comprises 40% of the sign area and will be five feet in height.

- The copy area of each respective wall sign must not exceed 15% of the area of the wall to which it is affixed. The wall signage as presented today in these slides, except for that shown on the North elevation meets this requirement. The aggregate area of signage on this elevation must be reduced to 15%.
- Signage within the historic district may not be internally illuminated. However, signage may be illuminated via back-lighting. One sign as proposed will be back-lit. This will be the “**Hot Chicken Now**” sign on the south canopy elevation. The attached signage schematic illustrates the design. The balance of the signage for this project will either be illuminated via exterior, up-lighting, or will not be lighted. See the attached schematic drawings for more details.

Scott Couchenour began the discussion with a question about the existence of a pole sign in the front of the building.

Senior Planner Moore responded that there was a pole sign within the front yard of the building that had been taken down and that one pole sign did remain on the property along the west property line. He indicated the existing pole sign could remain on the property and that it could be used, though it was not part of the current review by the HRB.

Chairman Roman then asked board members if they had any other comments or questions about the signage as presented.

David Booth asked if the proposed monument sign within the front yard of 314 N. White Street was appropriately located with respect to sight triangles.

Senior Planner Moore responded that the current site plan for the monument sign did not have sight triangles included. However, he indicated that staff would ensure at the time of permitting that the monument sign would not be placed within a sight triangle.

Mr. Booth then asked about the lighting mechanism for the monument sign.

Senior Planner Moore indicated that the monument sign as proposed would be illuminated via external uplighting only.

Mr. Booth asked how the signage copy on the monument sign would be designed.

Ms. Kim Fisher with Casco Signs, Inc. responded that the owner wished to have the option of either doing PVC mounted or painted lettering.

Scott Couchneour then asked if the lettering on the awning would be painted on.

Ms. Fisher responded that the canopy would include painted lettering except for the sign proposed to be lit with backlighting. This backlit sign would include channel lettering.

Mr. Booth expressed concern about the south facing canopy sign in terms of both content and the proposed backlighting design. He indicated that it would have an adverse impact on Walter Elisha Park.

Chairman Roman agreed with this sentiment and asked Ms. Fisher if the owner would be willing to consider revising the “Hot Chicken Now” copy as proposed on the south face of the canopy.

Ms. Fisher stated that this was part of their branding and if possible, they would not want to change this.

Ms. Leventis indicated that she believed the signage was nicely done.

Mr. Couchenour stated that he liked the overall signage package for the site.

Mr. Booth stated that the monument sign should have some type of black, metal cap which matched the materials on the building. He then asked if there was any historical precedent for the signage proposed on the canopy.

Senior Planner Moore responded that when the property was used as a service station that the canopy did have painted advertising on it.

Mr. Booth indicated that he believed the "Hot Chicken Now" copy should not be illuminated with backlighting.

Chairman Roman summarized the sentiment of the HRB in indicating that they wanted a black, metal cap on the monument sign and that they did not want the "Hot Chicken Now" copy on the south facing canopy to be back-lit. He then asked if board members had any other questions.

Ms. Brinton asked if the "Thanks for Visiting" copy would be visible.

Ms. Fisher stated that this would be visible on the canopy as one exited the restaurant.

Chairman Roman then asked if the pole sign which remained would be impacted by the percentages which had already been allocated.

Senior Planner Moore stated that there were two pole signs on the property. One of these pole signs had been removed and the town had ruled that it could not be put back up because it was nonconforming. The pole sign which remained was located on the western edge of the property and could be used if it remained and was not removed.

Chairman Roman then asked Ms. Fisher if she had any further questions.

Ms. Fisher indicated that she had no further questions.

There being no further questions or comments, Chairman Roman entertained a motion.

Mr. Booth made a motion to approve the signage package as submitted with the following three conditions:

1. The monument sign, as depicted on Sheet 1 of 6, shall include a decorative, black, metal cap linked to the materials as found on the main structure at 314 N. White Street.
2. The wall signage, as depicted on Sheet 4 of 6, shall not exceed 15% of the area of the north elevation wall.
3. The south face canopy signage, as depicted on Sheet 5 of 6, shall not include back-lighting. This signage shall instead be designed and installed in the same manner as the canopy signage as proposed on the north, east, and west canopy faces, except that the south facing canopy signage may consist of the same font design as shown in the attached drawing as submitted by Casco Signs, Inc.

Scott Couchenour seconded the motion.

By a vote of 5-0, the HRB approved the motion to approve the certificate of appropriateness with the conditions as noted.

There being no further business, Chairman Roman adjourned the meeting at 5:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alex J. Moore, AICP

Senior Planner

March 30th, 2023