



City of Richmond

City Hall
900 East Broad Street

Meeting Minutes - Final Commission of Architectural Review

Tuesday, October 9, 2018

6:00 PM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

Quarterly Meeting

Call to Order

Chairman Klaus called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Roll Call

Present -- 5 - * Commissioner James W. Klaus, * Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., * Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, * Commissioner Sean Wheeler and * Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

Absent -- 4 - * Commissioner David C. Cooley, * Commissioner Sanford Bond, * Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks and * Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer

1. Staff Report Reorganization

Staff recently provided copies of a proposed revised staff report to the Commissioners by email. Chairman Klaus requested that staff provide by email a copy of the original staff report and the revised format for comparison. Chairman Klaus suggested that the reports include the historic photographs. General Commission discussion indicated approval for the revised format with an appreciation for the new organization and bullet points, though some found the map image too small. Chairman Klaus suggested the format of the revised staff reports be placed on the agenda for the next meeting so the Commission could vote on it.

2. Building Permits and Administrative Approval Reports

Staff suggested emailing electronic copies of the monthly building and administrative approval reports to the Commissioners to reduce the amount of printing for the monthly meetings and to provide more time for the Commissioners to review these materials. The Commissioners agreed with this approach for the upcoming October 23rd meeting. Staff also mentioned that sometime in the future all applications, plans, and staff reports would be handled electronically through Energov.

3. Window Materials - Update of Products Available

Ms. Chen mentioned that the Guidelines are clear that vinyl is not permitted and while we cannot change what has been approved and/or installed in the past, we need to come to a decision about how we move forward and what the Commission will approve and not approve, and why.

Chairman Klaus stated that based on his review of all windows at the locations provided by the applicant at a recent meeting he could not tell the difference. The Commissioners reviewed the photographs taken by Chairman Klaus and discussed the differences.

Commissioner Wheeler mentioned vinyl windows are not energy efficient as required for

new construction and the profiles of vinyl windows are lacking the depth you find on historic windows. Chairman Klaus agreed this is a problem for divided lights especially for larger windows.

Commissioner Morgan mentioned that PVC materials are often shiny while an aluminum finish is more matte and historically accurate. Other Commissions agreed that the vinyl finish does not maintain their structural integrity especially for the larger size windows and the factory applied colors do not age well.

Commissioner Morgan stated that for new construction the Commission could consider some flexibility in materials but has concerns that the Commission should be approving quality, durable materials and that while the Commission cannot regulate architectural styles it can facilitate the use of good materials.

Ms. Chen suggested that the Commission start considering what is important for windows profiles, frame sizes, and other features of windows.

Commissioner Morgan asked if the Commission should start requiring window specifications with applications and staff suggested that this information could be submitted for staff review with the building permit application.

Chairman Klaus mentioned that part of the question is that some of the windows look the same regardless of materials. Commissioners Morgan and Wheeler responded that some vinyl windows do not have or maintain their integrity as they age. Commissioners continued discussion of vinyl vs. PVC.

Chairman Klaus asked staff to send out the windows specifications for the Plygem 300 windows to all of the Commissioners and that a vote be taken at the next monthly meeting.

Commissioner Pearson stated that it is important for the Commission to be able to articulate detailed specifications of windows in order to be consistent in their approvals. what the Commission will approve and not approve, and why.

Commissioners then discussed what qualities are important including: profiles, frame size, finish (smooth without a grain), if it can be painted, true or simulated divided lights with a spacer bar, and trim sizes. The Commissioners also discussed differences between historic building rehabilitations and new constructions and if the requirements would be different.

Chairman Klaus asked staff to resend all of the information about previously approved windows and the proposed Plygem 300 windows for Commission comment and discussion at the next scheduled monthly meeting.

Questions, Concerns, Comments from Commissioners

Commissioner Klaus adjourned the meeting at 7:29 PM.