CITY OF CONWAY
COMMUNITY APPEARANCE BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2012
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 4:00 P.M.

Present: Brooke David, Robert Harper, Robert Miller, Amber Wall, Danny Clounts, Jason Pippin

Absent: George Ulrich

Staff: Joe Henderson, Zoning Administrator; Michael Leinwand, Planning Director; Barbara Tessier, Secretary

Others: Sharon Holbrook, Mike Harrelson, A-1 Signs, Anne Smith; Jennifer Satterthwaite, SC Department of Archives and History

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman David called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Miller made a motion, seconded by Pippin, to approve the July 22, 2012 minutes as written. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

C. DESIGN REVIEWS

1. Simply Sofia – Russell Fowler, applicant, requests approval of one sandblasted building plaque located on the front façade of 328 Laurel Street. (TMS# 137-02-14-010)

There was no representation.

2. Solano’s Italian Restaurant – Russell Fowler, applicant, requests reconsideration of a previous design review for a wall sign at 326 Laurel Street. (TMS # 137-02-14-010)

There was no representation.

3. K.C.’s Deli – A-1 Signs and Graphics, applicants, request approval of two primary wall signs, entrance door lettering, and secondary window signage at 1129 Third Avenue. (TMS# 137-06-19-001)

Mike Harrelson stated his name for the record.
Henderson said this was within the Central Business District. He said staff recommended approval for all the signage requested for meeting the architectural design guidelines and requirements of the *Unified Development Ordinance*.

Henderson asked if they were applying dimensional letters to the wall signs. Harrelson said it would be the same colors and font as the former Carolina Skillet signage. He said they would be taking it down, repainting it, and putting the new letters on it. Harrelson said they were.

Wall asked if the background was going to be black on the windows or if it would be transparent. Harrelson said it was transparent.

Henderson asked if it would be a true red and not an orange. Harrelson said it would be what was referred to a safety red.

Miller made a motion, seconded by Wall, to approve the signage requests as presented. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

4. **Prudential Real Estate – A-1 Signs and Graphics, applicants, request approval of one primary wall sign, entrance door lettering, and secondary window signage at 915 Third Avenue.**
   *(TMS# 137-02-01-023)*

   Mike Harrelson was the representative for this item as well.

   Henderson said this was also in the Central Business District. Henderson said the sign met the size requirements for wall and window signage. He said staff recommended approval of all signage requested.

   Henderson verified with Harrelson that the sign was sandblasted. Harrelson said that was correct. He said it was sandblasted on high density urethane board. He said the blue would be matched to the blue on the handouts that the Board had.

   Miller made a motion, seconded by Pippen, to approve the signage as requested. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

5. **Little Treasures – Sharon Holbrook, applicant, requests approval of two secondary window signs and one door sign at 32 Main Street.**
   *(TMS# 137-02-02-024)*

   Sharon Holbrook stated her name for the record.

   Henderson said this had been on the agenda several months ago. He said it was still the same logo. Holbrook said the lettering would be black and gold.
Henderson said that was a change from the original black and white. Henderson said the signage met requirements for window signage. He said staff recommended approval.

Harper made a motion, seconded by Clounts, to approve the requested signage. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

ADD ON:

Coastal Greek – 332 Laurel Street

Henderson said this was a retail establishment on the corner of Fourth Avenue and Laurel Street. He said as part of their temporary sign package, staff allowed them to put up some window signage. He said they were presenting for approval two window signs and door graphics. Anne Smith, the applicant, said it was for three window signs. She said they would like to put one on the Fourth Avenue side. Henderson said there were two windows on the Fourth Avenue side and was she just requesting one sign. Small said that was correct. Henderson said that additional window signage would be allowed by the guidelines. Small said they were under the required size.

Henderson asked Small if the property owner desired to make improvements to the transom area. Small said she would love an awning. Henderson said he thought that would be allowed. She said the owner was not ready to move forward with that.

Miller asked if there was any kind of physical harm that could come from the transom. Henderson said there was not. He said it had some type of OBS material put into transom that had become unsightly. He said it did open up inside the store. He said replacing with glass would possibly allow light in through the transom into the store. Small said it was a complete solid wall in the front. Henderson thought it might be a drop ceiling. Small said that was right. Small said someone built something at one point from which they hung things off the rafters. She said some of that had been covered over.

Miller asked if there was any ordinance that they were not in compliance with. Henderson said no.

Henderson said it was a storefront with great potential. He said he had spoken to the owner before about incentives and improvements he could make to the building. Small said she wanted an awning because the heat coming in was unbearable. She said something would have to be figured out. Henderson showed a picture of the drop ceiling underneath but above that was where light could actually come in if it were translucent. Small said when they moved into the building, the glass wall on the other side was missing panes. She said they
were told they were clear. Henderson said this was only remaining period transom glass in the Central Business District, and should be preserved.

Miller told Small to ask the building owner if they were a member of Conway Downtown Alive because there might be monies available for an awning.

Miller made a motion, seconded by Wall, to approve the requested signage. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

D. TEXT AMENDMENTS

1. Amendments of the Conway Community Appearance Guidelines: Planning Department staff requests review of City Council initiated amendments to Sections 4.1.8, 4.1.44, 4.2.9, 8.1.27, 8.4.13, 10.2.19, and 10.4.2 of the “Historic Design Review District: Community Appearance Guidelines” relating to materials for trim, accents, and windows in non-residential areas.

Leinwand said this was an amendment initiated by City Council. He passed out a map to go along with his presentation. He said the guidelines were adopted on December 12, 2011. He said rather than postpone the adoption of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) or the guidelines, City Council decided to amend the guidelines after their adoption concerning materials for trim, accents and windows in non-residential areas and the HDRD (Historic Design Review Districts). He said they wanted to have a few more workshops.

Leinwand said City Council had the workshops, and they had come up with a proposed amendment. He said as a group, City Council decided to continue the prohibition of vinyl in the non-residential areas and the historic districts. He said they were open to allowing synthetic materials such as PVC, AZEK, and vinyl for trim and accents in the non-residential areas and in the Historic Design Review Districts. They were also open to allowing vinyl windows in these areas. He said the next step was the review by the Community Appearance Board. He said this had to be done before any amendment could be made. He said it would then have a public hearing.

Leinwand said staff had researched various “Preservation Briefs.” He said staff had also received input from the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. He said they believed allowing these synthetic materials would not be detrimental to the local historic design review districts.

Leinwand said the text in red in their issue papers was the proposed amendment changes. He said the changes would allow fiber cement, AZEK, PVC, and vinyl as appropriate materials for trim and accents along with vinyl windows. However, the CAB, on a case-by-case basis, would allow these types of materials for areas that were in the
National Downtown District for Contributing Properties, and other properties listed on the National Register individually.

Miller said that this had come to the Board before in one form or another. He said the Board had been pretty adamant about vinyl, and even PVC materials, as not being necessarily allowed, especially in the downtown area. He said the Board was apprehensive about making any decisions on a case-by-case basis. He said when it came to materials like vinyl and PVC, they simply should not be allowed. He said writing it in as permitted and then saying the CAB had to approve it would set everyone up for an unfavorable outcome. He said this would just make for problems.

Miller said vinyl was suitable for budget constraints but not downtown especially in the historic districts. He said there had been numerous offers to staff and management for the CAB to meet with City Council to discuss materials. He said their offer had not been taken advantage of.

He said the Board had said before they did not want to see vinyl, and they did not want to review on a case-by-case basis. He said vinyl and PVC should not be allowed period within the downtown environment, and it should not be left up to the CAB to decide on a case-by-case basis. He said as the Board membership changed so did the decisions and opinions of what materials could be on certain buildings. He said even allowing it in general was problematic outside the downtown area. He said it was overly detrimental to the built environment, which ultimately impacted taxable values. He said it was not suitable materials for building in commercial districts, especially in a historic area. He said when it came to AZEK and trim board, and other composite materials, they at least had a quality to them that had wood resemblance. He said they were paintable and had less required maintenance. He said if owners did not maintain vinyl, by power washing it on a constant basis, it became problematic over time as it stained and deteriorated. He said regardless of what the suppliers claimed it was not an overly suitable material.

Wall asked if a motion had to be made. Leinwand said the Board needed to make a recommendation, favorable or unfavorable, so he could forward it to City Council.

Wall and Pippin said they agreed with Miller. Pippin said he was not as concerned with the materials, but he was concerned with the case-by-case basis aspect. His concern was also with the changing of the Board members and different opinions. He said it would be a nightmare. Clounts said he also agreed with this statement.

Harper said he agreed as well. He said former members, such as Watts and Olds, had also felt this way in the past.

Miller made a motion, seconded by Pippin, to recommend that vinyl and PVC and/or plastic materials not be used or considered suitable materials within the
downtown area, anywhere instances in which the design guidelines or ordinances were rewritten to state the CAB would review on a case-by-case basis, regardless of the materials, should be removed completely, to consider AZEK-type materials or other composite-type materials to be suitable alternatives to allow for budgetary constraints within building renovations and new construction. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

Leinwand asked if this motion covered all three historic design review districts. Miller said that was correct.

E. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

F. BOARD INPUT

Miller said he didn’t know that the CAB was also the Tree Board. Henderson said he would put together a workshop with the arborist, Wanda Lilly, to present to the Board.

G. STAFF INPUT

1. 2011 C.P. Quattlebaum Design Awards – Planning Department staff requests review and approval of selected nominees for the 2011 C.P. Quattlebaum Design Awards.

Henderson gave a brief overview of the awards. He said they were created in 1999 when the CAB was created. He said they focused on interior design, construction, restoration, landscape design, and signage. He said there were eight different categories.

Harper told the Board that if there was nothing for a particular category they felt was worthy, they didn’t have to nominate anything. Henderson said that was correct. Henderson said the ordinance permitted two nominees per category, but an award did not have to be given if the Board did not feel anything merited an award. Henderson said if the Board had any suggestions for any of the categories, he would welcome them.

Henderson started with restoration of an existing home. He said 1401 Laurel Street was a good nominee. He said Brantley Green and Palmetto Construction had done the restoration. He said the house belonged to Scott and Sherer Royce. He said it was an early 1930’s construction. He said it needed a lot of work. He said there was hardi plank put on the outside. He said they did a complete overhaul of the interior. He said they kept a lot of original shelving. He said they maintained a lot of the original woodwork. He said they were very meticulous in the details of the renovation.”
Henderson moved on to new construction of a home. He had seven homes on the list and showed exterior photographs of each one. He said most of the houses were in Wild Wing.

The Board said they would like to see interior shots from 1212 Wood Stork Drive, 192 Glass Hill Drive, and 3171 Long Avenue.

There were three choices in the new construction of a non-residential building. Henderson said when compared to any other Dollar General in the county, this design was much nicer. He said they tried to mimic some of the historic vernacular commercial buildings of the historic district in designing the upper façade and cornice area. Miller said he had heard the construction costs were about 20% higher to make it that nice. Henderson said they could have had a much taller sign and went with the smaller monument sign. Henderson said he thought it had contributed greatly to the corridor.

Miller said from a critique standpoint of design awards, you look at buildings like this, a Dollar General, and the builder went out of his way to do something of interest with it. Miller said he could have put up the typical Dollar General.

Henderson said Car Quest was a new construction, but he said he liked it for the amount and configuration of landscaping that was installed. He said he didn’t have anything for residential landscaping at this point. Harper said the owner had a lot of pride about how he was saving the existing trees. Henderson pointed out that they had also made the bay doors glass. Henderson showed more of the landscaping.

Henderson also showed pictures of the CCU Chapel. He said he thought they did a great job of developing this within the wooded area.

For restoration of a non-residential building, Henderson said there was only one. He said it was the Conway Christian Daycare. He said typically this was the category where the renovation was in the downtown area, but this one was in the Main Street Corridor. Henderson said it took years for this building to finally get its Certificate of Occupancy. He said he could not get any interior pictures because the children were there, but that the owner would be taking pictures for him when the children were not there. Henderson said DSS required a lot to be done to retrofit the building.

Henderson went on to interior design. He said Berni’s 501 had done a good job of completely renovating the interior. He said the bar is new, the seating is new, all the kitchen equipment was new, too. Henderson said there was also an outdoor patio area.

For landscaping, Henderson said all he had was Car Quest. He asked the Board to let him know if there were any others around the city that would be potential nominees. He said he liked residential landscaping projects and he had asked the garden clubs, but they had no suggestions.
Henderson had seven choices for signs. He said there were not many businesses spending money on signs in 2011. Of the seven, the Board liked the Benton Buildings metal sign and the Recycled Rooster.

For contribution to quality development, restoration, landscape or design by an organization or individual, Henderson listed the Cherry Hill Baptist Church Charities Building. He said they collected food items and clothing and those in need could take a bag and fill it with what they needed.

Miller asked about being able to nominate something as adaptive reuse. Henderson said the ordinance set the titles for the awards.

The Board decided that they would wait until a meeting in September to vote on the choices. In the meantime, Henderson would be open to any other suggestions for any of the categories.

H. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Approved and signed this 12th day of Sept., 2012

Chairman, A. Brooke David