CITY OF CONWAY
COMMUNITY APPEARANCE BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2013
COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 4:00 P.M.

Present: Anne Bullock, Robert Harper, Danny Clonts, George Ulrich, Amber Wall, Robert Miller

Absent: Jason Pippin

Staff: Joe Henderson, Zoning Administrator; Barbara Tessier, Secretary

Others: Ben Burroughs

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ulrich called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Harper made a motion, seconded by Clonts, to approve the March 13, 2013 minutes as written. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

C. CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS

1. Conway City Hall Handrail and Step Restoration – Ben Burroughs and Richard Johnson, applicants, request approval of a historic restoration of damaged and missing iron handrail components, and the repair of the original stone steps at 229 Main Street. (TMS# 137-02-20-007)

Ben Burroughs stated his name for the record.

Burroughs said the South Carolina Society of Colonial Dames Chapter was trying to put the project up for a national award. He said the president of the state chapter was from Conway.

Burroughs said Richard Johnson would be doing the restoration at City Hall. He said he had already done restoration work in the city and the state. Burroughs said he had total confidence in Johnson's ability to do the work absolutely correct.

Burroughs said back in the 1980's a group of people met with City Council to talk about the City Hall building. He said they knew improvements would need to be made

over time. He said rather than city staff have to do the research, a committee was formed called the City Hall Historical Advisory Committee. He said the committee would come up with projects that needed to be done, do all the footwork, and then turn in a recommendation to City Council. He said Council would decide if the work needed to be done or not. He said this was one of the proposals the committee had talked about years ago. He said at the time, the money was not available, and they were not exactly sure how to make the improvements.

He said the Colonial Dames had recently gotten involved and asked him to handle this improvement as the project manager. He said he tied Coastal Carolina into because some studies had to be done by people at Coastal. He said Theresa Johnson was president of the South Carolina Chapter of the Colonial Dames turned in the proposal. He said Richard Johnson was her husband. He said Johnson was only charging for materials and a small amount of labor. He said City Council had approved the work being done.

He said the proposal outlined what would be done to improve the handrails and the steps. He said the steps over the years have worn too much. He said they were not talking about making the steps look brand new. He said the building was at least 175 years old and the steps did not need to look new. He said the things that needed to be repaired would be done. He said the theory behind the damage to the handrails was that in the 1830's or 1840's during the nullification crisis, there was a riot and they were damaged then. He said there were photographs from the late 1800's that show the damage just as it looks now. He said nothing had really been damaged since then.

Burroughs said Johnson had been very careful to get materials that matched the original. He said a professor at Coastal who had a florescence machine that read the particles in any material and would tell what the make-up of the object was. He said they used it on the steps. He said it was pretty much traced back to Maryland Red Seneca. He said they would be trying to duplicate it for the steps. He said they would do the same thing with the wrought iron.

Burroughs said he had samples of the material for the steps. He said the company made the substances to rebuild steps for historical properties. He said it was like sculpturing the step back. He said a color needed to be selected. He said his opinion was sample number 15 was the closest match. He said numbers 13 and 14 were also close. He said he would like the Board to agree to let them use whatever color they thought was the perfect one. Clonts asked who was going to decide what sample was the best. Burroughs said he and Johnson would make that decision. He said if the Board wanted to go outdoors and look at the samples against the steps, he was fine with that. Henderson said he thought that would be the best approach. Henderson said maintenance did not require CAB approval, but there was the one section of the narrative which required the comparison of several different shades of the cement fill for the steps. Burroughs said he was concerned about how the samples would look in today's light rather than another day.

At this point, the recorder was stopped and the Board went outdoors to look at the samples against the steps. Burroughs put the three tiles on the steps. He said the materials would be blended in to the existing steps. Clonts asked if the steps would be cleaned first. Burroughs said nothing had been mentioned about cleaning the steps before putting on the new materials.

Several Board members were concerned that the steps would look like they had been patched. The Board mentioned the paint that was on the top several stairs on the right-hand side of the building. Burroughs said the paint would have to come off. He was asked if it would be sandblasted off. He said they would not sandblast, but there might be some type of chemical process that could be used.

The Board re-entered the building and the recorder was turned on again. Harper asked if the restoration was for safety or for the potential of winning the award. Burroughs said the award would be a bonus. He said the main thing was to restore the steps and handrails as well as for safety reasons. He said this project was for pure correct preservation so the building would last another 200 years and be safe. He said they did not want to compromise the integrity of a historical building though.

Clonts said something was clearly going to have to be done to all the steps to bring them into some type of uniformity so they all looked similar when they were finished. Clonts said he didn't know what they would be. Burroughs said Johnson could answer that but he could not be at the meeting today. Burroughs said again it would not be sandblasting, but perhaps hosing them down. He said that might lighten them up and even them out. Henderson said the mildew needed to be killed. Burroughs said using a hose with rid the steps of the mildew and the dirt. He said they almost couldn't select a color until the steps were cleaned.

Burroughs asked if the Board could narrow the selection down to one of the two colors and neither either come back or let Johnson decide. Burroughs said he was worried about scheduling. He asked Henderson how often the Board met. Henderson replied twice a month. Burroughs said that would work.

Harper asked if this was an epoxy material that would be poured in. Burroughs said it was poured in, but it was not a traditional mold, but more of a sculpturing. Harper asked why they wouldn't do all the steps that way. Burroughs said they did not want to get rid of all the character and make it look all new. Burroughs said there was a certain amount of character that should be retained. Burroughs said once it was done the weather and time would blend it anyway.

Burroughs said on page 10 and 11 of the proposal, Johnson talked about the restoration of the stone steps. He said he contacted Conproco Corporation, who manufactured two modified cement products that were engineered for stone restoration. He said he would be using the Mimic product. The proposal went on to say that the products had been successfully used to restore architectural appointments and on Nationally Registered properties throughout America. Burroughs went on to read that

Johnson would like the Board to view the samples in both sun and shade. Burroughs said the problem was one of the samples looked closer in the sun and the other one looked closer in the shade. Burroughs said they could take a sample of the step material and have a custom match made. Burroughs said he thought one if the samples he had shown the Board was about as close as they could get. He went on to read that the stone restoration would require very specialized forms that would include an inlay design form. Hand tooling of all exposed edged would be required.

Burroughs repeated that the material would not be put all over the steps. He said the parts that were not eroding away would not be touched. He said that was why it had to be a close match. Burroughs said if the Board needed to talk to Johnson, he could come at another meeting.

Miller said he did not think that was necessary. He said he thought the biggest thing would be cleaning the steps because right now they were trying to color match dirt. He said in his opinion, he would leave them alone, but if it was the desire of the city to repair them then clean them and if the cleaning did not match either of the two samples, then to have a custom match done. He said all the Board members would have a different opinion between shade and light and what the samples looked like. He thought the color choice should be left to the professionals. He said again that the steps needed to be cleaned before they did anything else. He said the professional could choose a color that made the repair work look less like a patch job.

Wall asked exactly what the Board was charged with approving. Henderson said the original idea was for the Board to select a color from the samples. He said he thought the Board would just approve the project under the condition that there be a custom matching done by this company. He said he thought the project would be approved as presented. Wall asked if they could add the condition of the proper preparation of the steps as far as the cleaning. Henderson said they could add that condition.

Burroughs said they would clean it and match it and then it would all get dirty together. Miller said that would allow the blend to go away. Henderson said the consultant would know the appropriate way to clean it. Burroughs said Johnson would know the proper way to clean the steps.

Burroughs repeated what he heard the Board say, which was to do whatever needed to be done to clean the steps and then let Conproco Corporation custom match what was left. Henderson said it would not need to come back to the Board under those circumstances.

Wall asked again about the paint on the steps. Burroughs said he did not have an answer. He said he felt Johnson would take the paint off without damaging the stone. Burroughs said leaving that paint was just another color that didn't belong. He said he knew Johnson had talked about removing the cement patches. He said he couldn't imagine that Johnson was not going to remove the paint.

Harper asked what the budget for this project was. Burroughs said the price Johnson quoted and the city accepted was $5,200. Burroughs said Johnson was donating a lot of his time. Henderson said it was almost pro bono. Burroughs said Johnson was being done as a thing of love for the City of Conway. Harper said that was wonderful.

Miller made a motion, seconded by Wall, to approve the project as submitted with the following conditions:

1) The existing steps be cleaned in a manner that gives the assurance they will not be damaged, and as much dirt and algae be removed as possible to get down to the original color;
2) The color will be color matched through the factory; and
3) The Board will give permission to the applicants and the installer to use their best opinion as to what color would be best suitable for the patchwork on the stone steps.

The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

Burroughs said he had sat on the CAB previously, and he thanked the Board members for their service.

D. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Historic Identification Signs and Markers for Local or Regional Tourism Initiatives. Staff requests review of information related to historic identification signs and signs reflecting local or regional tourism initiatives, allowed in Section C.6.4 *Traditional Commercial Sign Guidelines.*

Henderson said this was an item for information. He said on February 13, 2013, the Board looked at an agenda item for Local or Regional Tourism Initiatives. He passed around photographs of what they had looked it then. He said they had been approached by a local business to put up this type of signage. He said this particular signage was a designation from South Carolina Heritage Region, a regional tourist organization. He said they were interested in local businesses or sites that encouraged tourism to the area.

Henderson said the Design Guidelines specifically allowed this type of signage in the historic district, but it did not give any guidance on the size that should be allowed. He said the CAB, would on a case-by-case basis, determine whether or not they would approve these types of signs.

Henderson said the Conway Glass plaque had a lot of text and photographs of them doing their craft work. He said it was brought up at that time that the Board

wanted a little more information on what other municipalities permitted. He said he had contacted the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor organization to see what types of identification signs they allowed. He said they allowed three different types. He said the one that Conway Glass had was the largest of the three at 22" x 37.5" and was called an interpretive sign. The next sign was 10"x 16" and was just text. The third was a 12"x18" pole sign. Henderson said he thought the 10"x16" sign with just text was probably the most appropriate.

Henderson said he had not checked with the organization prior to the February meeting, and the Board did not have the information on the different sizes available. He said they had all the information now.

Henderson said the Board had asked how many organizations there were that had plaques. He said the South Carolina Garden Club had a sign by the courthouse. He said Main Street USA, South Carolina Heritage Corridor, and National Register of Historic Places all put up signage. He said it was up to the Board to decide what could be applied to the historic district. He said Staff's contacted some smaller town and asked them how they viewed the signs. He said the smaller towns welcomed this type of signage that would bring people into their historic districts. He said those towns were Bennettsville, Cheraw, and Georgetown. He said Charleston said they did not permit this type of signage. He said they only allowed historic signage that recognized the site or the building.

Henderson said based on the information he gathered, Staff's recommendation would be to continue allowing regional tourism organizations to draw attention to downtown Conway; however, make sure it was an appropriate size and that it had an appropriate amount of text. He said staff felt the Conway Glass sign probably had too much text and too many pictures. He said perhaps the name of the organization and the name of the business would be enough.

Henderson said Staff would not recommend putting this type signage on National Register Historic Places structures, either individually or in the district.

Harper asked who was responsible for the maintenance of the signage. Henderson said the property owner would be responsible for the maintenance of the signage. Harper asked who determined if a sign had to be replaced or if it no longer met the standards. Henderson said the zoning ordinance had a section that required abandoned, dilapidated, disfigured or faded signs to be removed.

Clonts asked if the signage could be moved if the business moved. Henderson said they would have to take appropriate steps to have it moved to another location in the historic district.

Clonts asked if they had to rescind their decision about the Conway Glass sign. Henderson said they'd already approved it. Miller said they approved it because they didn't have all the information at the time. Henderson said they could rescind their

decision, but he'd never heard of a Board doing that. He said if they did and were challenged, they would point to the design guidelines section that permitted regional tourism initiatives. He said there was not a size criteria to follow.

Wall asked if Henderson was saying that going forward in the historic district recognition would be on a plaque rather than on a poster. She said that was would she would like to see. Henderson said the guidelines stood as they were, but where this particular organization offered three sizes, a plaque would be more appropriate.

Henderson said Staff asked the applicant if the size they presented for approval was the only size available. The applicant said this was the only size. Henderson said he did not verify that information at the time. Harper said the applicants might not have known there were other sizes. He said maybe the larger size was all that was shown to them. Henderson said that was possible.

Wall asked if the Board was proposing some type of amendment to the design standards. Henderson said this was just for information. He said they were taking this new information and could make a motion if they wanted to.

Miller made a motion, seconded by Wall, that Staff revisit the design guidelines in terms of plaques and other types of signage for Heritage Corridor related issues to amend the design guidelines to give the Board something to base their decisions on, and to be able to enforce their decisions. The vote in favor was unanimous.

F. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

G. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Signed and approved this 22ND day of May , 2013

George Ulrich, Chairman