

Plymouth & Whitemarsh Townships
Historical Architectural Review Board
Meeting Minutes – May 11, 2022

The following HARB members were present: Dave Conroy, Plymouth Township Zoning Officer, Karen Coyne, John Von Essen, Tom Higgins, Ken Parsons, Jerry Rafter, Robert Sztubinski, Whitemarsh Township Director of Building & Codes. Also in attendance: Kathy Bandish, Plymouth Township Council Liaison, and Charlie Guttenplan, Whitemarsh Township Director of Planning and Zoning.

1. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 8:32 AM by Mr. Rafter.
2. ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE: None.
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April 9, 2022 – approved.
4. OLD BUSINESS: None.
5. NEW BUSINESS:

27 East Germantown Pike – Restoration and Addition

- Represented by Meghan McAllen. Owner Tom Robins called in via phone.

Mr. Rafter noted that the applicants presented an informal overview of the plans at a HARB meeting a few months ago. Mr. Robins gave an overview of the project; a renovation and restoration of an existing 1790 building and an addition of 892 square feet in the rear to be used as office space. Mr. Guttenplan explained the stage of review of the project. It has been approved as a land development and this presentation is following a building permit application. Mr. Guttenplan showed material samples to the Board. Mr. Robins noted that Sherwin Williams historical paint colors would be used and that features including windows and doors will be historically consistent. Windows will have external wood grills. The existing building will remain stucco and the rear addition will have fiber cement shingles. The existing building has a metal roof, the rear addition will have a shingle roof.

Mr. Sztubinski asked about the railings on the deck above the entrance to the rear addition. The plans indicate the use of white PVC railing. Mr. Sztubinski asked the applicant to consider alternatives to PVC railing. Mr. Robins stated that the intent is to have railing fit in with siding and window framing.

Sydelle Zove (Harts Ridge Road, WT), asked about whether the stucco on the existing building will be patched or painted. It will. Ms. Zove also asked about whether the metal roof will be painted. Mr. Robins noted that it will be replaced.

Mr. Parsons asked about gutters and downspouts. Mr. Robins stated that they are rebuilding yankee gutters. Mr. Parsons noted that half circle gutter would be the most historically accurate and K-gutters, as shown on rear addition are not appropriate. Mr. Robins stated that he would look into it, and change should be possible.

Mr. Parsons inquired about the roof overhang. Mr. Robins stated that it will match existing roof. A motion to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve a Certificate of Appropriateness was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 7-0.

5/15 East Germantown Pike – Presentation on History of Properties

- Presented by Sydelle Zove (Harts Ridge Road, WT),

The presentation provided a detailed architectural history of the two properties using material primarily from the Plymouth Meeting Historical Society. 5 E Germantown Pike has historically been a residence and general store, and later a post office. There were various architectural changes to 5 E Germantown over time. A feed shed and stable, and later a telephone exchange building were located in the space between 5 and 15 E Germantown. 15 E Germantown was originally a double home, later converted to a single-family dwelling. The recently demolished brick addition was constructed in 1908 and used as a barber shop. Originally there were two small porches on the façade, as opposed to the more recent single porch. Additional details can be found in Ms. Sydelle's PowerPoint presentation located in the Township files.

15 East Germantown Pike – Informal Presentation on Proposed Changes.

- Presented by John McDonald of KSM Architects (site architect)

Mr. Rafter introduced the project which includes the restoration of the original structure and an addition in the rear. The buildings will be used for office space. Mr. Guttenplan noted that the Planning Commission referred the project to HARB after considering the land development application. The applicants recently presented to HARB regarding the demolition. They have received zoning relief for this project.

Mr. McDonald presented samples of siding, stucco, paint, and a shutter. He stated that the intent of the project is to return the building to what it was historically. Mr. McDonald described historic 1830 era paint colors, window style, and architectural features including functional shutters, S-hooks, and hardware. He noted the roof along the façade will be replaced and federalist church style doors will be used. Posts will be federal style. Asphalt shingles will be used for the roof.

There was clarification by Mr. McDonald that the renderings are to scale. There was a comment by Mr. Sztubinski about the flat roof on the breeze way and potential for maintenance issues as well as an aesthetic consideration. The Board agreed that a modification should be considered. Mr. Parsons commented on the etching in the stucco, a historic practice that is meant to give the impression of stonework. The Board decided to recommend the removal of the etching. There was discussion about the heights of the roofs.

It was determined that the applicants should return after modifying plans. The following aspects are to be modified:

- Ensuring that the windowpanes are the appropriate style. There was consideration about whether 6 over 9 or 6 over 6 windows were most appropriate.
- There was a request for greater detail on the renderings of window casing.

- There was a request to modify the roof style over the breezeway to a gable roof rather than a flat roof. There was also a request to increase the height of the roofline on the breezeway to match that of the original building.
- There was a request to eliminate the etching on the stucco.
- There was a request to look into continuity of roof pitches.
- There was a request to consider a hip style porch roof rather than a shed style roof.

As a public comment, Ms. Zove expressed her interest in a hip roof over the porch and advocated for half round gutters. It was clarified that half round gutters are included in the plan. More generally, Ms. Zove expressed concern with the scale of the rear addition, stating that she believes it is too large and overpowers the original structure. There was discussion of the building scale by the Board.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY): None.
7. HARB MEMBER COMMENTS: None.
8. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:12 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles L. Guttenplan
Director of Planning & Zoning/Zoning Officer
Whitemarsh Township