
**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN
DESIGN REVIEW & PRESERVATION BOARD**

MINUTES

10-Jul-02

Present

J. BIANCO, CHAIRMAN
P. EVANS
J. FORTUNA
N. GOFF
N. STAMLER

Absent

D. BROWN
B. PLUMLEY
M. BRADY
B. KRONENBERGER

Also Present

M. JOHNSON
K. LAUGHLIN
A. RUBACHA
A. MINKUS
J. LAPOSTA
P. RAIDER

The meeting commenced at 5:30 PM.

Minutes from the regular June meeting were not approved and must be reviewed for approval with these minutes (July) at the August meeting.

First, K. Laughlin presented a sign proposal for Napa Auto Parts on Newfield Street. J. Bianco inquired about illumination. K. Laughlin responded that they were individual channel letters. K. Laughlin inquired into measurement of sign area. J. Bianco suggested that if they revised the design to de-illuminate the band, it would be considered architectural feature instead of signage, and the basic design would be approved.

Next, M. Johnson presented the Board with two alternate color proofs of the guidelines: blue and purple. The voting for blue was J. Bianco, P. Evans, J. Fortuna, and N. Goff. Voting for purple was N. Stamler.

Next, A. Rubacha of Wesleyan University presented the background for the new film center project and introduced architects from Jeter, Cook, & Jepson (JCJ). Early discussion revolved around reuse of 307 Washington Terrace. J. Laposta said the classrooms required high ceilings and, also, that film study -- much like architecture study -- required spaces that allowed for the smooth, close integration of students, faculty, and programs. Use of 307 would necessarily atomize portions of the program by separating them from the main spaces. J. Bianco inquired why the main building couldn't simply make up the space by expanding southwards. J. Laposta responded that such a strategy had been studied but encroached upon steeper grades, a valued garden hillside, and vehicular access. The discussion then turned to the material proposed for a portion of the new building: brick. The board wondered what the context was for a choice of brick, versus limestone and brownstone. JCJ architects noted certain buildings on Wesleyan's campus that used brick, but the board felt these were exceptions to a predominating brownstone theme through the campus, and limestone at the CFA. Had brownstone been considered? A. Rubacha said that the client wished the center to stand out from the rest of the CFA and Wesleyan. The Board questioned the wisdom of doing this to such a degree. The rooflines and scaling of two proposed classrooms that would occupy 307's space did not appeal to the Board on the grounds that they seemed "like Monopoly houses." J. Bianco encouraged JCJ to join the two cornices somehow and/or utilize a hip feature. P. Evans said she has always valued the residential tone of this section of Washington Street and was sorry to see it go. N. Goff agreed and said she used to visit a childhood friend who lived in one of the houses. N. Stamler also said she was sorry to see the neighborhood context go.

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P. Evans made a motion that the twin classroom building be further studied for alternative designs. J. Fortuna seconded. J. Bianco added that JCJ should try to pick another material more in keeping with the campus context, with brick being the material of last resort. JCJ inquired could they utilize a different color or style of brick on the theatre's rear facade? J. Bianco responded perhaps if it were also a smooth surface. A vote was taken on the motion with all voting in favor and N. Goff abstaining.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Munro W. Johnson

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