

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE MAYWOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES COMMITTEE

MEETING #1

**Wednesday, November 15, 2017
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Lobby Rooms Cherry and Dogwood**

MAYWOOD MEMBERS: Dean Arkema
Bart Collart
Amanda Davis, MCA President
Heidi Fitzharris
Ken Friedli
Sean Handerhan
Heather Hanson
Kris McMenamin
Andy McLeod
Rae Mueller
Carol Rickard-Brideau
Bruce Wiljanen

MEMBERS ABSENT: Alex Berger
Lorne Epstein
Chris Friedli
Maria Greene
Elenor Harvey
Kris McLaughlin

HALRB MEMBERS: Joan Lawrence, Chairman
Tova Solo
Andrew Wenchel
Richard Woodruff, Vice Chairman

STAFF: Cynthia Liccese-Torres, Historic Preservation Coordinator
Rebeccah Ballo, Historic Preservation Planner
John Liebertz, Historic Preservation Planner
Kyle Fisher, Historic Preservation Management Intern

INTRODUCTIONS AND PURPOSE

Ms. Lawrence, Chairman of the Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB), asked members to introduce themselves, state where they lived in Maywood, and how long they have resided in the neighborhood.

Ms. Liccese-Torres introduced the purpose of the Maywood Design Guidelines Committee (MGC) and said that the Historic Preservation Program (HPP) staff is looking forward to collaborating with the rest of the Committee. The process should be accomplished in three or four meetings. Members should pencil in April 18, 2018, as a 4th meeting in case it is needed. Meetings are scheduled every other month, which will allow time in between meetings for staff to review suggestions and for members to consider the proposed revisions staff produces. The main objective of this process will be to discuss the *Maywood Design Guidelines* (MDG) to see what items can be transferred from HALRB review to Historic Preservation staff review. The Committee also will examine the existing CoA application form to see if changes are needed.

Meetings will be recorded so as to assist staff in the preparation of meeting minutes. There is also a project website that will be the repository for all of the materials related to the Committee (meeting agendas, minutes, presentations, drafts to review, etc.).

[6:06 PM: Andy McLeod arrived].

At the conclusion of the Committee meetings, the recommended changes will be presented to the full HALRB. If the HALRB supports the proposed recommendations of the Committee, staff then will prepare a report to the County Board. The County Board will need to take action on the proposed changes before they would go into effect. Staff anticipates bringing the revisions to the County Board in summer 2018.

REVIEW OF STATE CODE, COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN ARLINGTON

Ms. Ballo provided an overview of the legal and policy framework that allows for historic preservation within both the Commonwealth of Virginia and Arlington County. She also gave general background information about historic preservation in Maywood. Maywood was established as a Local Historic District in 1990 through an historic preservation zoning overlay created by the County Board.

Federal law allows for states and localities to undertake historic preservation activities via the tenth amendment. Essentially, states have the power to do what the federal government does not do (Virginia has the right to enact an historic preservation ordinance, and allows localities to administer this portion of the State Code).

[6:12 PM: Rae Mueller entered].

Virginia is a “Dillon Rule” state, which means that local governments are only permitted to do what the state constitution expressly allows them to do. The “police power” is the most relevant to historic preservation, which allows for zoning ordinances, of which historic preservation ordinances are a part. Under the Virginia State Code, localities can create ordinances that establish review boards (e.g., the HALRB) and historic preservation districts that govern changes to architecture and employ a permitting system. The MDG are the standards by which such permits in Maywood are reviewed. The County Board possesses the sole power to establish these standards and gives the HALRB the authority to enforce them.

The first MDG were written and adopted by the County Board in consultation with the HALRB and the neighborhood upon creation of the local historic district. The MDG were updated and amended in 2005 by the HALRB in consultation again with Maywood. The historic preservation portions of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance (ACZO) were amended in 2010; at that time, the County Board also officially adopted the MDG and the other local historic district design guidelines. Further in 2010, the County Board determined that it would be the sole authority to establish local historic district design guidelines.

Ms. Liccese-Torres asked if the members had any questions so far.

Ms. Rickard-Brideau asked how the County Board’s authority to establish local historic district design guidelines affects the Administrative CoA (ACOA) process.

Ms. Ballo replied that staff can administratively approve only certain kinds of permits based on the existing design guidelines, but only the County Board can amend the design guidelines. The authority to review and approve permits must be specifically designated to either the HALRB or County staff by the County Board.

[6:25 PM: Dean Arkema arrived].

REVIEW OF MAYWOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES

Mr. Liebertz introduced the existing MDG. The first MDG were established in July 1990 when the local district was created. In 2005, the MDG were updated by staff in a collaborative process with the neighborhood. These were amended again in 2011 to allow for the addition of new materials such as cellular polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and cementitious fiberboard siding/trim in select locations.

Historic preservation staff has the authority to regulate only those items described in the MDG.

Staff recommended the Committee examine any items listed under "Site Elements" for consideration as ACOAs. Mr. Liebertz asked which item the Committee wanted to discuss first.

Ms. Davis suggested retaining walls.

IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ACOAs

Mr. Liebertz asked the Committee to consider the possible locations, materials, and dimensions of retaining walls. Staff then would take the Committee's recommendations, edit the existing MDG, and bring suggested revisions back to the Committee to consider at the next meeting.

Ms. Davis asked if staff expected the Committee to meet outside the staff-led meetings.

Mr. Liebertz replied they did not.

Ms. Davis suggested that only the ACoA process should apply to retaining walls on corner properties.

Ms. Fitzharris agreed.

Ms. Davis suggested the normal palette of retaining wall materials (e.g. field stone and brick) should be considered for the ACoA process.

Ms. Ballo asked if there were any specific retaining wall materials the Committee wanted to include in the ACoA process.

Ms. Fitzharris suggested pressure-treated railroad ties in the front of the house should go through the regular CoA process, but in other locations (sides and back) could be ACOAs. If railroad ties in the rear of the house would face the street, they should require a CoA.

Mr. Collart asked why railroad ties were problematic.

Ms. Fitzharris specified that "pressure-treated timbers" were what the Committee was actually referring to, not actual railroad ties.

Ms. Rickard-Brideau said that they tend to rot.

Ms. Davis said that they also harm plants.

Ms. Hanson asked staff to confirm that if someone wanted to do something that was not specifically allowed through the ACoA process, they could still go through the CoA process.

Staff confirmed yes.

Ms. Hanson added that the Committee should thus focus on deciding what materials are acceptable for ACOAs.

Staff agreed.

Ms. Fitzharris said that the “front” of the house should be defined as the face of the house forward.

Ms. Solo asked Ms. Fitzharris to clarify what elevations of the house should be considered for ACoAs for pressure-treated timber retaining walls.

Ms. Fitzharris replied that all elevations were being considered; only those elevations that did not face the street could go through the ACoA process.

Ms. Ballo clarified that corner lots that had at least two elevations facing the street would go through the CoA process instead.

Mr. Handerhan suggested the Committee move to discussing other kinds of materials.

Ms. McMenamain asked the Committee if it found concrete, brick, masonry, and stone as acceptable materials.

Ms. Davis asked if poured concrete should be allowed.

Mr. Liebertz said that poured concrete has been approved in Maywood by the HALRB in the past.

Mr. Handerhan asked if staff could provide input on what materials are historically appropriate.

Mr. Collart said that the Committee should focus on whether certain materials are historically appropriate, not only those that seem aesthetically pleasing to current residents.

Ms. Ballo said staff would review how concrete and wood materials have typically been considered in Maywood and provide information for the Committee to discuss these materials further next time.

Ms. Solo asked the Committee if automatic ACoAs for retaining walls under one foot tall could be allowed.

Ms. Davis agreed, citing the example of small garden beds.

Mr. Liebertz commented that tiered retaining walls under one-foot in height have caused complaints before in Maywood.

Mr. Liebertz asked the Committee if it was okay to move on to another site element. The Committee agreed.

Mr. Liebertz read the current MDG regarding driveways. He asked the Committee to consider discussion on driveways, sidewalks, patios, and their materials; and to keep in mind that the zoning regulations for curbcuts..

Mr. Collart asked the Committee to consider elaborating on different standards for driveways, sidewalks, and patios.

Ms. Fitzharris said that driveways, sidewalks, and patios of a certain size and location with specified materials could all fall under the ACoA process

Ms. Davis agreed.

Ms. Rickard-Brideau inquired if double-wide driveways should go through the ACoA process.

Mr. Liebertz responded that there may be location parameters that could be set for a driveway's proximity to the house.

Mr. Woodruff asked about County zoning regulations for driveways.

Mr. Liebertz explained that there are zoning regulations for where curb cuts could be placed.

Ms. Ballo explained the Committee had different options for placing width or square footage limits for consideration in the ACoA process.

Ms. McMenamain asked the staff to provide more information about these options for future meetings.

Mr. Liebertz agreed staff could do this for the next meeting.

Ms. Ballo asked the Committee for more feedback on sidewalks and patios.

[6:45 PM: Bruce Wiljanen arrived].

Ms. Davis asked what the County zoning laws are for hardscape in a rear yard.

Ms. Ballo replied that the law only relates to impervious surface coverage over the entire lot. Most lots in Maywood are large enough that it is not an issue.

Ms. Fitzharris added that patios do not fall under the lot coverage calculations.

Ms. Rickard-Brideau asked if driveway, sidewalk or patio rules pertained to large caliper trees. She clarified to ask if provisions could be added to allow staff to review impacts to protected trees in Maywood, and also allow staff the authority to reject or suggest hardscape be moved or redesigned to avoid adverse impacts to these trees. Staff said this could be added and would work on language.

Mr. Liebertz responded that staff can work with the County forester to address whether a tree may be harmed by construction of a driveway, sidewalk, or patio.

Mr. Handerhan asked if concrete could be replaced in-kind without going through the HALRB.

Staff responded yes.

Mr. Wiljanen inquired what the rules are for elevated wooden patios.

Ms. Liccese-Torres and Mr. Liebertz recommended tabling this issue until the Committee discusses exterior renovations at a future meeting.

Ms. Fitzharris suggested staff consider putting requests for patios less than a certain size through the ACoA process. She also suggested prohibiting patios in front yards.

Ms. Ballo reviewed the Committee's suggestions thus far:

- Driveways, sidewalks and patios all have parameters whereby they would be considered for the ACoA process.
- Driveways less than 12-feet wide and installation of driveways where there are existing curb cuts can be put through the ACoA process.
- Staff will make recommendations on placement and materials.
- Sidewalks can be made of brick, stone, or concrete.
- Patios could be subject to a square foot limit or a lot coverage ratio limit.
- ACoAs should only be administered for patio placement in side and rear yards.
- Staff will develop preliminary guidelines for large caliper trees that can go through the ACoA process.

Ms. Liccese-Torres asked if the Committee wanted to add gravel as an acceptable material for walkways.

The Committee agreed.

Mr. Liebertz next addressed the topic of parking areas. He read the current MDG statement: "Ordinary maintenance to existing driveways does not require a CoA. Driveways may be added to existing properties or to lots with new construction. This action requires a CoA. The use of front yards for storing vehicles detracts from the appearance and character of the neighborhood and is discouraged." Mr. Liebertz recommended merging driveways and parking areas into a single ACoA category. He asked the Committee for their thoughts.

Ms. McMenammin mentioned the fact that several houses in Maywood do not have a driveway. Does this mean they have to go through the CoA process?

Ms. Fitzharris said she interpreted the rule as referring to parking vehicles in front yards.

Ms. Liccese-Torres asked if there were any more closing thoughts. She reminded the Committee that staff will be working on parameters for all of this site elements discussed in time for the next meeting in January. The first half of the next meeting could be used to address the details of the items discussed tonight, while the second part of the meeting could be a discussion of the next set of items the Committee wants to address.

Ms. Rickard-Brideau asked if staff could define "permanent" as it relates to a structure for future discussion about garages.

Ms. Liccese-Torres said that the staff's proposals for revisions will be ready for the Committee to review one week prior to the next Committee meeting on January 17, 2018. Please be prepared to give feedback to staff at the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Lawrence asked those who entered the meeting late to introduce themselves. She also asked each member to provide a "closing thought" about the process of revising the MDG. Mr. Wiljanen, Mr. Arkema, Mr. McLeod, and Ms. Mueller introduced themselves.

Mr. Wiljanen said that the process was very timely.

Mr. Arkema said that this first meeting was a good beginning.

Mr. McLeod said he was pleased to be part of the process. He has experience working with historic preservation. It is good that this Committee exists to streamline the review process.

Ms. Mueller introduced herself. She is pleased to be part of the Committee and offer her input to improve Maywood.

Mr. Woodruff stated that there is a lot of neighborhood support for the Maywood Historic District. There should also be support for this process as well. Anything we can do to improve the process will be beneficial to the community.

Ms. Rickard-Brideau asked the staff and HALRB members to provide them with things they can work on ahead of the next meeting, as well as expectations for how detailed the discussion should go.

Ms. McMenammin asked the staff for more recommendations so the Committee could be prepared to discuss effectively.

Mr. Handerhan said he appreciated the personal interaction on these questions.

Ms. Solo brought attention to the efforts of Ms. Davis in helping to organize the Committee and the staff for all of their continued efforts.

Ms. Hanson said she was pleased to see the community and the County working together to assist preservation.

Mr. Friedli said he was pleased to be part of the process to help clarify some aspects of the MDG.

Ms. Davis thanked the staff and HALRB for their work. She hoped to see the community better informed about the MDG and more outreach done to prospective Maywood residents.

Mr. Collart said that he has worked with many style guidelines as part of his work. He was pleased to move into an historic district and be a part of this process.

Ms. Fitzharris said she has had over thirty of her architecture projects shepherded through the CoA process. There are many things that can be simplified in the MDG. Many people in Maywood are frustrated about the process. Revising the MDG will be challenging, but is necessary.

Mr. Wenchel said he appreciated how well preserved Maywood is. He added that considering the scale of features like sidewalks and driveways is very important for the revision process.

Ms. Lawrence thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 PM.