

*noted attachments will be added after approval of the draft by the ARB



Minutes
Architectural Review Board
February 9, 2026
Council Chambers

You may view and listen to the Architectural Review Board meeting in its entirety at <https://www.regionalwebtv.com/fredericksburgarb>. The time of each presentation is in brackets below [00:00:00].

Members Present

Kelly Penick (Chair)
Helen P. Ross (Vice Chair)
Miller Blackburn
James Jarrell IV
Andi Smith
Nick Burger

Members Absent

Staff

Kate Schwartz
Kynzie Johnson

Chair Penick called the Architectural Review Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

OPENING REMARKS

Chair Penick determined that a quorum of six members was present and asked if public notice requirements had been met. Ms. Schwartz stated that they had.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA [00:02:01]

The agenda was approved with an amendment, deferring COA 2512-0164 to the March 9, 2026 meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & REPORTS

None.

DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

None.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

CONSENT AGENDA [00:05:37]

- A. COA 2601-0166 – 102 Hanover Street – Flood Barrier Installation
- B. COA 2601-0170 – 214 Charles Street – Fence Installation
- C. COA 2601-0171 – 110 Hanover Street – Sign Installation

Danae Peckler, speaking on behalf of Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc., requested that COA 2601-0171 be moved to item A on the public hearing. Dr. Smith motioned to approve the consent agenda as amended, and Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC HEARING [00:07:44]

- A. COA 2601-0166 – 102 Hanover Street – Charity Owens proposes to install flood barriers at this commercial building.

Ms. Schwartz provided a summary of the application. Charity Owens, the property manager, was present to answer questions.

Ms. Peckler, HFFI, questioned the requirement for flood barrier installation and its application to other buildings in the historic district (see attachment).

Mr. Blackburn asked for clarification on which entrances would be affected. Dr. Smith asked if flood barriers would be installed at the garage entrance or only entrances to livable space. Ms. Schwartz responded that flood barriers would be installed at all ground floor openings to the commercial space. Ms. Schwartz also explained the threshold for substantial improvements that require compliance with flood-proofing standards.

Mr. Blackburn motioned to approve the application on the condition that the barriers reach at least five feet in height. Vice Chair Ross seconded, and the motion passed 6-0.

B. COA 2512-0165 – 1318 Caroline Street – Michael Waite proposes to install solar panels on the roof of this single-family residence.

Ms. Johnson provided a summary of the application. The applicant and contractor were present virtually.

The Board supported the application and agreed with staff recommendations to set the panels six inches back from the eaves.

Chair Penick raised the question of potential ice damming due to solar panels raised by the recent ice storm and the Board's potential purview over this issue. Ms. Schwartz replied that she would look further into this issue.

Vice Chair Ross motioned to approve the application on the condition that all panels are set back at least six inches from the eaves. Dr. Smith seconded the motion, and it passed 6-0.

C. COA 2601-0168 – 1101 Caroline Street – John Albittar proposes to repave the entry stairs and replace railings at this commercial building.

Ms. Schwartz provided a summary of the application. The applicant, John Albittar, spoke on the desire to improve the building's safety and commented that the new railings would be aluminum rather than composite.

Ms. Peckler, HFFI, expressed appreciation for the ongoing rehabilitation of this building and provided additional historic background for this property. She commented on the lack of visible deterioration of the steps and suggested limiting the pavers to grassy areas (see attachment).

Mr. Blackburn asked if an evaluation of the existing railings had been conducted to determine their condition and if they can be retained. Mr. Albittar responded that the railings would likely be damaged during the stair alterations, but he would be open to preserving the railings if feasible.

Mr. Blackburn questioned the connection of the front and side entrances and if they serve different interior spaces. Mr. Albittar confirmed that the entrances each serve different, disconnected interior spaces.

Dr. Smith commented on the need to shovel snow at this business, as it currently poses a safety threat.

Vice Chair Ross questioned setting pavers on top of the concrete steps and how this would affect the size of the steps. Mr. Albittar replied that several inches of the concrete steps will be chiseled off so that the pavers can be installed at the same level as the current steps. Vice Chair Ross suggested using a more textured paving material.

Mr. Jarrell questioned if the pavers would be applied to all parts of the stairs, including the treads and risers. He raised concerns about how the material would be attached to the risers and if this is an appropriate use of this material. Mr. Albittar confirmed that all of the stair elements would be covered in this veneer.

Mr. Jarrell also questioned the semicircular hardscaping proposed in front of the building. The applicant replied that it is hardscaping with a retaining wall to protect an existing tree.

Board members agreed that they would like to see more product specifications and details on installation and use of the pavers as veneer. The Board also shared concerns about alterations to the concrete stairs to allow for installation of the pavers.

Mr. Jarrell motioned to continue the application to the next meeting to allow the applicant time to provide additional details to the Board. Mr. Blackburn seconded, and the motion passed 6-0.

D. COA 2601-0169 – 1104 Caroline Street – Ronald Snyder proposes to demolish an accessory structure and seeks approval for the site planning, scale, and massing of a new single-family dwelling on this lot. A second public hearing will be required for approval of the detailed architectural design.

Ms. Schwartz provided a summary of the application. The applicant, Ronald Snyder, and designer, J. Brown, were present to answer questions.

Ms. Peckler, HFFI, spoke in support of the infill project but suggested possible details to make the proposed residence more compatible with the surrounding buildings (see attachment).

Mr. Blackburn agreed with staff's recommendations and desire for further information on site planning, scale, and massing.

Dr. Smith spoke in support of the demolition of the garage and suggested the possibility of moving the curb cut to better fit the garage and meet side setback requirements. Mr. Gordon commented that they would like to avoid moving the curb cut if possible due to the location of surrounding parking spots.

Vice Chair Ross spoke in support of the project and agreed with staff findings regarding the demolition of the garage.

Mr. Jarrell asked Ms. Schwartz to explain the zoning requirements for setbacks and the process of determining infill calculations on this block.

Mr. Burger agreed with the suggested alterations to the setbacks to allow for openings on the side elevation of the proposed residence and spoke in support of demolition of the garage. Mr. Gordon asked if the proposed massing and scale seemed compatible. Mr. Burger replied that the Board would like to see more detail, including comparison elevations to the neighboring buildings.

Chair Penick asked if archaeology would be conducted as a part of this project. Ms. Schwartz stated that a residential lot grading plan would be completed, likely leading to a Phase 1 archaeological study with City archaeological consultants.

Chair Penick spoke in support of the suggestion to move the curb cut to allow for a more appropriate site layout and agreed with HFFI's suggestion for additional details as a part of the final design.

Mr. Jarrell motioned to approve the demolition of the existing garage and continue the discussion of the site plan, massing, and scale to the following public meeting. Dr. Smith seconded the motion, and it passed 6-0.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

No written public comment was received. Ms. Peckler commented on the ongoing discussion of neighborhood conservation districts within the City of Fredericksburg.

OTHER BUSINESS [01:14:09]

A. Fire Station 3 Design Review

Todd Flippen, Assistant City Manager, and Mike Jones, Fire Chief, gave an overview of the project. John Osmore and Matthew Leck of DJG, design consultants on the project, provided a summary of the design.

Board members spoke in support of the more modern design and appreciated the reference to the surrounding architecture. Members also voiced their support for the glass display showcasing the historic fire engine. The Board suggested use of red brick and more local materials, but were not opposed to metal paneling.

Chair Penick suggested further consideration of the surrounding residential resources when designing the building's form and massing.

B. Area 8 Character Structures Overview

Ms. Schwartz provided a summary of character structure designations and Ms. Johnson provided an overview of the resources identified for potential character structure designation in Area 8.

Board members provided feedback on additional resources to consider and further information to be presented at the next meeting.

C. City Code Discussion

Mr. Jarrell brought the Board's attention to a section of the City Code which allows the ARB to draft standards of appropriateness for review of City buildings. He suggested that the Board review the Code and discuss the possibility of drafting guidelines to help with review of City-owned buildings in the future.

STAFF UPDATE [01:52:01]

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Penick adjourned the meeting at 8:51 p.m.



Kelly Penick, Chair



9 February 2026

To: Kate S. Schwartz

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cc: Planning@fredericksburgva.gov

The Historic Fredericksburg Foundation has reviewed the upcoming agenda and related COA documents for the February 9, 2026, meeting of the Architectural Review Board and submits the following comments on select projects.

Consent Agenda:

9.A. COA 2601-0166 – 102 Hanover Street – Flood Barrier Installation

HFFI requests the removal of this application from the consent agenda to better understand the proposed work at this 2022 building.

Public Hearing:

10.B.ii. COA 2601-0168 – 1101 Caroline Street

HFFI wants to thank the applicant and stewards of this property for the repairs and needed maintenance in the past year or so. This resource is unique in terms of its form and architectural detailing in town, and we appreciate the care that is being taken to rehabilitate it.

I did a little bit of research on this property and discovered that it first appears on the Sanborn map of 1896 as a double house or duplex, so it was constructed sometime between 1891 and 1896. The City Directory of 1892 suggests that it was completed by that time and occupied by two families: that of Hamilton J. Eckenrode, a local shoe salesman, and John H Meyer, a proprietor of Germana Flour Mills. While the earliest 1896 map shows no porches on the west or south elevations, later iterations reveal repeated changes to the entrances and fenestration of the building. Over time, the property was used as offices, the Wissner School for boys, a boarding house, hotel, dining hall, barber shop, and recently a Ba’hai Faith Temple.

HFFI is not opposed to replacing the grassy garden plots around the foundation and between the existing concrete and concrete block entrance stairs to the building. However, a widespread and irreversible treatment adding contemporary concrete pavers to the stairs negatively impacts these early- to mid-twentieth century features—all of which remain in good condition. I inspected them closely the other day and saw no spalling or uneven surfaces.

Limiting the pavers to the ground surface will also save the applicant a considerable amount of money by reducing material and labor costs.

Again, HFFI thanks the applicant for making meaningful improvements to this historic asset and hope to see more of the historic fabric of this resource retained and repaired wherever possible.

10.B.iii. COA 2601-0169 – 1104 Caroline Street

HFFI appreciates the relative sensitivity of the proposed new infill at 1104 Caroline Street. It is broadly keeping with district guidelines and appears to be reasonably scaled in relation to its surroundings. However, we agree with staff's recommendations for additional information at next month's meeting to visually quantify the proposed design's compatibility in context with neighboring historic assets. Such data is an important and valuable tool to assist the public and ARB in assessing any project's scale and massing. Just some general dimensions for the regulating lines of adjacent properties would be helpful.

While the architectural details require additional review in the future, a few flourishes might enhance its compatibility on a block with several Queen Anne and Folk Victorian dwellings. Perhaps something as simple as Hardie-plank shingles in the front-facing gable of the house or trading the matching double-hung gable window for a more-complex, multi-light arrangement? After all, the purpose of the guidelines is to support contextually sensitive design that responds to its unique context.

Lastly, HFFI would also like to inquire about plans for any archaeology on the property. This lot was historically owned by General Hugh Mercer and many believe it to have been the original location of his apothecary.

Again, our thanks to the project applicants for the care exhibited in proposed plans, and we look forward to learning more at the March meeting.

General Public Comment:

HFFI would like to inquire about the ARB's involvement in City staff's work to create and establish Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs). As NCDs are a type of historic preservation planning tool, based in the same legal code that supports local historic districts and architectural review boards, does City staff have any plans to coordinate with the ARB before going back to City Council?

It seems that the involvement of this commission would be important at the early stages of this effort, given the experiences and expertise ARB members have and also the duties and purpose of the ARB to the City.