



Memorandum

Planning Board

TO: Mayor Randy Casale and City Council Members

FROM: Etha Grogan
for Planning Board Chairman Gunn and Planning Board Members

RE: City Council Referral to Review Tioronda Bridge Historic Preservation

DATE: February 22, 2019

At its meeting on February 13, 2019, the Planning Board reviewed the City Council's referral regarding the Tioronda Bridge in accordance with its request per the December 17, 2018 City Council Resolution to "advise how Chapter 134 and the requirement to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness applies to the design of a new bridge at this location."

Members reviewed the history of the Tioronda Bridge and whether the standards for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness would apply to the design of a new bridge with City Administrator Anthony Ruggiero, City Planner John Clarke and City Attorney Jennifer Gray. A discussion took place with regard to the provisions of Chapter 134 of the City Code, the existing bridge abutments, location of the bridge relative to the historic nature of buildings on either side of the creek, and whether the new design should come before the Planning Board for review and comment.

After a lengthy discussion, the Planning Board members felt:

1. A new bridge would qualify for review of a Certificate of Appropriateness under Chapter 134 because it is an exterior alteration on property within the Historic District and Landmark Overlay (HDLO) Zone. Although the historic bridge no longer exists, except for portions of the central piers, the new bridge will act as a connector between two historic districts, linking the Beacon Terminal site to the Craig House properties;
2. A new bridge structure should be reviewed by the Planning Board for a Certificate of Appropriateness; and
3. The standards set forth in Chapter 134 for the review of a Certificate of Appropriateness would be applied to the design of the bridge and in particular the criteria set forth at Section 134-7.B(1)(a) through (e) was referenced in its discussion.

Regarding the design of a new bridge, the Planning Board members commented that while the historic components of the bridge are not in a condition to be used for structural support it may be possible to use them for aesthetic design purposes or for an interpretative exhibit. Board

members also commented that since the original design represented an advancement in technology for the time period in which the bridge was constructed and had a unique patent which contributed to its inclusion on the Historic Register, this may be a good opportunity for the design of the new bridge to create something unique that references its history but also incorporates some advancement in technology. While not intended to be proscriptive, concepts that were discussed included the incorporation of brick to speak to the historic character of the HDLO in that area and the use of stone on the central pier and abutments. While the consensus of the Board was to consider the design in the context of the HDLO, consistent with the criteria for reviewing a Certificate of Appropriateness, some members of the Board cautioned against slavish adherence to that standard without consideration to originality of design.

The Planning Board also recommended adding a provision to Section 134-4 to allow the City Council the option to remove a landmark from the City's list of landmarks previously designated by the Council as historic in the event such landmark is destroyed, demolished or no longer exists in an historic condition for one reason or another. By making this recommendation and to the extent the Tioronda Bridge may be located on the City's historic landmark list, the Planning Board is not suggesting that the Tioronda Bridge be removed from such list.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.