



## Memorandum

To: Board of Architectural Review

From: David Levy, Director  
Kelly O'Brien, Acting Deputy Director  
Sharmaine Abaid, Planner (Permits & Design Review)

Meeting Date: August 5, 2022

Re: **CodeCreate Work Session – Church Street Vision**  
**Article 12.1 C-1B – Pedestrian Commercial Zone**

### CodeCreate and Church Street Vision

As the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) knows well, the Town of Vienna is in the process of updating the zoning code, in a process entitled CodeCreate. The process involves, as directed by the Town Council, reviewing all portions of the zoning code and presenting a new structure and, at times, updated content to reflect the Town's values and the Comprehensive Plan.

A very important portion of the zoning code is the Church Street Overlay, which defines specific design and architectural standards for construction along Church Street, with the goal of the Church Street Vision Plan being "To reestablish the Church Street commercial corridor as a Town center, unique with architecture, public space and well-defined pedestrian routes; to encourage a viable commercial mix while preserving Vienna's small-town character."

The Architectural Vision Statement in the plan is "To create a main street urban architecture that is reminiscent of the small-town American streetscape of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries."

As part of the approval of the Church Street Overlay in 1999, the BAR, at that time, approved the building and plan design features "in their entirety" before it went to the Town Council for its review and approval. With that approval, the Town Council made the decision that, to facilitate the type of redevelopment that it sought, it would

streamline the development process by having the Town Council review and approve components that are otherwise, in other parts of Vienna, the purview of the BAR. The BAR has therefore not been formally involved in the approval process for Church Street projects since 1999.

Nonetheless, the BAR's role and expertise in Vienna remains in the areas of architecture and design. During the CodeCreate process, therefore, it is staff's strong belief that the BAR should have a role in helping to craft components of the code update, as it relates to architecture and design.

The purpose of the August 5, 2022 work session is to provide an opportunity for the BAR to review the existing Church Street Overlay and consider any recommendations regarding potential updates to the regulations within the district. As of this time, neither staff nor the consultants working on CodeCreate have developed any recommendations for change.

### **Role of the Board of Architectural Review**

As a reminder, the Board of Architectural Review is authorized by Chapter 4 of the Town Code, and the Town Charter, to review exterior modifications within designated design control districts.

The Town code requires any potential amendments to the Church Street Vision code section to be reviewed first by the Board of Architectural Review. After completion of the review the Board can make recommendations to the Town Council prior to a code update presentation to the Town Council.

Staff recommends that the focus of the work session be to first review the existing Church Street Vision code, specifically Sections 18-87.5 through 18-87.6, and then determine if any changes are needed. Any formal recommendations for changes would be added to a future Board of Architectural Review meeting agenda and voted on at that future meeting. The Board would then submit their recommendations to Town Council as part of the code update.

The Town's Web site has a page dedicated to the Church Street Vision which includes a summary of its plans and goals, as well as previously approved Church Street Vision projects.

### **Attachments**

1. Current Code – Article 12.1 C-1B Pedestrian Commercial Zone.

2. Link to Church Street Vision web page: <https://www.viennava.gov/your-government/town-departments-at-your-service/planning-and-zoning/zoning-code-and-map/church-street-vision>