

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 4, 2020
Held Remotely Via Zoom And Telephone Access

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Design Review Board ("DRB") held Wednesday, November 4, 2020. Chairman John Henke called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

1) ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman John Henke; Vice-Chairman Keith Deyer; Board Members Gigi Debbrecht, Natalia Dukas, Michael Willoughby

Absent: Board Member Patricia Lang

Administration: Nicholas Dupuis, City Planner
Brooks Cowan, City Planner
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist

Chairman Henke notified the DRB that he would not discuss Primo's and La Strada in his capacity as a Board member due to conflicting interests. In both cases he spoke only to help explain the proposals being made by the businesses.

Chairman Henke asked all meeting participants to be mindful of not speaking over each other.

11-86-20

2) Approval Of Minutes

Motion by Mr. Deyer
Seconded by Ms. Debbrecht to approve the DRB Minutes of October 21, 2020 as submitted.

Motion carried, 4-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE
Yeas: Deyer, Debbrecht, Dukas, Henke
Nays: None
Abstain: Willoughby

11-87-20

3) Public Hearing

None.

11-88-20

4) Design Review

None.

11-89-20

5) Sign Review

A. 856 N. Old Woodward – The Pearl

CP Dupuis reviewed the proposed sign specifications. He noted that the specifications had been updated since the DRB last discussed the sign at its October 21, 2020 meeting.

Owner John Marusich was present on behalf of the application. Mr. Marusich confirmed he might be interested in creating a sign plan that would dictate how tenant signage is displayed on the building's exterior.

Board members commented that having an approved sign plan allows a building owner to permit signage that adheres to the plan without having to re-appear before the DRB. Additionally, having a sign plan puts the onus on the DRB to approve or dis-approve non-adherent sign proposals from tenants, instead of that pressure being on the building owner.

Chairman Henke thanked Mr. Marusich for making The Pearl's signage compliant with the ordinance.

Motion by Mr. Deyer

Seconded by Ms. Dukas to approve the Design Review (Sign) application for 856 N. Old Woodward – The Pearl.

Motion carried, 5-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Deyer, Dukas, Henke, Willoughby, Debbrecht

Nays: None

B. 996 S. Adams – Primo's Pizza

Chairman Henke recused himself from Board discussion of this item.

Vice-Chairman Deyer facilitated discussion of this item. He noted that without Chairman Henke the Board had the bare minimum for a quorum, and asked the applicant if they would like to proceed with their review this evening. Vice-Chairman Deyer specified that if the applicant wanted to delay their review until more Board members were available the applicant could do so without incurring an additional fee.

Ed Phillips of Phillips Sign and Lighting was present on behalf of the application. Mr. Phillips said he would like the review to proceed as planned.

CP Dupuis reviewed the item. He confirmed for Vice-Chairman Deyer that the applicant had reviewed the sight triangle near the sign to ensure that vehicles leaving the parking lot would be able to see oncoming traffic.

In reply to Mr. Willoughby, Mr. Phillips confirmed the bollards would be set a bit forward of the sign as shown in the end view. He also explained that the applicant chose the 40" bollard height because generally it allows vehicles to see them in their rearview mirror.

Motion by Mr. Willoughby

Seconded by Ms. Debbrecht to approve the Design Review (Sign) application for 996 S. Adams – Primo's Pizza – with the following condition: 1. The applicant must remove the existing pole sign; 2. The two aluminum stem and leaf designs are not approved; and, 3. That the bollards are set as shown in the end view and not as in the plan view.

Motion carried, 4-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Willoughby, Debbrecht, Deyer, Dukas

Nays: None

Abstain: Henke

11-91-20

6) Study Session

A. Wall Art

Chairman Henke resumed facilitation of the meeting.

CP Cowan reviewed the item.

Both Chairman Henke and Mr. Deyer expressed a preference for temporary installations of wall art over permanent ones.

Mr. Deyer said a review process for public art in the City should at least include criteria regarding permissible size, political messages, commercial messages, and permitted number of murals in a given location.

Chairman Henke said that murals considered in a historic area should be reviewed by the HDC.

There was consensus on the part of the DRB that they would be amenable to being part of the review process for public art installations in the City.

Mr. Willoughby said the primary function of the DRB in such a review process should be to evaluate how wall art would affect the building on which it would be installed and how it would affect the environmental context around said building. He said that while he thought the DRB could opine on the content of the wall art, he did not imagine that would be their primary charge.

Mr. Willoughby added he would likely be against art on the fronts of buildings, and amenable to wall art installed in alleyways.

CP Cowan said the Public Arts Board may want to pursue installing art on the front of the bridge of the 555 Building, but agreed that the installation of wall art on the fronts of buildings would likely be limited.

Mr. Willoughby said he would like to see a map of alleyways that could offer opportunities for wall art installations.

There was DRB consensus that the rear and side walls of historic buildings in alleyways could be places to install public art. There was also consensus among the DRB, CP Dupuis, and CP Cowan that the process would need to tread very carefully in regards to proposed installations on historic buildings. It was agreed that no wall art should be proposed for historic facades.

The Board members thanked CP Cowan and said they looked forward to further discussions on the topic.

11-92-20

7) Miscellaneous Business And Communications A. Pre-Application Discussions

Chairman Henke stated that the City has no policy against descriptor words in signage, per conversations with both City Attorney Currier and Planning Director Ecker. Chairman Henke reported that City Attorney Currier cautioned the DRB against trying to apply a blanket prohibition on descriptor words, since it could open the City up to lawsuits. Planning Director Ecker has also advised Chairman Henke that questions about descriptor words would only be brought before the DRB if the Planning Department felt they were excessive, inappropriate, or ill-fitting the building on which they would be installed.

Chairman Henke listed the functions of pre-application discussions. They aim to reduce costs for the applicant, avoid excessive review of signage, and to provide an additional opinion on items about which a Planning Department staff member is unsure. He clarified that the purpose of these discussions is to serve in an advisory capacity, and that the intent was not for the DRB to have veto capacity in these discussions. Chairman Henke emphasized that CP Dupuis and other Planning Department members are professionals, and that their opinions on signage should be treated as such. He acknowledged that sometimes members of the DRB may have questions about an approval or disapproval, and that discussion and feedback around those issues would be welcome.

CP Dupuis also stated that he is always learning more about the Board's preferences, and that he integrates that information into his decisions about sign approvals and reviews.

There was consensus among the Board members that when clarifying text is a noun that is part of the business' title, that would be fine to approve administratively without a pre-application discussion. Examples given of such business names were 'Joe's Market' or 'Frank's Shoe Repair'.

Ms. Dukas said she felt most strongly that excessive verbiage or anything that affects a historic structure's exterior should appear before the Board for at least a pre-application discussion, if not a full design review.

Mr. Willoughby said that anything which made CP Dupuis feel uncertain could be reviewed at at least a pre-application level.

1. 395 E. Maple (Sign) – Pazzi

Mr. Willoughby explained that it was appropriate for Mr. Pazzi's signage to state that he deals in contract furniture in order to communicate his business to professionals in the relevant industries.

Mr. Deyer and Ms. Dukas agreed that while they previously felt the proposed signage was too long, in understanding that the specificity was needed they were alright with the proposed signage.

After Board discussion, there was consensus that Mr. Pazzi should be allowed to install his signage as proposed.

2. 920 E. Maple (Sign) – Arcadia Home Care & Staffing

There was consensus that 'An Addison Home Care Company' should be removed from the bottom of the sign.

3. 243 E. Merrill (Sign) – La Strada

There was consensus that the proposed verbiage change was acceptable, but that the centering of the signage above the restaurant needed more work and that one font should be selected for the signage instead of using two different fonts.

B. Draft Agenda - November 18, 2020

1. 855 Forest – Abood Law Firm

C. Staff Reports

1. Administrative Sign Approvals

2. Administrative Approvals

3. Action List - 2020

10-85-20

Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Lang

Seconded by Ms. Dukas to adjourn the DRB meeting of November 4, 2020 at 9:03 p.m.

Motion carried, 4-0.

Design Review Board
Minutes of November 4, 2020

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Lang, Dukas, Debbrecht, Deyer

Nays: None

Nicholas Dupuis
City Planner

APPROVED