

MINUTES
KNOXVILLE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MEETING OF DECEMBER 16, 2009
SMALL ASSEMBLY ROOM

Present:

Kim Henry
David Dewhirst
Anne Wallace
Amy Haynes
John Sanders
Joe Petre
Jeffrey Nash
Carol Montgomery
George Daws
Michele Hummel
Rachel Beasley
Michael Davis
Brandon Pace
Bob Hall
Steve King
Bill Lyons
Bob Whetsel
Hannah Parker
Gene Burr
Mike Reynolds
Mark Donaldson
Charlotte West

Organization:

APA Representative
Dewhirst Properties
City of Knoxville
Resident
AIA Representative
Business Representative
CBID Representative
Historic Zoning Commission
City Engineering
CBID
Hedstrom Design
Sanders Pace Architecture
Sanders Pace Architecture
Southeast Glass Building
City of Knoxville/Engineering
City of Knoxville/Policy/Com.
City of Knoxville/Policy/Com.
City of Knoxville/Policy/Com.
Graduate Planning UT
MPC
MPC
MPC

Kim Henry, Chair, called the meeting to order. There was a quorum present, and they introduced themselves. Board members present are shown in italics.

A motion was made by Joe Petre and seconded by John to approve the November 18 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Certificates of Appropriateness:

Certificate No. 12-A-09-DT

514 W Jackson Ave - West Jackson Workshops (John L. Sanders, AIA)

Pre-development meeting: N/A

Description of Work

This proposal is for the renovation of an existing structure in the Jackson Avenue Warehouse Historic District. This brick building retains all the walls and windows of the original building, but there is not a roof and the garage doors are missing.

The owner plans to clean and repair the brick façade and windows as the guidelines require (see attached elevation for details). The brick will not be painted. A new roof will be installed, which will require new downspouts on right and left sides of the façade. Four new wall-mounted up and down lighting will be placed in the area between the upper and lower windows.

The new storefront will be recessed in the existing opening eight feet from the sidewalk edge to create a covered entry for the tenant suites. The storefront will be made of aluminum. There will be new concrete steps and a ramp to accommodate the slope in the sidewalk.

Staff Comments

Section 1.C (Historic Resources) of the guidelines deals with the renovation of structures within a historic district. Staff feels the proposal meets the intent of this section.

Staff Recommendation

APPROVE Certificate 12-A-09-DT without conditions.

Mike Reynolds gave an overview of the project.

Brandon Pace, Sanders Pace Architecture, stated they are renovating the existing warehouse for commercial spaces. They are fixing and reglazing the windows, recessing the front entry for three tenants, adding concrete steps and a ramp.

Anne Wallace asked why the storefront is setback eight feet from the sidewalk. Brandon Pace said it is setback to allow for the entrances to the individual spaces. Mike Reynolds asked if the recess is necessary to accommodate the stairs and ramp. Brandon Pace stated that is correct.

Mike Reynolds stated there will be four lights between the upper and lower windows that will up and down light the façade.

A motion was made by Anne Wallace and seconded by Jeffrey Nash to approve the staff recommendation. The motion carried with John Sanders recusing.

Certificate No. 12-B-09-DT

Wayfinding (City of Knoxville)

Pre-development meeting: N/A

Description of Work

The city has been working on the Downtown Knoxville Wayfinding and Signage Program for several months. The goal of the wayfinding effort is to make it easy for visitors and residents to navigate around downtown Knoxville as well as highlighting its attractions and offerings in an appealing and informative manner. The project area encompasses all of downtown including World's Fair Park.

After a series of steering committee, stakeholder, and public meetings, including a City Council workshop, the Design Development Package (15 October 2009), Revised (05 November 2009) has been submitted for Design Review Board review. This package takes into consideration all

the comments that have been received to date and offers the Board an opportunity for input prior to finalizing the design development phase.

Staff Comments

Section 1.A2 of the Guidelines speaks of resident and visitor orientation. The guidelines state to "establish a comprehensive wayfinding system for pedestrians" and "create consistent parking signs and directional signs for both pedestrians and vehicular traffic." Staff feels this proposal addresses both of these concerns.

Staff Recommendation

Recommend APPROVAL to City Council as submitted.

Mike Reynolds stated that this project has already been through an extensive public review process, including public meetings and stakeholder meetings. Since this is a public project the board will not be voting to approve the Wayfinding program, rather making a recommendation to the Mayor and City Council.

Anne Wallace stated that city projects that are in the D-1 boundary have to come before the board for review. She has worked with organizations and stakeholders in and around downtown to assist in the planning of the wayfinding project. She discussed options A, B,C, D and an unnamed option which were shown in the packet presented to the board. Anne said that people generally gravitated towards the option that combines both classic and modern element, but some individuals were concerned about using too many bright colors.

Anne said the directional signs will specifically name public and quasi-public venues such as Market Square and public parking garages. The directional signs will not name specific private establishments such as restaurants and shops in order to avoid the off premise advertising prohibition. She displayed full scale sign examples which will be vehicle and pedestrian oriented.

Michele Hummel, CBID, stated she was on the steering committee and feels this will be a great asset for downtown.

Amy Haynes asked about some of the vehicular signs being too large and maybe blocking pedestrian spaces. Anne stated the location of all signs will be done to minimize the encroachment into pedestrian spaces. The location of the signs has yet to determined; but is the next phase of the wayfinding project.

Anne Wallace stated that the current green vehicular directional signs will be taken down once the new signs are installed to get a unified look and reduce visual clutter.

Joe Petre asked why the parking sign is in a different font than the other vehicle oriented signs. Anne stated that it may be because the other signs are intended for streets with higher speeds. She stated she will follow up with the design consultants as to their reason.

Joe asked if they coordinated with the city's logo. Anne stated they are not replicating the city logo colors since the logo is apt to change with administrations and can create costly

maintenance over time. The City decided to go with a color scheme that was a good fit in general for Downtown.

Kim Henry asked how they will let people know about the wayfinding program. Anne stated they have already had media coverage but will do press releases when they are closer to installing the signage and further information can also be found at www.cityofknoxville.org/wayfinding.

Kim Henry asked how the about the phasing of the sign installations. Anne stated there will likely be three phases. Phase 1 will cost about \$300,000 and include pedestrian and parking directional signs, and should begin this summer. The capital improvement budget for the city in the upcoming year is very tight and may or may not include funding for all of Phase 2. She stated the City is looking into all available funding sources, such as the Transportation Planning Organizations stimulus funds which may be able to be used for wayfinding signage. The city is also looking at maintenance of the signs and will budget ten percent of the cost of the signs yearly for maintenance.

Anne stated the planning area for this wayfinding study goes from World's Fair Park to the river, to James White Parkway and the coliseum to Regas Square.

John Sanders asked about the shapes of signs. He said there are some that are squared off on the bottom and others that have a sweeping arch. Anne responded that there are standards for scale and shape for the signs that are meant for directing vehicular traffic. This may require that signs have squared off corners. The other sign types are a compromise of public opinion with the sweeping arch. Anne stated the design consultants tried to coordinate the design of the two sign types by adding a painted sweeping arch to the vehicular directional signs. Anne also offered to check with the consultants to see if the other vehicular directional signs could include the painted sweep/arch detail to maintain consistency.

City Council voted to support the design direction.

Mike Reynolds stated he will summarize the conversation to send in the recommendation memo to the Mayor and City Council.

A motion was made by Amy Haynes and seconded by Carol Montgomery for the board to submit a letter of support for the proposed Wayfinding plan to the City of Knoxville including the discussion during the meeting. The motion carried with Anne Wallace recusing.

No. 12-C-09-DT

Sidewalk Improvements - Market and Union (City of Knoxville)

Pre-development meeting: N/A

Description of Work

This proposal is a sidewalk improvement project by the City of Knoxville. The project limits are the sections of sidewalk on Market Street between Cumberland Avenue and Church Street and on Union Avenue between Gay Street and Market Street.

Two design options were presented by Hedstrom Design at a public meeting on September 1st. Both options included new street cross sections, on street parking, street trees, and wider sidewalks with decorative treatments in the furnishing zone. The majority of attendees preferred Option A, which has been submitted for the Downtown Design Review Board's review. Additional work has been done to recommend trees that will not block views into retail establishments, determine the best location for trees and consider lighting typology and locations for each street.

The sidewalk improvements include a more consistent sidewalk system (particularly on Market Street), wider sidewalks in most cases, street trees with tree grates, pedestrian scaled lighting, bike racks, and permeable pavers at the back of the curb. On-street parking would remain on both streets, and increase on Market. The proposed lighting would have the acorn fixture to be consistent with the other lighting downtown but is proposed to be dark sky compliant with full cut off.

One existing Bradford Pear tree will be removed on Market Street to allow for the alteration of the curb line. Three existing trees on Union Avenue, adjacent to Krutch Park, will remain and have their pits expanded and covered with tree grates.

Staff Comments

Section 1.A.1&4 deal pedestrian and bicycle safety, and downtown beautification. In staff's opinion, this proposal meets the intent all the applicable guideline requirements.

Staff Recommendation

Recommend APPROVAL to the City Council as submitted.

Mike Reynolds gave a brief overview of the project.

Anne Wallace stated that the City and design consultants, Hedstrom Design, have looked at the aesthetics and maintenance of this project. There were two design options presented at a public meeting and the option before the Board is the preferred design direction.

Rachel Beasley, Hedstrom Design, stated that her company is working on improvements to the streetscape at Market and Union Avenues. The consultants have discussed widening the sidewalks, the types of trees, bike racks and lighting.

Joe Petre asked about the size and type of tree grates. Rachel stated that the tree grate size will depend on the location but the size will not be smaller than three feet by six feet.

Joe Petre asked if detectable warning strips for the blind will need to be installed at alleys. Steve King said that detectable warning strips are not typically installed at alleys but can be if there is a need. There is not anticipation at this time that the alleys on Market Street will need detectable warning strips.

John Sanders asked why full cut-off lights will not be used to reduce the amount of light shining into condos. Anne Wallace stated that the lighting fixture being used is the typical acorn fixture

seen in most of downtown. The globe used for this application will have a cap that will make the light dark sky compliant, but may not be full cut-off. John suggested looking at other city projects that have used lighting, other than the acorn light, for an alternative lighting design.

Anne Wallace stated that the lighting proposed for this project is consistent with the design choices that have been made for lighting in the downtown area for the last several years. Steve King responded that the city typically uses the types of fixtures that KUB can stock. It is possible to explore other options, but that presents other challenges. Anne stated that they are looking at the lighting design for both vehicles and pedestrians.

Anne Wallace stated the next step after the Board's review of the schematic design is for City Engineering and the consultants to complete construction drawings. The work will not commence until after the Rossini Festival and the City plans to start with Market Street, finish that section, and then work on Union Avenue. When working on Union Avenue, only one side of the street will be worked on at a time leaving good pedestrian access from Gay St. to Market Square and vice versa. Another item that has been discussed was to select trees that do not drop lots of leaves or nuts, and not block views into businesses.

David Dewhirst stated there should not be a curb cut between the Cherokee and Cunningham buildings. He feels this is not an alley and the curb cut can be removed. Steve King said he would have to look into it.

Amy Haynes would like for more bike racks to be added. Rachel Beasley said they can add more bike racks without much problem.

A motion was made by David Dewhirst and seconded by Joe Petre to recommend approval to the City of Knoxville, adding that the Board applauds the use permeable pavers and street trees, but recommends a lighting fixture that is dark sky compliant and full cut-off in residential areas, and the addition of more bike racks at the intersections. The motion carried with Anne Wallace recusing.

Certificate No. 12-D-09-DT

555 W Jackson Ave - Southeastern Glass Building (Revision of 5-B-09-DT (John L. Sanders, AIA)

Pre-development meeting: 12/8/2009

Description of Work

This proposal is a revision to the approved Certificate 5-B-08-DT. The applicant is requesting a change to the design of the porte cochere and a change the required tree planting requirement.

The original request and approval for this project was to enclose the porte cochere while retaining the existing arches. This request is to remove the arches to allow the porte cochere scorching opening to be squared off and infilled with a storefront design similar to the original request. The storefront will have a bronze metal framing and will have clear glass. The infill around the storefront will be a random design of hardi panel with thin joints separating the panels. The face of the porte cochere will be stucco.

The original approval required that there be two trees in the surface parking lot area. The applicant is requesting that this requirement be removed from this approval because of constraints on the site which were unforeseen.

Staff Comments

This project is within the Southern Terminal and Warehouse Historic District. In the Historic Resources section of the guidelines the following principles should be considered: Section 1.C.2a, Section 1.C.3 and Section 1.C.10. These sections cover storefronts, entrances and how new construction should reflect architectural and historic qualities. While this infill storefront is not in a new building, it creates indoor space where the space has been utilized as outdoor space for a majority of the building's life.

The design is very much different from the original building and the previous designs for the space. This design creates a recessed storefront area that is the same height as the storefronts in the original building which provides a visual consistency. The glass area of the new storefront will be the height of the storefront in the original building, minus the transoms. The reduced height of the storefront is to provide space for a lower ceiling height and for energy consideration with respect to solar heat gain.

The storefronts facing Broadway and Jackson Avenue are exactly the same except the Broadway storefront does not have an entrance. The small building face at the corner of Broadway and Jackson will have a thin window with a similar random infill pattern of Hardi board as the Jackson/Broadway storefronts.

There is some concern by staff that the glass area of the storefront does not come close enough to the corner of Jackson and Broadway to give pedestrians coming around a corner a safe feeling. The Board should consider the impacts of the storefront design in relation to the pedestrian experience near this intersection.

The Guidelines require that one shade tree be planted within surface parking lot at a ratio of 1 tree per 8 parking spaces (Section 1.A.3e).

Staff Recommendation

APPROVE Certificate 12-D-09-DT subject to the following condition: 1) One shade tree be planted in the southeast corner of the parking lot near the sidewalk shown in the site plan and labeled as a landscape island.

Mike Reynolds gave an overview of the project.

John Sanders and Michael Davis, Sanders Pace Architecture, stated they will infill the porte cochere in a similar fashion as they have already received approval. The new design will remove the stucco arches, which are not structural. John stated and provided photo evidence that in the late 40s or 50s, the porte cochere was infilled. The new proposed design allows them to match the new opening height with that of the original building storefronts, which better ties the two building components together. If someone wanted to remove the proposed storefront infill in the future they could and rebuild the arches to match the existing design.

Mike Reynolds stated that staff discussed the design with the applicants and felt that there may be good reasoning to bring the storefront glass closer to the corner. This would bring some transparency to the corner of the building and make pedestrians more comfortable turning the corner. Jeffrey Nash stated that if this was done it would ruin the interior space because there is not another good location to have furniture. Amy Haynes stated that not knowing what is coming around a corner when you are walking is part of being in a downtown environment and didn't seem to think the proposed design is much different than other areas around downtown.

A motion was made by Jeffrey Nash and seconded by David Dewhirst to approve the staff recommendation. The motion carried with John Sanders and Joe Petre recusing.

Staff Report:

N/A

Other Business:

- Mike Reynolds stated that staff has talked to the Engineering Department about reducing the minimum sign clearance requirement to 9 feet. An amendment can be created to the sign ordinance. David Dewhirst suggested the sign minimum to be 7 feet 6 inches. Joe Petre stated that store fronts vary in height and signs will need to vary in height to coordinate with the storefronts. Anne Wallace recommended that staff move forward on reviewing the sign height with engineering.
- Mike Reynolds stated that the vertical sign on the 411 Building is not what the board approved. He will be looking into what can be done to correct the issue.
- Gene Burr, teacher at the UT School of Planning, presented an analysis of Market Square that was developed by Masters of Planning students. He asked the students to research the history of Market Square and analyze the current design of the square. The students spent an hour twice a day to determine where the people were and where they were going. They saw it as a hospitable setting. Gene reviewed the positive and negative aspects the students recognized. He thanked the Board for allowing him to make his presentation.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.