

MINUTES
KNOXVILLE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MEETING OF MARCH 21, 2012
SMALL ASSEMBLY ROOM
4:00 P.M.

Present:

Kim Henry
Anne Wallace
Bob Alcorn
Mike Reynolds
Joe Petre
John Sanders
Matt Synowicz
Chad Boetger
Carol Montgomery
Daniel Odle
Jim Hagerman
Melvin Wright
Alan Sims
Sean Wagner
Mark Heinz
Jayne Walshaw
Becky Lawson

Organization:

APA Representative
City of Knoxville
Resident Representative
MPC
Business Representative
AIA Representative
CBID
Resident/Architect
Historic Zoning Commission
Conversion Properties, Inc.
City of Knoxville, Engineering
City of Knoxville, Inspections
Resident
NewStudio Architecture
Dewhirst/Arnstein Partners
Knoxville TVA Employees CU
Knoxville TVA Employees CU

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kim Henry. It was established that there was a quorum present and the Board members introduced themselves. Board members present are shown in italics. Ex Officio Member Jim Hagerman was introduced.

Action: A motion was made by Bob Alcorn and seconded by John Sanders to approve the February 15, 2012 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Certificates of Appropriateness:

Certificate No. 10-H-11-DT

710 Walnut St - 710 and 712 Walnut (Total Demolition Services, Inc.)
Pre-development - 10/18/2011

Description of Work

Demolition of 710 and 712 Walnut Street and removal of all structures, foundations and footings.

Add new landscaping, fencing and pedestrian gateway as shown in the attached plans. There will be a courtyard that is accessible by the public.

Staff Comments

These two buildings are not in a National Register Historic District or individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, so Section 1.B.8 (page 19) of the Downtown Knoxville Design Guidelines would apply. The Downtown Knoxville Design Guidelines state that "The demolition of buildings... may be appropriate when in compliance with the guidelines". It also states, "If a building is demolished, all visible unutilized building material must be removed and the site must be vegetated or otherwise brought into compliance with the guidelines".

Staff Recommendation:

APPROVE Certificate 10-H-11-DT as submitted.

Discussion: Mike Reynolds stated that the Applicant has again requested postponement. The church is still in negotiations with Knox Heritage to find an alternative use for the buildings as opposed to total demolition, and may be close to an agreement. Mr. Reynolds recommended approval of the Applicant's request for postponement for one more month. There was not a representative from Total Demolition present.

Action: A motion was made by Anne Wallace and seconded by Carol Montgomery to approve postponement of this Certificate until next month's meeting. The motion carried with Bob Alcorn opposing.

Certificate No. 3-A-12-DT

501 Market St - Urban Outfitters (NewStudioArchitecture)

Pre-development - N/A

Description of Work

Add a canopy sign attached directly to the underside of a new entry canopy, which was approved as part of the Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) 7-B-11-DT. The sign will be made of hot-rolled steel for the body of the lettering, translucent wire glass (not plastic) for the letter faces, and "earth white" neon lighting behind the glass. The sign will be 1 foot 8 inches tall by 20 feet long, or approximately 33 square feet.

Add building mounted signs on the corner of Market Street and Union Avenue, and Union Avenue and the alley. The sign at Market/Union features projecting letters that have been cut and folded out of the attached steel plate. The sign at the Union/alley features simple cut-out lettering within the steel plate. The signs will be made of hot-rolled steel plate with routed letter cut-outs, and exposed "earth white" neon lighting. Both signs will have two faces, each of which is 6 feet 2.75 inches tall by 1 foot 1 inch wide, or 6.87 square feet per face. The sign at Market/Union features lettering that projects 6.75 inches out from the face of the steel plate. The plate itself is mounted 3 inches off the face of the building in both locations. The bottom of the sign at Market/Union is 9 feet 1.75 inches above the sidewalk. The sign at Union/alley is 8 feet 2 inches above the sidewalk.

The center and right storefront bays facing Market Street will be slightly modified from the original approval in CoA 7-B-11-DT. The right bay is now proposed to be flat and not have a recessed entry, which was part of the original approval. The bulkheads will be poured concrete and be approximately 8 inches tall. The original approval had a wood or metal paneled bulkhead, approximately 18 inches tall.

The main entry in the center bay will have a new door. The doors will be tube steel with steel angle glazing stops and 1 inch clear glazing. The door handles are to be steel plates finished with wood. The doors combined will be 9 feet tall by 7 feet 2.25 inches wide.

Staff Comments

The canopy and wall signs as proposed do not fit any of the traditional sign types described in the guidelines, however, staff believes that the designs conform to the intent of the guidelines and the illumination is consistent with past approvals by the board in regard to how internal illumination is utilized.

Staff Recommendation

APPROVE Certificate 3-A-12-DT as submitted.

Discussion: Sean Wagner, President, NewStudio Architecture, architect of record was present for questions. Mr. Wagner also noted he was representing Urban Outfitters. There were no questions.

Action: A motion was made by John Sanders and seconded by Bob Alcorn to approve the Certificate as submitted. The motion carried with Chad Boetger abstaining.

Further discussion: Joe Petre asked Mr. Wagner for clarification on the illumination of the signs. Mr. Wagner clarified that all of the letters in each of the 3 signs are internally illuminated and only the canopy sign that has a glass front. Mr. Wagner further clarified that all connections and junction boxes will be concealed. It was further noted that the signage was compliant with the sign ordinance.

Mr. Wagner stated that the tenant was in final lease negotiations with the owner of the building.

Certificate No. 3-B-12-DT

406 Walnut St - Market Square Garage Solar Installation (City of Knoxville)
Pre-development - N/A

Description of Work

Add 36 solar panels to the north stair/elevator canopy of the Market Square Garage. The panels will be attached to the standing seam roof with roof clips and support rails.

Staff Comments

Section 1.B.7h, Mechanical Equipment and Service Utilities, states the following, "Allow solar panels and other technological advances on rooftops and other unobtrusive locations." These solar panels will be mounted on a roof and will be effectively non-visible from the public realm.

Staff Recommendation

APPROVE Certificate 3-B-12-DT as submitted.

Discussion: Jake Tisinger, Knoxville Office of Sustainability, was present. Mr. Tisinger stated the visibility of the solar panels would be very low. He further stated that there would be one penetration through the roof however the contractor will work with the City to ensure the roof warranty stays intact. Mr. Tisinger clarified that although most of the light will be absorbed, there would likely be some moderate reflection. He also noted that he did not believe that installation of the panels would impact the surrounding high rise buildings due to glare.

Action: A motion was made by Matt Synowicz and seconded by Carol Montgomery to approve the Certificate as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

Certificate No. 3-C-12-DT

301 Wall Ave - Knoxville TVA Employees Credit Union (Neon Service Co.)
Pre-development - N/A

Description of Work

Add a new wall sign to the face of the building adjacent to the alley. The sign is 5 feet wide by 9 feet 1 inch tall, or approximately 45 square feet. The sign will be internally illuminated and have an embossed acrylic face.

Staff Comments

The Downtown Knoxville Design Guidelines recommends wall signs to be located in the sign board area. The rear elevation of this building, which faces Market Square, is visible because the

neighboring building sits back substantially from the street edge. The sign board area for the rear elevation is considered the same height as the area between the storefront and second story windows on the street facing facades. There are street trees that obstruct the view of the rear elevation when leaves are on the trees. Another option for signage would be to do a projecting sign and/or wall sign along Wall Avenue on the sign board.

Staff Recommendation

APPROVE Certificate 3-C-12-DT with the following condition: The sign shall be installed in the sign board area on the façade facing Wall Avenue or the sign board area on the rear elevation facing the alley.

Discussion: Mike Reynolds reviewed the application noting that the Applicant is looking to increase the visibility for their building from the Market Square and Market Square Garage area as it currently does not have visibility from there. They would like to capture the pedestrian traffic. Mr. Reynolds noted that this was an unusual situation because the rear of the building is highly visible.

Representatives from the credit union, Jane Walshaw and Becky Lawson were present. Ms. Walshaw stated that the credit union has had requests from both residents and customers to add more visibility for the ATM machine located there as currently there is no recognition on that side of the building. The proposed height of the sign is to increase visibility from Market Square in addition to discouraging vandalism. She further noted it would be consistent with other building signage.

A discussion ensued regarding the exact position of the sign with regards to the second story windows. The sign is higher than the windows on the adjacent side of the building. Lowering the sign to be inline with those windows may be an issue as the object below the sign is a component of the credit union's security system.

Multiple optional locations were discussed. Mike Reynolds clarified that there is no specific criteria for the size of wall signs other than the limitations created by the size of the sign board area itself in relation to the scale of the building. When placed off the actual sign board area the size of a wall sign would only be limited to sign ordinance guidelines.

Further discussion revolved around the size of windows verses the actual size of the proposed sign. There appears to be a discrepancy in the size of the sign as represented in the drawing and comparing that to the known size of the windows.

The staff recommendation was restated to affirm that the sign needs to be installed in the sign board area on either the Wall Avenue side or the rear elevation facing the alley. If placed on the rear façade the sign would be horizontally designed and placed beneath the alarm box. The sign could be placed on the brick or the precast area.

Mike Reynolds noted the Board can approve any sign they feel is appropriate.

Kim Henry, reflecting the discrepancy of the actual size of the sign proposed, offered Ms. Walshaw the option of going forward with a vote today or returning to the Board next month with a new application that more accurately reflects what the credit union is proposing.

Bob Alcorn noted that the Board could propose a reduction in the size of the sign.

Ms. Walshaw clarified that the ATM machine is located on the Wall Avenue side of the building and that there were directional signs for it on in the windows.

It was established by Kim Henry that the credit union would need to resubmit a new drawing, making the sign at least to the scale of the height of the windows and revisit where it was actually placed.

It was further clarified that the recommendation from the Board was to postpone the application due to insufficient information and that the Applicant would just need to return to the Board next month with a new drawing of the proposed sign.

Joe Petre further clarified that the Board was specifically recommending they reduce the size of the sign.

Action: A motion was made by Joe Petre and seconded by Bob Alcorn to postpone this Certificate until next month. The motion carried unanimously.

Staff Report:

304 S. Gay Street (2-B-12-DT) – Add new non-illuminated wall sign at street level.

607 Market Street (3-D-12-DT) – Replace existing signs on top of the building and along the sidewalk for similar signs of the new owner, US Bank.

Bob Alcorn initiated a discussion amongst the Board members regarding the maximum number of postponements that may be allowed verses when an application should be resubmitted. Mike Reynolds noted that he would research that and that additionally, he would investigate a tabling option as the Board's Administrative Rules and Procedures do not currently have that option. Once tabled, an application is not heard until the Applicant requests it be put back on the Agenda.

Ann Wallace stated that since the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) is the "housing body" of the Board, placing any such limits may be a challenge. To the best of her knowledge and based on her experience, Ms. Wallace noted the MPC does not limit the number of postponements for an application. Ms. Wallace suggested researching that as well in identifying what the Board can do with regards to postponements.

Other Business: There was no other business;

Action: A motion was made by Ann Wallace and seconded by Chad Boetger to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.