



DESIGN COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES MAY 24, 2017

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Richard Erwin called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM in the Council Chambers, 9611 SE 36th Street, Mercer Island, Washington.

ROLL CALL:

Chair Richard Erwin, Commissioners Hui Tian, Lara Sanderson, Vice Chair Colin Brandt, and Tami Szerlip were present. Commissioners Anthony Perez and Suzanne Foster were absent.

STAFF PRESENT:

Evan Maxim, Planning Manager; Bio Park, Assistant City Attorney; Nicole Gaudette, Senior Planner; Robin Proebsting, Senior Planner; Andrew Leon, Planner; Lauren Anderson, Assistant Planner; were present.

Bio Park, Assistant City Attorney, was introduced to the Design Commission.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the April 19, 2017 meeting. The minutes were approved as amended by a vote of 4-0. Colin Brandt abstained.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

Agenda Item #1: Design Review DSR17-004 – Design Review and Approval for Subway Sign

Andrew Leon, Planner, provided a brief staff presentation on the project. The proposed Subway and sign is located in the PBZ zone on the south end of the island.

Michelle Prynne, Plumb Signs, responded to questions from the Design Commission.

The Design Commission discussed alternative sign design proposals that would result in a smaller sign that would fit between the two columns. The Design Commission also indicated that the sign should be scaled to be of a similar size to the cleaner's sign along the same façade.

Colin Brandt moved to grant the Subway Sign Application design approval for one wall sign as shown in Exhibit 1 and as conditioned by the May 24, 2017 staff report to the Design Commission, provided that Exhibit 1 shall be modified as follows: the horizontal extent of the logo sign in total shall not come within 4 inches of the inside corners of the adjacent columns. Moved by Colin Brandt, seconded by Lara Sanderson. Approved 5-0

Agenda Item #2: Design Review DSR17-008 – Design Review and Approval for Caruccio's Signs

Andrew Leon, Planner, provided a brief staff presentation on the proposed four signs, including a summary of the previously approved master sign plan and the proposed design. The proposed Carruccio's business and four new signs are located in the Town Center within and upon the Aviara building.

Suzanne Zahr, architect for project, responded to questions from the Design Commission. Suzanne provided a copy of updated graphics reflecting representation of one of the wall signs at night, for the Design Commission's review and reference. Suzanne Zahr indicated that the landlord had approved the proposed sign design.

The Design Commission discussed whether wall sign #2 should be approved. The Design Commission expressed concerns about setting precedent with a second wall sign and revised designs for the two proposed blade signs. Suzanne Zahr noted that there were significant deviations to the master sign plan for signage on the Aviara building.

Lara Sanderson moved to grant the Caruccio's Sign Application design approval for two wall signs and two projecting / blade signs as shown in Exhibit 1 and as conditioned by the May 24, 2017 staff report to the Design Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tian. Approved 5-0

Agenda Item #3: Design Review DSR17-006 – Study Session for Hotel Mercer

Robin Proebsting, Senior Planner, provided a brief staff presentation on the project. The applicant for the Hotel Mercer is seeking guidance on: 1) required ground floor transparency; 2) whether the width of the "through block connection" can be approved as designed; and 3) the proposed building overhang over the through block connection.

Commissioner Hui Tian disclosed that she had previously worked with the applicant on a separate project. Commissioner Tian indicated that her past work did not affect her ability to review the proposed project impartially and that she had not engaged in ex parte communication with the applicant regarding this application.

Karson Keever, Jon Graves Architects, responded to questions from the Design Commission. Kenneth Lee, Dollar Development, also responded to questions from the Design Commission. Karson Keever explained the required ground floor footprint programming, which necessitated the proposed reduction in through block corridor width.

Regarding item "1)", the Design Commission indicated that 50% ground floor transparency is required along the west side of the building.

Regarding item "2)", the Design Commission indicated that the through block connection was too narrow, but that this may serve as a secondary path to the eventual light rail station. The proposed minimum width of 8 feet was not appropriate for the thorough block connection; the Design Commission was split on an appropriate minimum and was inclined to stick with a 20 foot minimum width measured from the property line, but may accept a minimum width of 16 to 18 feet from the property line for an exceptional design. The 4-foot encroachment of the easement into the pedestrian through block connection is acceptable. Providing the pedestrian through block connection would serve as a major site feature and the plaza would not also be required.

Regarding item "3)", the Design Commission indicated that a 3 foot wide decks / patios or overhang, 15 feet above ground can extend into the area used for pedestrian through block connection. The design should be jagged and not a solid wall extending the full length of the connection.

Agenda Item #3: Design Review DSR17-012 – Study Session for Aviara Water Feature / Landscape Design Change.

Nicole Gaudette, Senior Planner, provided a brief staff presentation on the project. The applicant for the Aviara is seeking guidance on proposed design changes to a replace a previously required water feature with a proposed landscape amenity.

The Design Commission requested that the applicant return with a proposal compliant with the Town Center code.

The applicant apologized for changing the water feature to a landscaping feature, without first obtaining the City's approval in advance of the change to the water feature. The applicant responded to question from the Design Commission.

The Design Commission indicated that the landscaping should be predominantly native and adaptive or drought tolerant species; City review (Parks Department) to confirm the appropriateness of landscaping is requested. The Design Commission indicated that the black pavers should also be modified and converted to landscaping. A description of the overall theme or concept for landscaping on the site is desired. Details on the lighting plan is also required.

OTHER BUSINESS: None

PLANNED ABSENCES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS: Commissioner Tian will be absent from the June 14th, 2017 meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

The next scheduled meeting is June 14th, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Evan Maxim, Planning Manager