

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN COMMISSION

MEETING OF

September 21, 2017

Members Present

George Davis
John Ranson
R.J. Lackey
Sherry Chaney
Peyton Keesee

Members Absent

Courtney Nicholas
Johnathan Hackworth

Staff

Kenny Gillie
Lisa Jones
Clarke Whitfield
Ryan Dodson

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

I. ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

- 1. A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 301 Lynn Street to complete exterior renovations per submitted design.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Stephen Stats developer for 301 Lynn Street. 301 Lynn was built in 1886 it was the sister building to Smith Seeds, which is another one of my developments. Some of the windows back in the day were taken out and bricked up. In my new design we do the same as Smith Seeds. We take out the brick and install windows that mimic not match the historic windows which is design guidelines from DHR. Smith Seeds has already been done and has already been approved. I am doing the exact same thing because they have the exact same windows. These are the original windows from 301 and from Smith Seeds and these are the replacement windows that have been approved by DHR and were approved for the 315 project. I am just memorizing what I did on the building that is right next door same owner Johnny Hughes back in 1886.

Mr. Davis stated and this is at 301 Lynn Street?

Mr. Stats stated this is at 301 Lynn Street this is the corner building of Lynn and Loyal.

Mr. Davis stated it was in my thinking that was going to be torn down.

Mr. Stats stated that is the front building the back building is the one that I am developing and that was built in 86. The front building was put up in the 30's 1934 I believe and the prior owner allowed the roof to collapse and the entire structure is imploding. The city had already condemned it and asked that I have two structural engineers look at it and they recommend immediate demolition. That is why that one is coming down. It is not coming down all the way. I was in here a couple of months ago and got approval on my demolition.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Ms. Chaney made a motion that the request does meet the guidelines as presented and should be issued a COA. Mr. Keesee seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

2. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a temporary (30 day) mobile ice skating rink at 629 Craghead Street. There will also be a concession stand, picnic tables, lights and port-o-lets available during this time.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Ms. Katilyn Henderson I am here on behalf of the River District Association. I'm now the office coordinator. We would like to have this installed on November 30 by the rental company. Throughout the month of December and it will be taken down on January 3.

Mr. Davis stated I'm assuming there are other of these set up in other places this is pretty widely done or just been experimented with.

Ms. Henderson stated our executive director is from Florida and they have had one there for the past seven years. That is where the idea came from. It does seem to work well.

Mr. Lackey stated are you going to have skate rentals as well?

Ms. Henderson stated yes skate rentals are included. There is a 2.00 fee for everyone skate rental included for 20 minutes. We will be accepting cash only.

Mr. Lackey stated 2.00 fee includes the skate rental?

Ms. Henderson stated and the skate time. It is great for people that have not skated before because it has a little more friction than ice.

Mr. Keesee stated where are you going to put this again?.

Ms. Henderson stated it is going to be placed in the parking lot in between the dome and the community market building.

Mr. Gillie stated you will see it on page 15.

Ms. Henderson stated it is going to be 30 feet by 40 feet.

Mr. Keesee stated why don't you leave it up a little longer?

Ms. Henderson stated for now we were just testing the waters to see what the out come would be. For right now the rental only lasts for the month. That was our funding from the DRF.

Mr. Keesee stated who is paying for this?

Ms. Henderson stated its part of the Make It Happen Grant from DRF.

Mr. Davis stated Mr. Whitfield I'm sure they have been in touch with you about liability issues and everything.

Mr. Whitfield stated yes sir we have worked thru all of the insurance provisions and the concession provisions. We have worked thru everything this was pretty much the last step they have done a great job of getting everything together between the city and parks recreation and our office and everyone involved.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ranson made a motion that the request does meet the guidelines as presented and should be issued a COA. Mr. Lackey seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The August 10, 2017 minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

3. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 215 Main Street to install a new projecting sign for Me's Burgers & Brews*

Cathy Kropp stated we have run into a couple of things since we opened. We have a large contention of people that can't find us. During the Summer with the trees it is hard for them to see our awning and we have had numerous people that have told us that they have driven around and turned left at the bridge and turned left and left and they will pass us. We are looking at something to put at the back of the building. You have approved an awning over two years ago and we have been open two years in September. We have looked at a awning. It would do a couple of things but it was a little pricey and there is kind of a roof out there. There is a little bit of a roof that's on an extension that's off the back of our kitchen. What we are asking for is a sign that would go on the back of the building and it would be two sided. Trophy and Sign has put it together for us, and have looked at placing it where the street lamp is but in a way that the street lamp does not hide the sign. If we find that the street lamp doesn't provide enough light with darkness coming on us pretty quickly now. Also if approved for solar lights that if we have that need for them as we see. We are mainly trying to help people find us. The dimensions are 36 inches wide and 48 inches long. We went with something that is just black and white that similar to but larger than the signs that were put on the public parking building.

Mr. Ranson stated what is the sign made of?

Mrs. Kropp stated it is aluminum.

Mr. Ranson stated are you asking to approve the lighting if necessary?

Mrs. Kropp stated yes. It would save in coming back and we would appreciate it. It will be aluminum and it will be designed by trophy and sign. They have done the Brick and Adam Jones is the one that gave us their information. It will not be flat against the building it would be on brackets. It would stand out from the building just a little bit.

Mr. Davis stated a note in your recommendation part that the sign is 12 square feet as opposed to the 4 square feet that is recommended in the guidelines.

Mr. Gillie stated correct. The code permits up to 16 square feet is what we have done for DellAno's and the Brick. It's one of those things that we are going to go back on and modify the guidelines in the future so we can say you can agree to allow for a waiver to that if you feel matches what been done in the district. The staff is not opposed to this. The square footage complies with the zoning itself just not the guidelines. The lighting also. There is a street light that is probably going to be taken care of by the street light but with the solar wash lights similar to what the brick has done. Brick has done a very attractive sign. It looks nice down there at night so we are not opposed to that either.

Mr. Davis stated and I don't see any problem with the height if she does put it above the awning.

Mrs. Kropp stated that's why we went with the sign rather than with an awning which is on the front of the building. We are mainly trying to solve a problem of people saying we have driven around for a half an hour. You have nice people in your city they walked us here from where we had parked. We are trying to solve a problem that would help us and provide customer service with people being able to locate us. Google maps and the map system does not help very much.

Mr. Davis stated I can understand the way they have blocked everything off. I can understand people if they don't know where you are having a hard time finding it.

Closed public hearing.

Mr. Ranson make a motion that this does not meet the guidelines. Mr. Davis stated that it does not comply with the guidelines. Mr. Keesee stated I would say that it is a minor discrepancy. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote.

Mr. Keesee made a motion that the request does not the guidelines but is a minor discrepancy as presented and should be issued a COA. Mrs. Chaney seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote.

4. *Recommendation from City Planning Commission to review Chapter 41 entitled "Zoning Ordinance" of the Code of the City of Danville, Virginia, 1986 as amended, more specifically Article 10: entitled "Signs", Section N entitled "Permitted signs in the CB-C Central Business Commercial District" and*

Section O entitled Permitted signs in the TW-C, Tobacco Warehouse Commercial District”.

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ranson stated so this means if we approve that we never have to make that silly motion again?

Mr. Gillie stated no.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Gillie stated this came about when the gentlemen from the old first citizens building asked to add additional signage and he couldn't do that. He requested Planning Commission to change the sign code to allow for additional signage in Central Business District. We are purposing is to match Central Business and Tobacco Warehouse District together because Tobacco Warehouse District allows for buildings that are taller. There are additional provisions for additional square footage which will address some of the issues that we are having with tall buildings. The one thing that we should have put in the staff report and I did not. Tobacco Warehouse District section 2a on wall signs it says one wall sign on page 22 of your packet. One wall sign shall be permitted for each wall of the building facing a public street on the premises. We had an issue before with building on Bridge Street when they wanted more than one wall sign. What staff would like to see is two district match square footage wise with everything else but we would like to amend section 2a to allow for more than one wall sign on it as long as the square footage limitations are complied with. So that way if you have multiple tenants you can have a sign for each tenant as long as they do not exceed what the allowable square footage would be. That is what we would like.

Mr. Ranson stated what is the process for dealing with it? You know what is going to happen. Somebody is going to come in asking for a sign then another attendant is going to show up later and want more signage. Have you thought thru the process of it.

Mr. Gillie stated that why we do it just as a square footage total. It is up to the building owner to say who gets what. If the major tenant gets 80 percent of it and that is the issue we had with the building downtown first citizens basically locked out. That is not a city issue that someone gave them all their signage. We just tell them this is the number you have to play with and it is up to you to make it work.

Mr. Ranson stated you tell them that in the application.

Mr. Gillie stated when tell them when they come to us. You got excess if you want to give it to this guy then don't come crying to us when you can't do it.

Mr. Ranson stated I just want to make sure that you tell them that before they get the third or fourth tenant in.

Mr. Gillie stated yes we tell me that ahead of time this is your total. You break it up how you want to.

Mr. Lackey so total square footage has not changed. I thought we were going to look at bringing it up with the zoning.

Mr. Gillie stated we are this change. The two to match the guidelines are the portion that say it is a four square foot not the zoning. We are going to end up changing the guidelines the actual design guidelines for the area. So you can deviate from the design guidelines. This board can't deviate from the zoning itself. Which Me's complied with the square footage of the zoning but not the guidelines. We under estimated projecting signs for the guidelines when we wrote it.

Ms. Chaney stated so our guidelines are more restrictive than actual planning and zoning?

Mr. Gillie stated correct.

Ms. Chaney stated we are trying to bring all three into the planning and zoning.

Mr. Gillie stated eventually we will bring all three to compliance. Right now the CB-C is one district and Tobacco Warehouse District is one. Those signs didn't match and now we are at least on the zoning getting those to match. Then later on bring the design guidelines to try to get all three of them to be together. So if this Board agrees with us then staff would like to do is change section 2a instead of saying one sign per wall to just say wall signs are permitted based on the square footage. Instead of one wall we will say wall signs will be permitted for each wall facing public street or premises not put limitations on one.'

Mr. Lackey stated so let me clear my head. If you are on the corner and you have two walls facing the street do you double the amount of signs you get or do you have to cut it in half and put it on each sign.

Mr. Gillie stated we take where the primary address is so if it is 500 Craghead Street and you have signage on Lynn Street. You can put signs on Lynn Street its just you are not getting additional square footage because you got in the corner.

Mr. Lackey stated you just get the one side square footage and you can break it up.

Mr. Gillie stated you can break it up how you want to. We found that this has been very effective. We do that in other districts here in the city. This is your number if you want eighty small signs fine. If you want one eighty square foot sign that's up to you.

Ms. Chaney stated when we did River District Association when they asked for the sign on their awning and then the awning with the signage on the side street and you said that was over the limit for what they could have. This would have allowed them to have signage on both sides.

Mr. Gillie stated correct. We advised them if they wanted to hold up that we thought this change would be coming. They felt they don't use that door any way. It was a benefit for them to have anyway.

Mr. Davis stated said I'm still fuzzy about one thing. If you have a building and it has several tenants in it and you have one tenant that comes in and wants a sign here and here and he uses only allowable amount of square footage that he can use so that the other tenants will have the opportunity to put signs up also.

Mr. Gillie stated if the building owner saves that square footage. It's the building owner's responsibility to tell your tenant you are allowed as a city we will tell you building is allowed x square feet total. The building owner should tell tenant (a) you can have y and tenant (b) you have this and tenant (c) you can have that not to exceed what the city allows. We don't feel it our place to pick what tenant gets more than any other tenant. We're just here is a flat number you are allowed as the city it is up to the owner to figure best how to best handle with their own tenant.

Ms. Chaney stated where they are the main tenant in the building so they have the largest sign and anybody else would have a smaller amount of square footage.

Mr. Davis stated that is what I'm asking because if someone come in and rents the third floor and you are on the second floor that may be very limited to how big of a sign that they can have.

Mr. Keesee what the square footage is.

Mr. Gillie stated it depends on what the owners granted previously. Let's use an example of hundred square feet. If the city says you are allowed a hundred square feet sign and you have three tenants then 33 would be equal to all. If they say this is the major tenant and they get sixty. Then you have forty left over for two additional tenants does one get twenty and the other twenty. It's really up to the building owner. The city is just saying a hundred is an hundred and it is up to you to make it work.

Mr. Ranson stated and this committee wouldn't have any way to go around that because they would have to get an zoning variance. We don't have to worry about if they come back to us. You deal with your tenant.

Mr. Lackey stated tenants now going forward may have gotten the maximum sign may have to make a smaller sign.

Mr. Gillie stated you almost want to say buyer beware if you are looking to purchase a building. You might want to check and see what you have and what you are allowed because you will have to deal with the tenant not from the city end.

Mr. Lackey made a motion to approve the staff recommendation and changes to the guidelines with the correction done today and. Mr. Keesee seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The November 9, 2017 minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

Approved By: