

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN COMMISSION

MEETING OF

October 18, 2016

Members Present

R.J. Lackey
George Davis
Sheri Chaney
Jonathan Hackworth
Courtney Nicholas
John Ranson

Members Absent

Peyton Keesee

Staff

Anna Levi
Tracie Lancaster
Ken Gillie
Clarke Whitfield

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Davis asked the Commissioners if they had any objections to hearing item 4 first. They agreed to move item number 4 to the front.

ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

4. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 210 N Union Street to install vinyl window signage for the Danville Civil Rights Museum.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Tom Powers from Power Signs. Mr. Powers stated we were contracted to install the signs on the windows.

Mr. Ranson stated will this just be up there for the length of the exhibit?

Mr. Powers stated it is supposed to be a year.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Chaney made a motion to approve as requested. Mrs. Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

1. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the 500 block of Craghead Street to repaint the buildings.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Rick Barker, the applicant.

Mr. Davis stated is it pretty much cut and dry as far as this one is concerned?

Mr. Barker stated I think so. The idea that I am bringing to you is the color palate for all the exterior of the buildings at one time; which will give us the flexibility as we work on these different buildings, so we don't have to wait a month and come back. We would like to get this much approved and then we might come back with some exterior changes in addition to the signage.

Mr. Ranson stated what did you base the color choices on? Was there any historical research done?

Mr. Barker stated this is not an attempt to be period appropriate this palate has been run by the Department of Historic Resources with the idea that their greatest concern is that we continue to go forward with like materials. So if a building is brick today it will remain brick. If it is painted brick then it will remain painted brick. Although, we have the option of painted it a different color we are taking each individual building and looking at it very carefully; trying to select a color to make each façade distinguished. Then the embellishments once that is done times eight buildings then we want to have the ability to back up and look at the entire streetscape at one time and have each building compliment the neighbors beside it. So that is the scenario on each individual façade and then we have eliminated some options because it may not have complimented the building beside it or two doors down.

Mr. Ranson stated that green color what is that? I can't exactly read it.

Mr. Barker stated the green that will be a color for the doorway or molding just the wooden surfaces not a building color.

Mr. Ranson stated it's hard to tell it looks like there is a lot of grey. Are the buildings mostly grey?

Mr. Barker stated there is a lot of grey. It's probably hard to tell on the iPad but I think it was 4 or 5 different shades of grey which are very different. We think that is a better choice on an individual building. We would say that grey is a neutral color.

Mr. Ranson stated so the blues, greens and golds are the trim?

Mr. Barker stated yeah just smaller accent colors. Our thought with the grey is if you paint some of these buildings which now maybe multiple colors, if the color is the right shade of grey the definition is in the shadow created by the architectural detail.

Mr. Ranson stated are some of the buildings going to remain unpainted?

Mr. Barker stated yes. If they are not painted today then they won't be painted in the future.

Mrs. Nicholas stated this top swatch is that a white washed brick?

Mr. Barker stated yeah that brick is a sample designed to replicate what 554 looks like today; which is a red brick with an old faded black paint on it so that is just the color. It is not an extreme color option obviously; the green that you pointed out is the one that is the furthest from neutral.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Lackey made a motion to approve. Mrs. Chaney seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

2. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 554 Craghead Street to install identical metal 3.5 x 10.5 ft wall signs. One sign reading "BB&T Scott & Stringfellow" is to be located on each side elevation. No new signage will be installed on the front elevation.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Rick Barker, the applicant. Mr. Barker stated I think you have a photo rendering the design request that we are actually making on they're behalf. I understand that the size as offered is outside the current guidelines if we were directed to bring that to the current guidelines or any other size that you would think would be more appropriate we are completely open to that.

Mr. Lackey stated I only have one question why doesn't it flip so that you can read it.

Mr. Barker stated it is interesting that you caught that when I saw it I said the same thing. BB&T corporate office offered the local office sign off on that and they are going to give them the option. So actually they would in fact match.

Mr. Davis stated I spoke to Rick earlier just kind of giving my opinion. To me it look like it might be nicer, Rick was courtesy enough to at least hear me out, if they had a sign attached to the front of the building in some way or another either that or coming off the side so that you could see it a little bit better. To me this sign is totally out of place where it is on the building with the type of building and type of façade that it has on the other side. If you have been up and down Craghead Street you won't be able to see this sign until you get right up on this building. I feel like a sign that might come out further if it was agreeable to Rick and to the corporate office that might be a little better.

Mr. Ranson stated where are we talking about? I don't see where on the front it might go?

Mr. Davis stated I'm talking about on the front corner.

Mr. Ranson stated it would be a narrow fit in that case.

Mr. Barker stated George is essentially describing a shingle style in which a metal rod from which a shingle might hang from the corner which would be visible for both sides whether you are on the side.

Mr. Ranson stated so it wouldn't be attached to the building It would be hung. Like the Del'anno's Pizza sign?

Mr. Davis stated I am just mentioning that. I am not making a motion or anything I'm just mentioning that it looked like a neat idea to me.

Mr. Barker stated if I could just add a comment. There is a good likely hood that we are going to get to know each other in the next six months. We will be back for consecutive meetings for some time to come. I actually share the same concern that you do as we don't want signage to get out of hand within this block. We are trying to establish a tone if you will. I don't want our tenant's to be competing for signage space whether that is per sign, a neon sign or anything that is oversized and inappropriate. If one person gets a large sign I don't want the other getting a larger sign to try and compete with them. I feel that you need to have signage to identify the store front. So when a tenant using the sign in a usefully way that's good but to go beyond that is to advertise. So while this is still early this is our first tenant and there will be more to come. We are open to taking direction in what you all think is appropriate for the River District as far as signage. My signage standard today for the tenants would likely be stricter than the City's sign ordinance.

Mr. Davis stated if I understood you correctly this morning Rick you have complete control of what type of signs they put up?

Mr. Barker stated yes we intend to restrict by lease as to what the tenant can do to anything on the exterior or visible from the sidewalk or street. We just see a little inconsistence throughout the district and with having all of these buildings that way we can have better control. For instance, I am not a big fan of putting decals or sticker on the windows I think signage should be kept to a minimum.

Mr. Ranson stated you designed this signage and placement with an eye toward future tenants?

Mr. Barker stated yes, if I can maybe walk you through the genesis of that sign pattern. If you look closely at the corners of the building each side from top to bottom originally there was the word "Hardware" and that has been painted over in white. But you can see the ghost image under that. So putting these large vertical banners on the building a hundred years was the norm. So this idea started with maybe we would like to do something similar rather than hand painting something on the building that would

therefore essentially destroying the ghost images underneath. We might just attach something to the building in the same place, actually they would be vertical. If you think this sign is too large. The first sign that BB&T sent me took up the space for the second and third floor. So that has been reduced they would occupy the second floor so that sign is essentially taking the distance between the second and third floor. It is probably a little oversized from your guidelines and probably for asastic also. So this vertical banner idea one could argue that is appropriate because the hand painting that was on the building was original. We have thought beyond what you are looking at today to think that we will eventually have a tenant on the third floor. They might want some signage as well. So we have to think about what our needs are today and what our needs maybe tomorrow. In addition, this 32 square feet footprint we are considering today we would like to have an overall square footage for the building. So if you notice on the front on the building on the façade it says Supply Resources, our brand, it is very simple we chose a dull gold it's not advertising people come in our office and they are hunting for us. So it's just something so they can see the name and they know they have arrived. I think BB&T probably wants a little bit more than that, they are excited about moving. It is a great story because Scott Stringfellow was once in downtown Danville and then with the trend of today they navigated toward the mall, the high traffic area. I think it symbolic I think it says something about the new trend in the River District. Not only are we attracting businesses we are attracting the return of old businesses that had once left the area. They are excited about it so I appreciate that they want to display their brand and the way that is shows presence beyond the current clientele.

Mrs. Nicholas stated is this a business that would be open 9 to 5 or there about?

Mr. Barker stated yes.

Mrs. Nicholas stated so this sign would not be illuminated or need to be illuminated correct?

Mr. Barker stated correct.

Mrs. Nicholas stated am I reading it correctly or am I missing something is it only the one side of the building?

Mr. Barker stated it is actually on both sides of the building.

Mrs. Chaney stated so you would see it from each side.

Mrs. Nicholas stated which makes sense.

Mr. Barker stated the only thing that looks usual is if you look at the window pattern on each side of the building it's not a mirror image. There is actually more room on one

side between the corner and the window than it is on the other side. So if you look at the image the sign on one side looks larger than the other and it is actually distorted because one side is 5 feet from the window and on the other side is 8 feet. We imagine that most of their customers will come down Craghead and probably more often than not park at the community market parking lot. So they will approach the side of the building where this sign could be highly visible. We want a clear designation to the BB&T entrance they will share with us the 554 Craghead address all though there entrance will be on Colquhoun Street on the side. So we might want to come back to you with some directional signs and maybe some signs with some arrows. We don't necessarily want their clients coming into our lobby repeatedly asking for directions.

Mr. Ranson stated is there not going to be a sign at your entrance?

Mr. Barker stated yes and we plan to but that is not in this application. But they have a brass sign that is on the current building that would actually look good at the Colquhoun Street entrance. But we will come back to you all for that.

Mr. Ranson stated that building goes back for like a block doesn't it? You can have a lot of tenant's in there right?

Mr. Barker stated it actually doesn't go all the way back to Lynn Street.

Mr. Davis stated each of those buildings is about 75,000 square feet.

Mr. Barker stated so there is a Lynn Street warehouse that backs up to this Craghead street warehouse.

Mr. Ranson stated is there a limit Ken on the amount of signage that they can have over time.

Ms. Levi stated I think I figured it last week it was about 130 total square feet that they would be permitted per the Zoning Code. So you could permit anything up to that but not anything over.

Mr. Ranson stated so it shouldn't be a problem with 4 or 5 tenants.

Mr. Gillie stated that is a total that is not each.

Mr. Lackey stated that is 64 feet. Rick how big is yours?

Mr. Barker stated the smallest.

Mr. Lackey stated 10 feet maybe so you are at 74 feet out of 132. So that leaves 64 square feet for all other tenant's.

Ms. Levi stated oh yeah.

Mr. Barker stated this decision will restrict the next one for sure.

Mrs. Chaney stated so are you just looking to put a single tenant on that top floor?

Mr. Barker stated the preference would be to have one tenant take the whole top floor. If it gets busier than that we will probably have to go back to a directory sign, which would list all tenants on one side. The other thing that might be critical and why you are seeing this application today which created the need was because BB&T announced they're relocation yesterday. They intend to relocate the first of December so they were hoping with some direction from you today that they can have the signs manufactured and installed by December 1st.

Mrs. Chaney stated what is the size of those windows on the second floor?

Mr. Barker stated on the side?

Mrs. Chaney stated yeah. I mean on the front I'm sorry.

Mr. Barker stated those are much larger they are 5 feet wide and 8 feet tall roughly.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Lackey stated is there a reason staff was recommending doubling the size? If I understand the guidelines its 32 square feet per business and they are asking for 64 square feet and you all were okay with that. I am wondering why?

Ms. Levi stated based on the size of the building for a wall sign like this to cut it in half it seemed an appropriate size. Then you would need it on both sides since it is proposed to go on the sides. If you are driving down one side of the street you are only going to see one so really only one sign is going to be visible at a time. The size of each individual sign looked appropriate although we did recommend that it be limited to 32 per sign in accordance with the guidelines.

Mr. Davis stated something else that I want to bring up I don't know if this will have any impact on the consideration or not. But right about where they want to put the sign on the Colquhoun side there is still telephone poles there and a massive amount of wires it don't show it in this picture. Somewhere down the road we are figuring the side walk is going to be dug up and the wires and everything are going to be put under the ground.

Mr. Gillie stated the wires are not all ours.

Mr. Lackey stated so that's not a good assumption to make.

Mr. Gillie stated the City will do what we can but I'm not promising that things are going to go underground. We have no control over what other folks do with the overhead. So at this point I don't have an answer for you. It would be nice I won't disagree with you.

Mrs. Nicholas stated Mr. Whitfield the motion was made if I want to second but amend how do I do that?

Mr. Whitfield stated well if you want to amend it then it needs to be seconded and then you can amend it.

Mr. Ranson made a motion to approve. Mr. Hackworth seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-2 vote.

Mrs. Nicholas made a motion to amend the motion with the following conditions: reduce to 32 square feet size per guidelines for each sign. Mr. Lackey seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

Mr. Lackey stated I'll just say I'm not thrilled with doubling the per business requirement. It's not because of Rick's project but to me once you have done that then someone else comes in and says you did it for them why aren't you doing it for me. Then we are in the position to explain well this building is too big or this building is too small. I just think it has a tendency to really get out of hand.

Mr. Davis stated in all fairness RJ, a lot of the things that we have voted on haven't been standalone buildings.

Mr. Ranson stated we voted a while back to allow an increase in the signage in the district as long as it didn't exceed the City Zoning. So are you referring to the City Zoning?

Mr. Lackey stated did we move our guidelines to the City Zoning?

Ms. Levi stated no we don't.

Mrs. Chaney stated no we didn't move them to the City Zoning we just made the comment that you couldn't go above the City Zoning.

Ms. Levi stated but you all have the ability to approve things larger than the guidelines recommend.

Mr. Lackey made a motion to amend the amendment adding to give the developer permission to look at the attached sign that we have been talking about. So if he decides that what he wants to go with he don't have to come back in front of us.

Mr. Whitfield stated that is a substitute motion. So what you need now is a second for the substitute motion.

Mrs. Chaney seconded the motion.

Mr. Davis stated if the substitute motion is voted on can we do a vote by email?

Mr. Whitfield stated no nothing can be done by email.

Mr. Davis stated so technically he would have to wait until the next meeting to bring forward any other designs for the BB&T.

Mr. Whitfield stated that's correct. You can't vote by email that is strictly prohibited.

Mrs. Chaney stated if I understand RJ though your proposal for the projected sign would be a two sided sign with the same square footage. So they are to the 32 square feet and it's going to be doubled sided projecting.

Ms. Levi stated your guidelines recommend 4 square feet per side for a projecting sign.

Mr. Whitfield stated did we have a second on his motion?

Mr. Davis stated yes Sheri seconded it.

Mr. Whitfield stated you can withdraw your motion.

Mr. Lackey withdrew his motion given the fact that it is 8 times what we allow on a projecting sign.

Mr. Whitfield stated so now we need a vote on the amendment and the original motion.

The amendment was passed with a 6-0 vote.

The original motion passed with a 4-2 vote.

- 3. A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 548 Craghead St. to install a temporary wall with vinyl informational and real estate signage inside the courtyard area.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Rick Barker, the applicant. Mr. Barker stated we are again sharing some of the same concerns we don't want all of these buildings tattooed with multiple signs. We thought well of 548 Craghead which is the former Eldridge Drugstore which no longer has a roof; which makes it what we refer to it now as a courtyard. But there is a façade there but no buildings behind it. So rather than having multiple signs on different buildings I thought of taking this courtyard area

building a wall in it that has a roof. When I say a roof I mean a shared roof to keep the water off the wall and having the ability to attach signs. There are a lot of curious people that want to know what is happening and I think with the proper display of information that would educate some interesting parties. So among the things that we would like to display I would like to have a rendering of the entire streetscape mounted on this board. The City will soon be releasing the final design plans for the parking lot that is going to be constructing that will accommodate these buildings. That design is impressive. When I look at River District infrastructure of the buildings and what the designer has come up with if there was ever a parking lot competition this would be an award winning parking lot. So that favorably enhances this property and I would like to have that mounted on the wall as well. We would also like to display in a smaller way some information about who to contact for leasing opportunities. We would not do that on every building but at one central spot that would include advertising for the entire block. The way this would be situated is you would have the sidewalk, façade and then this wall that you approach on the interior so it would be 6 to 8 feet back from the front façade. So if someone would curious they could park there car and walk on the sidewalk to read this.

Mrs. Nicholas stated it's hard for me to tell from the picture the wall that you are building would it reach from end to end?

Mr. Barker stated yes. The idea is this is going to be constructed by 4 sheets of plywood that would be 8 feet tall and so we don't block our way into the courtyard we would put a small hinge door on the side. I'm guessing this is probably an usual request. It is not one large billboard if you will but the wall itself will be oversized to a sign so I would expect if you were incline to say yes to this concept at all. You might want to limit the size of each individual sign.

Mrs. Chaney stated I assume that this wall is only going to be there during the construction period. Once you are done with everything it would be coming down because you are going to be doing something with this courtyard area.

Mr. Barker stated we imagine that courtyard becomes a compliment to the building on the left in case it becomes a restaurant that could be outdoor setting in that courtyard.

Mr. Hackworth stated Rick, I walked down to the building and part of the reason I assume you are doing this is for safety? It is really easy to notice when you walk to the courtyard that the shared interior wall of the Shift building has had a tree growing in it and part of the brick is sort of folding out. So there is a safety concern on that part that this is partially addressing but the other concern that I have is the structural beam that is holding up the upper façade. I noticed if you walk by there is extreme deterioration of on the side where the shift building is and some termite damage on the other side. So it similar to the issue you are currently facing with the Hughes building. So I am wondering have you had that looked at and will this be addressed before the wall goes in? People are going to be curious and they are going to walk in my concern would be with someone walking in and if that beam fell then you would have a liability there.

Mr. Baker stated I appreciate you looking at it that carefully. You are right our primary concern is centralizing the advertising if you will but by putting that wall toward the front

it does keep traffic out of the rear. I can tell you there is a no trespassing sign up there now and it's not relevant because there are probably wedding pictures in there every weekend. You are right about your concern of the stability of the façade we have had a structural engineer take a look at that. Because 548 is a façade only it doesn't meet the Department of Interior definition of a building. So it was not qualified for tax credits where the buildings on each side do. So we have a little bit more flexibility with what we can do with it because that façade is not attached to a structure. So on the front we will restore the cornice that was there originally. We have some 1960 photos and we know exactly what the cornice looked like. So we will replicate that and return the cornice to that façade. Then on the interior of the courtyard we plan to put metal L brackets that will be on each side of the façade which will tie the façade back to the two buildings on the side. Essentially, if you walk through the door and you are in the courtyard you turn around and look at the back of the façade we are going to put a metal ties and fasten it to the buildings just for sheer. The wind could blow that façade out because it's so little under it. Then you will see some of this in a later application in addition to restoring or replacing the cornice with the original design. Then there will be a metal wrought iron black metal fence at the bottom we will come back and suggest later and actually create a courtyard. But we are not limited because it is not historic tax credit.

Mr. Hackworth stated the stability issues how long do you anticipate before that is actually addressed?

Mr. Barker stated if you all made this signage subject to stability we could do it first.

Mr. Whitfield stated which you can do.

Mr. Barker stated we plan to do that anyway it would just change the schedule by which we do.

Mr. Hackworth stated is that currently built into the cost of what you are doing now?

Mr. Barker stated no, it is something that would need to be addressed long term so if we solve that problem in the next 60 days rather than the next year or two we don't have a problem with doing that.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Nicholas made a motion to approve subject to stability that the roof and the wall be approved with signage limited up to 32 square feet per sign for a period of no longer than 18 months (so that it's just not some permanent wall). Mr. Hackworth seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

Mr. Barker stated to satisfy the requirement of stability can I just copy you on the architectural structural design to correct that? Is that satisfactory?

Mr. Gillie stated send it to me.

Mr. Davis stated as long as he approves it we are good to go.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The September 8, 2016 minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Gillie stated the River District festival is this week.

Ms. Levi stated it starts today so right at 5 o' clock at Main Street and North Union a lot of businesses are staying open late. There is going to be a beer garden, music, etc. and it goes all weekend.

Mr. Gillie stated in front of you are a couple of photographs. The car wash that came in front of you two months ago I think at Union Street. It went to Planning Commission and they followed you recommendation of no. It went to City Council and they tabled it to give the applicant the chance to try and work from the outside to maybe come up with some other solutions. The applicant presented these to Staff to see if this would possibly be something that River District would look at. It's not an official request yet he didn't want to go too far into it if this is not something you are looking for. So I told him the meeting was today at 4 I would come and present it to you and see if anyone was yes, no or could give any suggestions to the applicant. He would still like to stay in that same area but he understands that the outside open air car wash is probably something that people are looking for. He is looking for alternatives on how to try to meet what everyone wanted for that area. So I just wanted to present these to you and you can just let me know. It is not an official request. It will be a single door building of this size sort in these colors. There is not enough room the build a double so that's why you have got the two different pictures. I am not good with colors so thank you for reminding me Clarke that they are different. If you could just take a look over them and you can let me know yeah or no and you have any other options that you think of let Staff know; so that I can direct him in what to do.

Mr. Chaney stated is he still talking about putting his directly behind this building?

Mr. Gillie stated correct.

Mr. Hackworth stated I wasn't here for that meeting obviously but I was here for the Council meeting. Has the building owner agreed to that?

Mr. Gillie stated no yet my understanding is that he is potentially looking at purchasing the building.

Mr. Whitfield stated he probably wants to get all of this squared away before he goes to the building owner anyway.

Mr. Gillie stated if he goes to try and buy it and he is told no anyway then he might look at a different site. That's why he is asking for ideas from this body. So just think about it and let me know.

Mr. Davis stated ken if you could send us an email with all of our address on it.

Mr. Whitfield stated just don't discuss it back and forth and make sure that you send everything.

Mr. Hackworth stated is it possible when you send that email that you can send the Zoning provision actually dealing with new construction?

Mr. Gillie stated correct.

Mr. Lackey stated I'm going to say that I couldn't imagine that I would vote for this.

Mr. Gillie stated okay.

Mr. Hackworth stated my intimal gut would be no.

Mr. Gillie stated okay that's fine.

Mrs. Chaney stated for a metal building, what already exist is existing and there is nothing you can do about that. But he is talking about building a brand new metal building downtown at least it would look better than some of the others. But I still thinking the same way I'm not in favor I see it turning into something more.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

Approved By: