

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN COMMISSION

MEETING OF

April 13, 2017

Members Present

Peyton Keesee
George Davis
Courtney Nicholas
Sheri Chaney
Jonathan Hackworth
John Ranson

Members Absent

R.J. Lackey

Staff

Renee Burton
Anna Levi
Tracie Lancaster
Alan Spencer

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

I. ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

1. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 416-430 Main Street to install up to three (3) 24 sq. ft. "Use Your Re-imagination" signs to collect citizen input on what kinds of businesses are desired in vacant river district storefronts.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Ernecia Coles. Ms. Coles stated we are starting a Re-imagination campaign. It is a way to call attention to some of the vacant store fronts and some of the vacant buildings in the River District. Also, getting public engagement and getting ideas about the types of the buildings they would like to see at those locations. What types of retail store would they like to see? What restaurants would they like to see? We have gotten some approval so far for those. I think at the next meeting you will see some additional buildings that would like to be involved in this campaign. The description in the application describes the types of signage that will be posted on the building. It is the Belk building. It is one of the largest, maybe the second largest, vacant building downtown. We are really curious to see what types of ideas people offer. It is basically a sign we will have dry erase markers placed on those signs with Velcro so that people can write down their ideas. That will inform Watershed Ventures, the group for the planning of that building, as well as the office of Economic Development who is trying to bring businesses into this area. Also the design of the signage was something that was actually proposed a couple of years ago during the rebranding effort for the River District. So I worked with the Laura Ashworth to design it. I can answer any question that you all might have.

Mr. Hackworth stated how do you plan to monitor it?

Ms. Coles stated daily. Our office at the Belk is only a few feet away. We will check it daily, probably at the end of every day for any inappropriate verbiage.

Mr. Hackworth stated well, that is my concern it is going to be on a dry erase board and you are essentially setting it up to become the downtown version of the Walmart bathroom wall. If you are only monitoring one time a day then anything that is of value that gets out on there could get erased.

Ms. Coles stated that is true too we will take down whatever we see and probably take photos of it too. We will monitor that and keep that in mind as days pass. If it becomes a more negative campaign than position we will probably end it early. But I have faith in Danvillians to share positive response. That is what I would like to keep in mind until I am proven otherwise. But it will be monitored maybe twice a day.

Mrs. Nicholas stated just for your own knowledge if someone uses sharpie on it and you go over it with dry erase marker it will come off.

Mr. Davis stated that was my concern the minute you said writing on it with a marker and looking at it daily. I can just imagine some of the things that would be written on there at night. I have danvillians too but there are a lot of people that don't consider themselves danvillians and they don't consider themselves of any other group nor do they care.

Ms. Coles stated perhaps we will do that in the morning and in the evening.

Mr. Hackworth stated if I may just suggest, just knowing how we have had to deal with stuff around our building on Bridge Street, sometimes I encourage you to stop by in the morning, at lunch and in the evening.

Ms. Coles stated okay.

Mr. Davis stated have you considered a dropbox?

Ms. Coles stated we could. I'm not sure how we would attach it though to particularly the store fronts on Main Street that we hope will participate. This seemed to be the easiest. Actually I know there are a number on Main Street all over the nation that are participated in this type of thing. They use stickers on the plywood boards and also another type of sticker for windows. So I would like to see how it goes the first month then if it is very negative we will consider another way to conduct this campaign.

Mr. Keesee stated it sounds to me like you are going to monitor it and if it gets out of hand you will do away with it. I don't see an issue with it.

Ms. Coles stated people can easily provide feedback via Facebook. However, we want to encourage people to physically walk downtown. We will post where these locations are on Facebook and see how many people are engaged. Especially the different events we have downtown. We really want to encourage people to walk Main Street, Craghead and other locations. That is the best way to get them to engage and visit the businesses in the River District.

Mrs. Nicholas stated it also may be valuable versus a dropbox because people will be able to see other people's ideas and that might inspire them towards something.

Mr. Davis stated I am all for it if it works.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ranson stated the only way we will know if it will work is approve it.

Mrs. Nicholas made a motion that the request meets the guidelines. Mr. Ranson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

2. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 309 Main Street to install a 3.5' x 9.25' sign on the north side of the building and a 2' x4.5' sign on the front of the building. Both signs will advertise di'lishi frozen yogurt bar. The request also includes painting the storefront and installing a temporary "Coming Soon" banner.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Ms. Levi stated the applicant called me this morning and stated that he had a family emergency and was unable to attend the meeting today.

Mr. Spencer stated did they indicate they wanted to delay action until they can be here?

Ms. Levi stated I suppose that would be up to you all.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Nicholas made a motion that the request doesn't meet the guidelines. Mr. Hackworth seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

Mrs. Nicholas made a motion that the request causes a minor discrepancy to the district and or property and should be grant the variance. Mr. Hackworth seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

3. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 600 Lynn Street to install an interpretative panel detailing the history of the site with information about the Danville Lumber and Manufacturing Company. The panel will be freestanding*

and will be 40" x 28" will be placed near the creek to the west side of the main building.

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Steve Dishman. Mr. Dishman stated I was informed that you all have the information as far as diagrams and pictures. We have two items so I'm trying to make sure I have the right one. This will be signs very similar to existing signs placed along the river trail and other sites around Danville. It will be describing the history of the site and area. It will have a picture of the historic significance of each of those.

Mr. Davis stated Steve, does this have anything to do with the little building that you all are in process of refurbishing?

Mr. Dishman stated that is the second request. We have to request. The first that you mentioned there will be right off of a parking lot. We have a visitors parking that is right between the 911 center and the Fire station this will be placed just beyond the sidewalk from that. So that anyone coming to view that would be able to stay on the sidewalk from the parking lot. This will be at the center of the site.

Mrs. Chaney stated this basically just acknowledges the history of the Danville Lumber Company.

Mr. Dishman stated that is correct and the site itself. As you see the pictures there of the main buildings as they were along Main Street.

Mrs. Nicholas stated about how close to the Fire house would the sign be?

Mr. Dishman stated if you look at the picture you have there it would be almost directly between the fire stations itself and the 911 center. As you see where the creek conveys and goes under the parking lot it would be in line with that. Which would make it more conducive to someone standing there to read and they wouldn't be so close to the station that they couldn't get a more panoramic view.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Nicholas stated I have a question. The guidelines speak about the mounting of signs onto buildings but I don't see much information about signs that are not attached to buildings.

Mrs. Burton stated this is something that really wasn't addressed during the design guidelines. This is something that is not considered advertising or commercial copy so it's kind of a case by case basis.

Mrs. Nicholas stated is it bound at all by size?

Mrs. Burton stated no.

Mr. Spencer stated so are you saying there are no rules?

Mrs. Burton stated they are the rules. It's all case by case.

Mrs. Chaney stated how they designed their sign and the way it looks like it is going to be mounted? I think it is similar to some that are already on the river walk trail.

Mrs. Burton stated it is. This mimics the river walk.

Mr. Davis stated it's not on the street it's within the perimeters of the fire stations itself right?

Mrs. Burton stated that's correct.

Mr. Spencer stated so would the motion just say that they move to approve it because there are not guidelines to say it meets?

Mrs. Burton stated I think there is a section that talks about just case by case basis. So you could still say that it meets the guidelines.

Mrs. Nicholas made a motion to approve as it meets the guidelines as written. Mr. Ranson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

4. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 600 Lynn Street to install a 18" x 12" interpretative panel at the two (2) remaining Danville Lumber Buildings on site. The panel will detail the use of the structures while Danville Lumber and Manufacturing Company was in operation.*

Present to speak on behalf of this request was Steve Dishman. Mr. Dishman stated there are two buildings that have been preserved and they are currently undergoing restoration that remained from the Danville Lumber company. This will be attached to the building itself because there is no other way to display this sign. This will describe specifically what these buildings were as you see the proposed verbiage. The sign will be attached to the building, flush with the building but something that could be read from the sidewalk for anyone that is passing through. This also fits with the Historical Preservation of the sidewalk with the cobblestones that came from the site. Do you all have any questions?

Mrs. Nicholas stated the sign itself what material will it be made of?

Mr. Dishman stated aluminum digital print.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Nicholas stated this would not put them anywhere near the 32 square foot limit right?

Mrs. Burton stated no. This will actually be just considered as informational signage not advertising copy. So it doesn't affect that.

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

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

III. OTHER BUSINESS

- Revised plans for the propane refueling station at 522 Spring Street

Mrs. Burton stated you do have paperwork in front of you, some diagrams about the propane fueling station that was discussed a couple of months ago. Marc Adelman is going to discuss that further with you.

Mr. Adelman stated a few months ago we met with the Commission concerning our interest to develop a propane refueling station across from the existing transportation center which is located at 515 Springs Street. It is my understanding that the Commission has the two page handout. The top page identifies our current interest. The second page reflects the original design that was reviewed by the Commission. The original plan called for an above ground 1000 gallon tank to be located in the corner of the parking lot at 522 Springs Street and having privacy fencing bordering the 1000 gallon tank. Just for reference you can see in that diagram where it has diagonal lines that section of the parking lot would have to be striped so that no one would be traversing through that area. You have got hatch lines that reflect rectangles those are supposed to represent buses that would be pulling over to the side and the dispenser units which are the pumps to actually put the fuel or propane into the buses. They would be side by side there and fuel up. Since we came up with this concept we continued to collect research from different vendors so that we could install the best facility possible. It was recommended that we pursue instead of a 1000 gallon tank, we go with a 2000 gallon tank and install the tank underground. That diagram is referenced on the top page of your two page attachment. If you look there you will see that where it references the 2000 gallon tank that is underground. That is the location as opposed to being in the far corner of 522 Springs Street properties. The pumps are dispensed and it will still be

located within the same location. One of the issues at the beginning was the fire departments concern regarding having a below ground tank. Since that discussion they are recommending that it would be the preferred option to put the tank underground. We have made an application to the State for Federal and State funding for this project. Before I came here today I was speaking with my representative at the State about the project and it is going to be recommended for funding. We won't know for sure until June. Since the plans have changed where we are going from a smaller tank to a larger tank and above ground to below ground we wanted to make you aware of where we were. We not seeking any approval at this time, we just wanted to make you aware of the things that have changed.

Mr. Davis stated did we table this before?

Mrs. Burton stated no it was approved.

Mr. Davis stated but you are just changing your mind.

Mr. Adelman stated correct. We want to make sure we do this right the first time.

Mrs. Chaney stated I'm just curios why did they all of a sudden say that an underground tank was better than an above ground tank?

Mr. Adelman stated well we went and talked with the Fire Marshall office and I think there were multiple reasons. First, as far as it being underground it is better protected from fire, a fire that could occur nearby adjacent to the property. Also, vandalism because it is located in an area that is not secured like Public Works Mass Transit propane station away from the general public. This is out in the public. We looked at that as an advantage.

Mr. Chris Franks stated for obvious reasons there is less equipment above that could be struck by lightning or vehicles, things like that.

Mrs. Chaney stated my only concern would be leakage.

Mr. Adelman stated the Fire Marshall didn't have any concerns about that. There are also advantages of maintaining warmer temperatures though out the year. There are more advantages then disadvantages. We will have to do more monitoring because it is below ground.

Mrs. Chaney stated I just come from a background of underground storage tanks and so that's why I was wondering. It's unusual that they would want to put it underground versus above but it makes since.

Mr. Adelman stated I think the location is the main reason. My plans were to come back to the Commission for final approval once we receive information about whether the grant has been approved or not if that's the appropriate approach.

Mrs. Burton stated yes.

Mr. Ranson stated how long are certificates good for?

Mrs. Burton stated certificates are good for one year.

Mrs. Nicholas stated we granted something different than what is been proposed now.

Mr. Ranson stated I understand that but even if it don't get funded and we approve it. I just wanted to save Marc another trip.

Mrs. Nicholas stated we approved that and he is asking for this.

Mr. Ranson stated I know but we can approve this now.

Mrs. Burton stated we don't have an official application so he has not officially applied at this time. If the Commission decides that they want to accept this as an application then you can vote on that. Then in turn vote for Certificate of Appropriateness.

Mr. Davis stated I'm going to play Mr. Lackey again it seems like to me if we approved it with it being above ground, and the Fire Marshall approves it with it being below ground it seems like to me it's a safer unit underground anyway. So what form of approval does he need from this Commission if we have already approved the tank being above ground?

Mr. Adelman stated it is possible if we go out to bid and the price comes in way over and we would have to revisit. So it may be better to come back when everything is final.

Mr. Davis stated okay we appreciate you coming today and keeping us informed.

Mrs. Burton stated just to let you know that you do have cases for next month so please plan on attending.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Approved By: