Meeting Minutes of the Design Review Board (DRB)
Special Call Meeting
Tuesday, July 9, 2013

The Design Review Board (DRB) met in the City Hall Council Chambers on Tuesday, July 9, 2013, at 5:30 P.M., with the following members in attendance: Ricky Richardson, Bill Joslin, Tip Pitts, and Mike Henthorn. Representing the Planning Department were Joshua Henderson and Julie Roland. Assistant City Manager Chris Story also attended the meeting.

[Editor's Note: Priscilla Singleton resigned from the Board on June 19, 2013, because she was now living in Atlanta, Georgia. A Pre-Agenda meeting was held in the City Manager's Conference Room at 5:15 P.M. where the Board Members were briefed on one discretionary review case, and had discussion.]

Roll Call

Mr. Richardson, the Chair, stated that notice of this meeting was posted and provided to the media 24 hours in advance as required by the Freedom of Information Act.

Mr. Richardson noted that four Design Review Board Members were present, constituting a quorum. Mr. Richardson said Ms. Priscilla Singleton would be missed on the Board; and there was one current vacancy position.

Mr. Richardson suggested the Agenda be amended to move the Election of Chair and Vice-Chair to the next meeting; and the Agenda for the July 9, 2013 Special Call meeting was approved as amended by acclimation.

Disposition of the Minutes from the June 12, 2013 Design Review Board (DRB)Special Call Meeting

Mr. Joslin made a motion to approve the March 5, 2013 minutes as submitted, and was seconded by Mr. Pitts. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Old Business – None.

New Business

Discretionary Review of a proposed 9 square foot (36" in diameter) hanging arm sign over entrance of Growler Haus located at 113 North Church Street, from Craig Kinley, Business Owner, in the DT-6 District.

Mr. Joshua Henderson came forward and was sworn; and he submitted the meeting packets the Board Members had previously received, as well as the slides and presentation into evidence, as Exhibit A; and he explained to the Board Members the petitioner proposed to install a 9 square foot, bracket mounted hanging sign on the building at 113 North Church Street in the DT-6 District. Mr. Henderson further informed the Board Members the applicant was requesting a Discretionary Review since Section 9.2 of the Urban Code allowed for arm signs to be installed by businesses that were located in high pedestrian traffic areas. The section stated that all arm signs are to be no more than 4 square feet in size and no more than 18" in total height. Per Section 2.2.2. of the Urban Code, Discretionary Reviews "would permit a change necessitated by a site specific condition, building specific condition, or an innovative manner in which to fulfill the overall design intent of the Urban Code", and required a public hearing for the portion of the project that is necessary to rule on the specific relief requested. He said the petitioner was present to address the Board Members on behalf of Growler Haus. He concluded his presentation by showing slides in order to better illustrate the request. He also showed slides Board Member Bill Joslin had sent to him, in order to show how the building looked approximately 4 years ago, and approximately 40 years ago, which Mr. Joslin explained in detail.

Mr. Craig Kinley, Owner of Growler Haus came forward and was sworn.

Mr. Richardson explained to Mr. Kinley the Design Review Board's intent was to make the experience of someone walking down the sidewalk in the downtown area, as pleasing as it could be, and they wanted it to be consistent throughout the City. He explained they were a fairly new Board in the City of Spartanburg, and as they tried to transition the town into a more pedestrian friendly environment, the

whole scale of what they were trying to accomplish with the downtown was very deliberate in making the experience more pleasant and friendly for someone walking in the Spartanburg downtown area. They wanted pedestrians to find the downtown shops interesting, look in the windows, and be attracted enough to enter the downtown businesses. The awnings and signage were all part of the entire experience, as well as the streetscape (trees, bushes, etc.). Mr. Richardson informed Mr. Kinley as the Board tried to debate these types of cases, the scope of what they were trying to accomplish was who each petitioner was trying to attract, regarding their signage, windows, awnings, etc. He said there would also be a lot of people driving down Church Street; and from his viewpoint, the vehicular traffic would not necessarily be their main customers, but rather people walking down the street. He explained the Board had heard quite a few variance cases regarding signs thus far, and had quite a few discussions, which he would like for him to participate in.

Board Comments and Questions:

- Mr. Joslin referenced a slide of the building and sign from the previous owner, and asked Mr. Kinley if he planned to activate the sign from the Cigar Shop with any signage. Mr. Kinley said that sign would be removed.
- Mr. Joslin asked the petitioner about the height for the proposed sign. Mr. Kinley said one reason was because he felt like the sign needed to be above the Crepe Myrtle trees out front; and he explained the other reason was vehicle traffic related.
- Mr. Joslin asked the petitioner if the trees were not out in front of the building, where would he have proposed to have the sign hung. Mr. Kinley referenced a slide of the building and showed he would have placed the sign much lower above the entrance.
- Mr. Pitts asked the petitioner if the proposed 9 square foot sign was also due to the trees. Mr. Kinley explained he proposed the type of sign that had been approved for Wild Wings; however, he had no problem dropping the size to four square feet.
- Mr. Joslin informed the petitioner, the Wild Wings sign had been installed before the Urban Code had gone into effect.
- Mr. Richardson said the Wild Wings sign would not have been allowed today.
- Mr. Pitts asked if the Crepe Myrtles were City owned trees. Mr. Henderson said they were.
- Mr. Joslin asked would the mezzanine portion of the building be activated with tables. Mr. Kinley said yes.
- Mr. Joslin felt the view from the inside looking out would be hindered by the Crepe Myrtle trees.
- Mr. Joslin referenced a slide of the photo montage of the building at Groucho's regarding a hedge; and he said perhaps the Crepe Myrtles could be replaced with an urban hedge that would still provide a safety zone from the busy street and the establishment, and felt it would enhance a lot of the issues they were talking about.
- Mr. Pitts liked the idea of removing the Crepe Myrtles, and felt they should go back with at least one canopy tree, and maybe on the far corner closest to Dunbar use a Ginkgo tree. He agreed that the evergreen hedge would be an appropriate hedge.
- Mr. Henthorn felt from an urban point of view the Crepe Myrtles were creating more problems, and the idea of replacing them with a hedge as a buffer between the street and the sidewalk was a good idea. It would provide greenery, a space definition between the sidewalk and the road, and would also allow customers to see out the windows and see the store front. Mr. Henthorn said he could see why the petitioner felt he needed the proposed sign to be placed so high.
- Mr. Richardson liked all of the previous thoughts, and felt it would feel a lot better. He asked Assistant City Manager Story if he had any thoughts on the matter. Assistant City Manager Story said it was definitely doable.

Mr. Kinley informed the Board Members if the Crepe Myrtle trees could come out, and he brought the sign down to pedestrian view; he could take the proposed sign down to a 24" by 24" sign which would really work for him.

Board Questions and Comments:

- Mr. Henthorn felt this whole issue went back to the original intent of the signage part of the Urban Code, and they had a lot of discussions about this issue. One of the main objectives was to get the signs down to where people could see them on the street, and to establish a signage ban along storefronts. He said the Design Review Board was trying to focus it back to where everything was nice and organized and people knew where to look for the signs. He said it also created a certain more walk able feeling as you walked down the street. Mr. Henthorn said if they had to change a little bit of landscape in order to make that work, they should do it.
- Mr. Joslin agreed.
- Mr. Kinley said he would take the size of the sign down to 24" x 24", if the trees come out.
- Mr. Joslin explained by doing that, it would be a tremendous help to the activity going on in the City in a very positive way.
- Mr. Richardson felt the consensus of the Board Members was if the trees could be removed and be replaced with a hedge, and the petitioner went with the 24" sign was a great solution and would be a huge improvement to the walk ability, etc. to Morgan Square. He asked Assistant City Manager Story, since the solution had been resolved if they needed to vote on anything.
- Assistant City Manager Story said he did not see any problems, and he would talk with Josh Baker tomorrow; and if there were any problems he would let them know.
- Mr. Joslin asked what was the time frame for Growler Haus to open. Mr. Kinley said he hoped to be open by August 1, 2013.

Mr. Richardson informed the petitioner they would leave everything in the hands of the Assistant City Manager and City Staff; and he thanked him for coming to the City of Spartanburg.

Mr. Richardson asked who was doing his signage, and about the materials. Mr. Kinley explained.

Mr. Joslin asked if his sign maker was in Anderson, S.C. Mr. Kinley said his sign maker was a professional contractor that did a lot of signage for him.

Mr. Joslin asked if the sign person received a design from the petitioner or was it his own design. Mr. Kinley explained it was a Growler Haus logo.

Mr. Joslin asked if they were going to activate the Charleston garden in the back. Mr. Kinley said yes, and explained they had access to it.

Mr. Richardson said the Board Members would look forward to hearing from Staff regarding this meeting.

Staff's Announcements

- Mrs. Roland reminded the Board Members there was one vacancy on the Design Review Board, and if they knew of anyone who would be a good candidate and would be willing to serve on the Board, to email her or the City Clerk for a form to be filled out for consideration by the Mayor and City Council.
- Mrs. Roland said there were two vacant positions on the Board of Zoning Appeals, and three vacant positions on the City Planning Commission, and there had been approximately five people who had sent in forms for consideration for the Planning Commission.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 6:15 P.M.

~~Ricky Richardson, Chair~~
Mike Henthorn, Vice Chair

Edited by Julie Roland, Secretary