

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 19, 2010 DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

CITY OF MESA

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2010

A meeting of the Design Review Board was held in the View Conference Room, 55 North Center at 5:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tim Nielsen - Chair
Wendy LeSueur – Vice Chair
Tom Bottomley
Dan Maldonado

OTHERS PRESENT

Lesley Davis
Debbie Archuleta
John Wesley
Gordon Sheffield
Laura Hyneman

MEMBERS ABSENT

Greg Lambright
Craig Boswell
Delight Clark

A. Review of Design Guidelines for Commercial Districts

Staffmember Laura Hyneman presented the changes she had made to Chapter 6 of the Zoning Code incorporating the Board comments from the January 6th meeting. The Board liked the design objectives.

The Board continued discussion of Chapter 6, specifically discussing development standards for 'urban' districts and large commercial centers. Gordon Sheffield explained the setbacks in the Commercial and Mixed Use Districts would be 30' for sites with an –A (auto) designator, 10' for sites with an –M, (mixed) designator, and sites with a –U (urban) designator could build right to the property line along the street.

Planning Director John Wesley stated the City planned to encourage the urban designation in areas where urban development was appropriate, rather than allowing –U designators for individual sites or buildings.

Regarding transparency of the ground floor: Chair Nielsen was concerned that if buildings were brought up to the street with parking in the rear the result would be buildings with solid walls or spandrel glass on the street side because business owners would place storage uses on the street side with entrances near the parking. He wanted the street side to be the people place. Boardmember LeSueur stated that in Scottsdale there are buildings brought up to 6 lane streets with parking in the rear. The buildings have display cases facing the street. She thought it was very well done.

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Regarding parking structures: Boardmember LeSueur stated there are some really great parking structures you wouldn't want to hide. Boardmember Bottomley thought parking structures need to be attractive, not just functional. Both thought there should be allowances for attractive parking structures.

Regarding build to lines: Boardmember Bottomley agreed buildings typically shouldn't be too far back from the street; however, he thought there should be exceptions for courtyards for U-shaped buildings or multiple buildings. Boardmember Maldonado wanted to make sure that retention basins were not placed between the street and the fronts of buildings if they were setback.

Regarding big boxes: Chair Nielsen thought they needed to have people scale, especially at the entrances. Boardmember Bottomley thought they needed to break the box and integrate the architecture not just 'tack architectural details' on. He stated big boxes should be architecture not camouflaged boxes. Boardmember LeSueur suggested using more trees next to the building to soften the building. Boardmember Maldonado suggested maximizing areas with several trees instead of evenly spacing the trees along the building. Boardmember LeSueur suggested requiring a percentage of coverage instead of saying one tree and two shrubs every 25'. Mr. Wesley questioned what the purpose of the landscaping should be. Is it screen, to shade, to soften? The board thought that landscaping needs to come up against the building more. They thought architects need to plan for the landscaping. Boardmember Bottomley thought the landscaping needs to be planned for in the design of the building. Landscaping should provide light and shadow to create interest on the building. Boardmember Maldonado stated the problem is the tenants always think trees block their signs. Boardmember LeSueur stated that is why trees need to be clustered. She suggested Kierland was a good example of how landscaping should work with a building. Boardmember Bottomley thought the size of the landscaping should be appropriate to the scale of the building. Boardmember Maldonado thought the landscaping should tie in with the pieces of the buildings. He thought signage should be determined earlier so the landscaping can be planned around it.

B. Adjournment:

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Archuleta
Planning Assistant

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