

MINUTES OF THE, AUGUST 5, 2009 DESIGN REVIEW MEETING

CITY OF MESA
MINUTES OF THE
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
August 5, 2009

A meeting of the Design Review Board was held in the Lower Level of the Council Chambers 57 East First Street, at 5:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tim Nielsen - Chair
Wendy LeSueur – Vice Chair
Tom Bottomley
Craig Boswell
Delight Clark

MEMBERS ABSENT

Greg Lambright

OTHERS PRESENT

Lesley Davis
Debbie Archuleta
Tom Ellsworth
John Wesley
Gordon Sheffield
Jeff McVay
Christine Zielonka
Reese Anderson
Barry Berkus
John Rosenfeld
Greg Marek
John Ducios
Others

MINUTES OF THE, AUGUST 5, 2009 DESIGN REVIEW MEETING

A. Call to Order:

Chair Tim Nielsen called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

B. Approval of the Minutes of the July 1, 2009 Meeting:

On a motion by Craig Boswell seconded by Wendy LeSueur the Board unanimously approved the minutes.

C. Take Action on all Consent Agenda items:

D. Design Review Cases:

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 5, 2009 DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

CASE #: DR09-15 **Desert Creek at Las Sendas**
LOCATION/ADDRESS: Northwest corner McDowell & Ridgecrest
REQUEST: Approval of a 73,972 sq. ft. office building, residential Villas at Las Sendas, the internal circulation road, and the dry creek area
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 5
OWNER: Talon Properties LLC/Chris Arnold
APPLICANT: Pew and Lake
ARCHITECT: Berkus Design Studio
STAFF PLANNER: Tom Ellsworth

REQUEST: Approval of a 73,972 sq. ft. office building, residential Villas at Las Sendas, the internal circulation road, and the dry creek area

SUMMARY: Tom Ellsworth explained the changes that had been made since the work session in July. Reese Anderson, Barry Berkus and John Rosenfeld represented the case. Mr. Anderson stated the applicants were in agreement with the staff report and the conditions of approval as proposed. Mr. Berkus explained the project had been designed to feel like a Village that had been built over time. Elements had been taken from Portofino.

Greg Marek, an adjacent neighbor, spoke regarding the project. Mr. Marek stated he was very supportive of the designs. He was glad the design concept would set the precedent for the retail to come in the future. He stated part of the wash would go through the office portion, he was concerned there was not a lot of detail. He was also concerned with signage. He wanted the Board to advise the Board of Adjustment to design the signs to be class A office signs. He also stated the Las Sendas Board had voted to approve this project.

John Ducios, another neighbor then spoke. Mr. Ducios agreed with Mr. Marek. He stated he wanted a partnership between Las Sendas and the developer. He thought that this level of quality was necessary for the residential and the future retail.

Mr. Anderson stated the reason the wash was not being completed was that future phases would have to remove them to develop their phases. He stated the signs would be design for Class A offices.

Chair Tim Nielsen confirmed there would be an off-set between the windows and the stucco on the office building. He wanted the Design Review Board to review the comprehensive sign plan prior to Board of Adjustment review. He suggested the review could be at a work session.

Zoning Administrator, Gordon Sheffield then stated that the number, size and location of the signs are the Board of Adjustment purview. This Board only reviews design. He also stated that if the sign package meets Code the applicant would not be required to go before the Board of Adjustment. Chair Nielsen stated this Board wants to ensure that the signs complement the architecture of the development.

Boardmember Tom Bottomley liked the changes to the wainscot. He thought the stone on the columns at the 4 & 5 floors would be too heavy. Mr. Berkus stated they could use the

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 5, 2009 DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

CDI or match the freeze. He thought the scale of the freeze seemed a little high. He suggested using the coping detail of the finish floor below the freeze.

MOTION: It was moved by Tom Bottomley and seconded by Craig Boswell that DR09-15 be approved with the following conditions:

1. Compliance with the development as described in the Design Review Board staff report and as shown on the site plan, landscape plan, floor plans and exterior elevations with the following modifications to be provided to Design Review staff for review and approval at least one week prior to submitting construction documents to the Building Safety Division:
 - a. Provide brochure photo of the Craftsman Court Ceramic Inlay Tile for the file.
 - b. **On the south elevation of the office building the columns on the upper center section are not to be wrapped in stone; use painted stucco or CDI possibly. To be reviewed by Planning staff.**
 - c. **Use the coping detail of the finish floor below the freeze.**
 - d. **The boxed element on the clubhouse to be sloped tile element at the appropriate scale.**
 - e. **Give comment to Board of Adjustment regarding the comp sign package at a Design Review work session meeting.**
2. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
3. Compliance with all requirements of the Development Services, Engineering, Transportation, and Solid Waste Departments.
4. Compliance with all requirements of the Subdivision Regulations if the pad/building sites are to be individually owned or if there is to be a condominium form of ownership.
5. All backflow preventers 2" or larger shall be screened with landscape material located within a 6' radius of the backflow preventer. All backflow preventers less than 2" shall be placed in a wire mesh basket *and painted green. (The City of Mesa has requested the change to green, to discourage theft.)*
6. Fire risers, building downspouts and roof access ladders are to be located within the building.

VOTE: Passed 5 – 0

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 5, 2009 DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

- E. Discuss, receive comment and take action on the following appeals of Administrative Design Review:

None

- F. Discuss and give direction to City staff on the following text amendment:

Possible amendment to the Mesa City Code regarding Titles 2 and 11 as they apply to the Planning and Zoning Board, Downtown Development Committee, and Design Review Board.

Staff Planner: Gordon Sheffield

Staff Recommendation: Discuss

Planning Director, John Wesley, stated comments from this Board will be given to the City Council. He stated the goal was to improve the process and ensure quality development. He briefly explained that per the proposal Planning and Zoning Board would be looking everything in the City including the Downtown. As of January 1, Planning staff had taken over responsibility for the downtown. He stated it was possible there could be sub-committees of the Planning and Zoning Board to focus on areas of the City like the downtown, the citrus area, Las Sendas, etc. He also stated there was some interest in going to a village system like Phoenix.

Chair Tim Nielsen questioned how a village system would work. How do you integrate the citrus area into a village group? Would most groups be larger?

Mr. Wesley explained they would likely be large areas. If pursued, one way this could be approached would be as part of the process to update the General Plan.

Boardmember Bottomley stated Phoenix seems to have one coordinator for each village area, who would help applicants work with the Boards. The coordinator would meet with applicants at job sites. In Phoenix the meetings were held as needed, which didn't work very well. It is a long and drawn out process.

Chair Nielsen questioned what the DDC thought of the change. Mr. Wesley explained they were concerned town center applicants would not get the level of attention they were used to.

Mr. Wesley then explained the proposed changes to the Design Review Board. Rather than looking at individual cases the Board would be looking at larger goals for the City, design guidelines/concepts/standards. Staff and a contract architect would work on cases, the cases would only come to the Board if applicants appealed the staff decision. Staff could review in 30 days. More difficult reviews would be done by the consultant architect. Letters would still be sent to neighbors for review and comment to staff. Chair Nielsen questioned whether it was really necessary to have

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 5, 2009 DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

citizen input on design. Citizen notice seems to add 15 days to the process. There is a lot of applicant time and staff time and maybe we don't need it. Citizens very seldom come to Design Review meetings and when they do, they usually want to talk about land use issues. Citizens can have unique ideas but they can also use it as a stumbling block to try to prevent projects from being built.

Chair Nielsen then stated that from a user's view point 6 years ago this Board review was miserable. When staff developed the work session format everything changed. There was positive feedback from professionals working with professionals on a non-threatening level. He stated he would be happy to work with character areas and guidelines, but not only once a quarter, they would need to meet more often.

Boardmember Bottomley agreed they need continuity and need to meet more often for character areas. He was concerned that having a consultant architect could become stale. Mr. Wesley explained there would be 2 or 3 architects who would rotate weekly. Boardmember Bottomley thought that was a better idea.

Boardmember Wendy LeSueur wondered if work sessions help with the staff time. Mr. Wesley said they do help, so would the consultant architect. It would probably be less time for staff if there were not meetings, no packets, no minutes, etc.

Chair Nielsen suggested the Board do only work sessions, then staff could work with the applicants.

Boardmember LeSueur asked if they could have work sessions and staff review without the neighbors being notified.

Boardmember Craig Boswell wondered what the Board would actually do if the function of the Board was done by staff and consultant architects. Mr. Wesley stated the Board would meet quarterly to review what staff was doing. They would meet for appeals, also to establish design guidelines. Boardmember Boswell agreed the neighbors don't need to be notified. People who want to complain will find out about projects anyway.

Boardmember Bottomley wondered if the Board should look at a project after staff and the consultant architect for projects rather than after approval. The Board could meet in an informal setting and give final approval.

Mr. Welsey suggested the Board look at character areas of the City so there are different design guidelines for those areas. Look at developed areas and see how they should be redeveloped. Maybe regardless of whether the Board becomes an appeals only; should they look at character areas.

Gordon Sheffield stated Chair Nielsen's response was accurate. The change in process with the work session was night and day. He stated he also hears general opposition to design guidelines and having someone critique their project. Citizens voted for design guidelines because they believed the quality in Mesa was less than surrounding communities. Originally Design Review was an appeals Board, it has evolved over time. Does this Board think it's feasible to go back to appeals with staff and consulting architect reviewing with this Board only doing design guidelines?

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 5, 2009 DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Boardmember Delight Clark did not like the idea of reviewing after staff has sent letters.

Chair Nielsen doesn't think the appeal process will work. If they can't work with staff and the consultant architect they won't want to see the Board, they will ditch the project. Sub-committees can meet to work on area guidelines but not quarterly.

Boardmember LeSueur was struck by the frankness of the comments in the work sessions but applicants seem to take them well.

Boardmember Bottomley did think the Board would be as efficient if they only work with concepts and not the details. What type of guidelines is staff talking about? Very general? Mr. Wesley stated like the Desert Uplands Guidelines. Boardmember Bottomley thought guidelines should say look at the possibilities rather than dictating. General direction and theme.

G. Other business:

Discuss the feasibility of using synthetic turf as a landscape material including within the right-of-way.

Staffmember Lesley Davis explained staff has had inquiries from applicants who would like to use synthetic turf in the right-of-way for projects. She stated staff is simply looking for direction from the Board.

Boardmember Tom Bottomley thought it was not very permanent, it is just tacked down. He was concerned it could be vandalized in the right-of-way.

Boardmember Wendy LeSueur stated there is a real spectrum of quality. It can look fairly real. She wondered if we should be trying to look like we are not in the desert. Maintenance is costly. Might work in small areas where it is very visible so it will be maintained. It is very expensive. Should have trees and shade.

Boardmember Craig Boswell stated it has to be well maintained. It can be very cheap.

Chair Tim Nielsen stated it is very hot. He did not want it used in the right-of-way.

Hear a presentation from staff and discuss Module 4 of the Zoning Code Update

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 5, 2009 DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Zoning Administrator, Gordon Sheffield explained that staff was trying to streamline, and make it more clear who has jurisdiction, where you go to appeal, and also to align with Proposition 207. Don't repeat things throughout the Code. Explain how modifications take place. Loop holes for staff review should be clear. Streamline the procedures so that car washes for instance would be one application. He stated that for zoning map amendments the consultant wants a mandatory neighborhood meeting, staff wants the Planning Director to determine if a meeting is needed. He explained staff had been working with landscape architects on the changes to landscaping, and working on-line with architects regarding parking requirements.

Distribute submittals to Board

H. Adjournment:

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Archuleta
Planning Assistant

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