

DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**May 30, 2019 – 8:30am
City Hall – Planning Conference Room**

1. Roll Call – Members Present

The meeting was called to order by Leah Byzewski at 8:30 a.m. with the following members present: Dave Badman, Leah Byzewski, Chuck Flemmer, Kate Kvamme and Alex Reichert. Absent: None. Quorum present. Staff present: Andrea Edwardson, Senior Planner, Others present: Nick Cox, Indigo Signworks, Brian Kounovsky, and John Christenson.

2. Reading & Approval of DDRB Minutes for May 9, 2019.

Moved by Reichert, second by Badman for approval of minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Wall Sign at 202 N 3rd Street, for Benchmarck Mortgage

Edwardson introduced the item by stating this was wall signage for the Chamber depot building at 202 N 3rd Street. The signs is a change copy of the sign that was there previously with new tenant information. Same size and location.

Motion by Reichert, second by Kvamme for approval of wall signage for Benchmark Mortgage at 202 N 3rd Street. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Parklet Design for 17 N 3rd Street, Half Brothers Brewing Co.

(withdrawn)

5. Outdoor Seating for 308 Demers Avenue, The Loft

Edwardson stated that this would be the Loft's first outdoor seating permit so it is before the Board for review. With the construction of Demers Avenue occurring this summer, the Loft is seeking to have outdoor seating to increase their visibility.

The Loft's main doors are accessed off of Demers Avenue. Construction fencing has reduced the sidewalk width to allow space for walking only. No seating can be placed on Demers avenue side.

The Loft has a rear access door for employees only on 3rd Street side and they would like to place four tables and chairs close to that access door. They would mount cameras to the side of the building that would be viewed from their service area in their restaurant on the 2nd floor. They would also have table tents placed on the tables that indicate customers should go up to the Loft area for service.

Christenson added that the tables and chairs would be placed around 330pm and brought in between 9 and 10pm each evening.

Reichert asked if there would be enough sidewalk room with the tables chosen. Edwardson stated that the sidewalk width is 15-14ft wide, leaving plenty of room for the 2.5ft wide tables and chairs.

Motion by Reichert, second by Badman for approval of outdoor seating at 308 Demers Ave. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Renovations at 22 S 3rd Street, 2nd Floor

Edwardson provided an overview of the project. The property has recently been purchased by new owners and they are seeking to renovate the 2nd floor, above Ely's Ivy, for seven new apartments. In order to meet egress code requirements for the apartments, existing windows on the 2nd floor will be replaced using the current openings and six new window openings will be added on the southeast side, facing Loon Park. A portion of the 2nd floor currently steps back on the alley side, with the renovations, that will be moved out to be flush with the first floor. New windows will be added to the alley side as well. Brickwork will match existing brick as best as possible.

Brian Kounovsky, property owner, stated that many of the existing windows are currently boarded up. They are proposing to reopen the windows to their preexisting sizes with new single hung windows.

Reichert asked what type of windows would be used. Kounovsky stated that they would be matching the front façade windows that have a black trim. He stated that they haven't finalized the material but are seeking a low maintenance type.

Flemmer stated that this is a historic so the look, style, color of the glass, etc. impact the final look of the building and should be considered.

Byzewski stated that there is a composite material option that isn't wood, but is paintable whereas vinyl is not paintable. She stated that the board has approved the composite type in the past for that reason.

Motion by Reichert, second by Flemmer for approval of window opening locations. Window materials to be approved after more details are provided.

Flemmer asked about the 2nd floor windows, if they would be replaced. Kounovsky stated that they would be replacing them to match all the other 2nd floor windows.

Kvamme asked if the owners had given any consideration to matching the existing arch fenestrations of the existing windows on the new windows. Kounovsky stated that he would have their architect review that option but seemed to think that would be too difficult to replicate as they would risk damaging more brick than necessary to do it.

Motion carried unanimously.

6.1 Request to Add to Agenda: Wall Signage at 22 S 3rd Street, Epic Place Apartments

Edwardson stated that this item has been asked to be an information and discussion item only by the owner as they would like board feedback prior to moving forward. Indigo Signworks has put together two sign options for them, one being a flag-mounted sign that would be off the 2nd floor and another sign that is channel letters, flush to the building on the 2nd floor. Ely's Ivy currently has a flag mounted sign on the first floor. The owners are seeking DDRB input on how to best name and identify their building.

Badman stated that the signage would be 30 feet in the air, and are there any other signs downtown at that height. He also stated that the signage won't be visible to the pedestrian.

Edwardson stated that the only flag mounted sign downtown at that height would be by Sky's Fine Dining, who are a second floor restaurant. Other flush mounted signs can be found throughout downtown, Edgewood, Alerus Financial. Flemmer stated those feel different because those examples are businesses not apartments.

Kounovsky stated that they wish to pursue something that everyone will agree on. They are seeking ways to create a destination that isn't just the business. They would like to name the building to be the identifier regardless of the potential of businesses changing.

Reichert asked about the penetrations on the building for the sign. Cox replied they would have to have nine penetrations into the mortar to secure the sign.

Discussion continued on the nature of naming the building and replicating that based on other downtown buildings that are named, The St. Johns block, Dacotah Building, etc.

No action was taken. Item will be brought back in future with more information.

7. Wall Signage at 415 1st Ave N, and 55 S 5th Street, Central and Corporate Parking Ramps.

Mrs. Edwardson stated that staff has been working with the Downtown Development Association on ways to better advertise available parking downtown. One solution that is being proposed is temporary wall signage on both Central and Corporate Ramps that would notify the public of free 2-hour parking stalls in each ramp. Central Ramp will have 14 stalls and Corporate will have 18 stalls on the first floors for 2 Hour parking. The banners will be a vinyl material that is heated and adhered to the building.

Removal of the banners is done with heat as well and leaves no residual materials on the façade. Banners are proposed at the corners of 1st Ave N and N 4th Street, 1st Ave N and N 5th Street, Kittson Avenue and South 5th Street, and Kittson Ave on S 4th Street.

Discussion held on the permit policies of the ramps. The ramps are reserved for permits only Monday through Friday 6-6pm, though staff is also considering changing the time to 7am-5pm. Additionally there are 24hour reserved stalls as well as customer stalls in both ramps.

Reichert asked if the wording of the banners could be amended to reflect the limited amount of 2hour stalls available. Current language of the banners implies that the whole ramp is available for 2hour free parking.

Flemmer commented that confusion on parking stems from outside signage conflicting with interior signage. Edwardson stated that the 2hour stalls would be individually signed so folks would know exactly which stalls were which.

Edwardson stated that if the 2hour stalls are to remain in perpetuity, staff would pursue permanent wall signage that more appropriately fits the DDRB guidelines. These temporary banners are meant to act like construction banners that advertise businesses being open during construction.

Edwardson stated the signs will also go forward to Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council for approval as a sign appeal. The size of the requested temporary signs is not allowed by code, so staff is seeking a variance to the sign code through the appeal process.

Badman questioned the durability of the product. Nick Cox, Indigo Signworks, stated that the material fades quickly. It is meant to be a temporary sign. He stated that the material may last for a few months, depending on exposure area. Mr. Cox stated that the building would remain in its original condition after the signs are removed.

Kvamme expressed concerns on future precedence and future requests for these types of signs. Noting the temporary nature due to construction, this sign seems typical. However she expressed concerns over allowing this type of material for downtown businesses. Badman stated that just because this sign may be approved, doesn't mean other would receive approval.

Motion by Flemmer, second by Reichert for approval of wall signage for parking ramps at 415 1st Ave N, and 55 S 5th Street. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Staff Updates

Executive Corners – Edwardson provided an update to the Board that the School District has plans under review for the Executive Corners lot on 5th & University. They will be installing a surface parking lot on the property. The property falls directly outside of the current DDRB boundary.

Thai Hot, 414 Demers Ave – Edwardson showed a photo of the Thai Hot store front that shows recent painting of trim and new signage installed. While the painting is not something that can be enforced as it does not require a building permit, it is not ideal as

they left the old darker blue paint on the upper portion of the alley window trim and painted the lower portion red.

The signage was not permitted and staff is working with Inspections and City Attorney on enforcement issues. That can be enforced and addressed for proper procedure and installation so staff is working on that piece.

Motion to adjourn by Flemmer, second by Badman with meeting adjourned at 9:19am.