



City of Ann Arbor

Formal Minutes

Design Review Board

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
[http://a2gov.legistar.com/
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Wednesday, October 21, 2015

3:00 PM

Larcom City Hall, 301 E Huron St,
Basement, conference room

A **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Tamara Burns called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

B **ROLL CALL**

Staff Present: Alexis DiLeo

Present 7 - Richard (Dick) Mitchell, Tamara Burns, Paul Fontaine,
William Kinley, Geoffrey M. Perkins, Shannan
Gibb-Randall, and Gary Cooper

C **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Agenda was unanimously approved. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

D **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

D-1 15-1283 August 19, 2015 Design Review Board Meeting Minutes

The minutes were unanimously approved by the Board and forwarded to City Council. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

D-2 15-1284 September 16, 2015 Design Review Board Meeting Minutes

The minutes were unanimously approved by the Board and forwarded to City Council. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

E **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

F **NEW BUSINESS**

- F-1** **15-1285** 319-323 North Main Street Sun Baths Design Review - A proposed project for a 2-story, 12,000-square foot community bath located on an 8,000-square foot site. The design includes a shed roof oriented south, a stone first floor and wood-sided second story. Vertical ribbons of windows are proposed on the street facade and the entire concept is meant to express water and flow. D2 (Downtown Interface) - Kerrytown Character Overlay Zoning District. (Ward 1)

Jan Culbertson and Edmond Bardhi of A3C Collaborative Architecture and Peter Woolf of Moving on Main LLC introduced and presented the proposed project to the Board.

Fontaine said he liked many things about the project but felt the inward focus would be a poor precedent. The design appears secretive and mysterious, reinforcing misconceptions and negative stereotypes. He urged the design team to open up the building to the street. This is particularly important given the project's location on Main Street.

Mitchell asked about shading of adjacent properties. Kinley noted it was a very different design than the previously considered movement center.

Woolf explained that the community baths concept is modeled after Japanese baths which have single-gender and mixed gender sessions. The single gender sessions are clothing optional, thus the need for opacity.

The Board further discussed the lack of views into the building, at the street level and second floor, and what could and could not be done with the design team. The various proposed materials, how they would be applied and how they might vary, was also debated.

Culbertson summarized the conversation to three main points: the design team should revisit the proposed social spaces within the building and opportunities for activity on Main Street; reducing the mass of the north elevation; and provide a different use for the attic space.

The following Guidelines were identified as applicable to the proposed design. These include Guidelines both with which the proposed project is, and is not, consistent.

Chapter 1: General Design Guidelines

A. Design Guidelines for Context and Site Planning

A.1 Urban Pattern and Form. When considering urban pattern and form, the petitioner should assess the character of the adjacent streetscape, open spaces, and buildings to determine how they function as places and facilities supporting human use. The project team's assessment should seek to define opportunities to enrich the design excellence of the project.

A.1.1 Identify and then reinforce the positive characteristics of adjacent sites.

A.1.2 Design sidewalk level features and facilities to provide enrichment of the pedestrian experience.

A.1.7 On sites that abut an alley, design the alley entry connection to the street to minimize pedestrian/bike/vehicle conflicts while taking advantage of the alley as an open space from which to see and access the new/proposed site and buildings.

A.2 Site Planning and Natural Systems. An urban setting can be a challenging environment in which to respond to natural systems. Consider natural systems such as sun and wind patterns, climates and seasonality, rainwater harvesting, and significant individual features such as street tree patterns and landmark trees on public and private sites.

A.2.1 Orient the building location to best accommodate climate, rainfall and area drainage patterns. The use of pervious versus impervious surfaces should be determined for each project based on beneficial environmental results.

A.2.2 Site designs should accommodate solar access and minimize shading of adjacent properties and neighborhoods.

A.2.3 Where location and site features allow, use deciduous trees, which provide shade in the summer and sun in winter months.

A.2.4 Orient plant groups to provide wind protection of plazas and entries in wintertime and allow cooling breezes into outdoor spaces.

A.2.5 Plant native and non-invasive species, especially those that require low levels of water and are tolerant of urban conditions.

A.2.6 Where location and site size allow, consider use of a rain garden

or vegetated roof to retain rainwater and serve as a site amenity, and employ rainwater harvesting methods for use in landscape irrigation systems.

A.2.7 Use porous materials in drainage and detention areas to promote rainwater percolation into the parent soil.

A.3 Open Space. Open spaces can include public and private courtyards, plazas, patios, terraces, alleys, and gardens. Throughout downtown, site features and elements that invite use should be provided. In commercial areas, open spaces should have an urban quality and character that enliven the street and enhance the pedestrian experience. Outside the commercial core and in civic areas, open spaces may be more park-like settings for human activity. Private property open spaces should be sized relative to the intended use and level of anticipated adjacent pedestrian activity.

A.3.4 Place an urban open space in a location that serves as a focal point on a site.

A.3.5 Orient an urban open space to the street or to cultural, historic or natural resources.

A.3.7 Enrich the space using special paving, plants, trellises and site structures.

A.4 Parking, Driveways and Service Areas. Parking, driveways and service areas are necessary functions, which should be designed to benefit the urban experience.

A.4.1 Locate and size driveways, access points, service entries, alleys, loading docks, and trash receptacles to minimize impact on pedestrians and maintain pedestrian safety, circulation, and comfort.

A.4.3 Locate a parking structure or a surface parking lot behind or to the side of a building, minimizing the visual presence of parking on adjacent public right-of-way.

A.5 Pedestrian Connections. Pedestrian connections include sidewalks, alleys and arcades that provide pedestrian access within, through and among properties. Such connections provide access to buildings, courtyards, plazas and other site elements.

A.5.4 Provide landscaping, seating, public art, lighting, interpretive markers, and water features to enrich and enliven pedestrian walkways and use areas.

A.5.5 Link on-site open spaces, such as courtyards and plazas, directly to a public sidewalk.

A.6 Cycling and Transit. Walking, cycling, transit and other multi-modal means of transportation are to be considered in the design of streetscapes.

A.6.2 Consider use of convenient bicycle racks, including proximity to building entries, weather protection and security when selecting a location for bicycle parking and storage.

B. Design Guidelines for Buildings

Building massing principles address the overall height, size and shape of a building. Although these guidelines refer to the visual aspects of structures, it is important to note that downtown zoning districts address key building massing considerations, including:

- Maximum floor area ratio (FAR)*
- Maximum building height*
- Maximum and minimum streetwall height*
- Average offset at the maximum streetwall height*
- Maximum building module length*

C. Design Guidelines for Building Elements

C.1 Street Edge. Building elements and architectural details used at the street front have a direct impact on the quality of the pedestrian experience and should be combined to create an active and interesting street front. Creative use of materials, textures and architectural details is especially important where there are few windows at the street front of a building.

C.1.1 Use building elements to create a street edge that invites pedestrian activity.

c) Wall surfaces with visually interesting detailing, textures and colors

C.2 Entries. The location, spacing and general pattern of building

entries impact the quality of the pedestrian experience downtown. Building entries should be located to enhance the street level experience and help give a sense of scale. Entries should be clearly defined, accessible, and located to express rhythm and visual interest along a street front. Although traditional building entry designs may be appropriate, creative and contemporary interpretations are also encouraged.

C.2.1 Clearly define a primary entrance and orient it toward the street.

C.3 Windows. Window design and placement should help establish a sense of scale and provide visual interest.

C.3.1 A high level of ground floor transparency is encouraged throughout downtown.

C.3.2 If contextually appropriate, upper floor windows should reference established patterns of adjacent and nearby buildings in size, shape and spacing by aligning sills and headers and using similar window proportions.

C.3.3 Window depths should be appropriate to the building design concept. For example, windows flush to the wall surface are often appropriate for modern designs, but traditional concepts should have punched or recessed windows.

C.5 Materials. Building materials should reinforce the massing and architectural concepts and enhance the character of the building and its context.

C. 6 Building Operational Systems. Building operational systems such as waste management, utility services, heating and cooling systems, must be carefully integrated into the design of a building and not detract from the architectural concept.

C.6.1 Integrate solar or wind systems into the design of the top of the building.

C.7 Sustainability in Building Elements. Consider sustainability when selecting structural and façade materials and designing functional building elements.

C.7.1 Use sustainable building materials whenever possible.

C.7.2 Select and apply building elements to maximize the building's environmental performance.

C.7.3 Incorporate building elements that allow for natural environmental control.

Suggested strategies include:

- 1) Operable windows for natural ventilation.*
- 2) Rotating doors or wind locks at high volume entries.*
- 3) Interior or exterior light shelves/solar screens above south facing windows.*

Kerrytown Character District

Kerrytown defines the downtown's northern edge and is the transition from commercial to residential as one moves to the east, north and west – away from the downtown. Two and three story Italianate masonry multi-use buildings with zero lot lines give way to late-19th and early-20th century wood-framed housing.

Many think of Kerrytown as home to several Ann Arbor "institutions" in the form of eateries, markets and entertainment venues. It is a lively district by day anchored by a stable retail presence, ample pedestrian elbow room and a variety of vehicular parking options. Kerrytown is a place locals like to frequent.

In the evening Kerrytown becomes more quiet. While Community High School and the Ann Arbor Farmer's Market provide vitality by day the use of each site recedes to parking at night. Evening activity in Kerrytown is limited to a number of well-spaced dining and entertainment venues in the core area between Detroit Street and Main Street, north of Miller Avenue.

Moving from the core of the Kerrytown Character District, with its brick-paved streets, into the surrounding neighborhoods the pedestrian amenities change. The sidewalks transition from continuous hardscape between building facades and the street curb into ribbons of walkway bordered by landscape setbacks and grassy street extensions. Trees become more prevalent with way-finding signage and lighting levels diminishing.

G **PLANNING COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS - STAFF REPORTS****15-1286** Staff Reports from Planning Commission Meetings

Two staff reports for site plan petitions reviewed by the Design Review Board were included in the packet.

H **COMMUNICATIONS****15-1287** Various Communications to the Design Review Board

Received and Filed

I **PUBLIC COMMENTARY (3 MINUTE MAXIMUM SPEAKING TIME)**

David Crouse, 509 N. Ashley, Ann Arbor, asked for additional details about the type of solar collection panels, shading and shadow issues, and proposed slope of the roof. He recommended panels manufactured in Michigan by Suniva.

Ethel Potts, 1014 Elder Boulevard, Ann Arbor, complimented the massing of the proposed development. Ms. Potts noted this was the first project to be proposed downtown that she felt was in context.

Bonnie Greenspan, said she did not care for the bench at the front entry and suggested a free-standing, independent bench instead.

J **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 4:05 p.m. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.