

# ANN ARBOR DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

## Staff Report

**MEETING DATE:** May 8, 2019

**PROJECT:** 545 South Main Street  
Project No. DR19-002

**ADDRESS:** 545 South Main Street

**ZONING:** D2 Downtown Interface (base)  
First Street Character (overlay)  
Secondary (street designation) – South Main Street  
Secondary (street designation) – East Madison Street

**DESIGN TEAM:** Von Staden Architects  
Midwestern Consulting

**HISTORY:** The Design Review Board discussed the original design plan for this project on March 13, 2019. The Board's [comments](#) were generally positive but more information and clarification was requested and some caution was expressed about the pedestrian experience.

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** A proposed project redevelops 545 South Main Street into a restaurant and entertainment venue. The 45,000-square foot site currently contains two multi-bay sheds and a one story now-vacant lumber and millwork building. The design plan proposed to renovate, remodel and expand the industrial building, remove a significant amount of the existing asphalt pavement, and create a loading area and small parking lot as well as outdoor entertainment space.

**Revisions** – The overall concept remains as previously proposed, redeveloping the site into a restaurant and entertainment venue. Additional details regarding the use of the outdoor space have been provided as shown on the [revised site plan](#).

Updated sketches [A](#) and [B](#) have been provided and show no significant changes to the proposed façades but do now include wall signs<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Signs are regulated by Section 5.24 of the Unified Development Code and requires separate, specific permit application and approval. Neither review or comments by the Design Review Board, or site plan approval by the Planning Commission or City Council, imply or grant approval for any sign whatsoever.

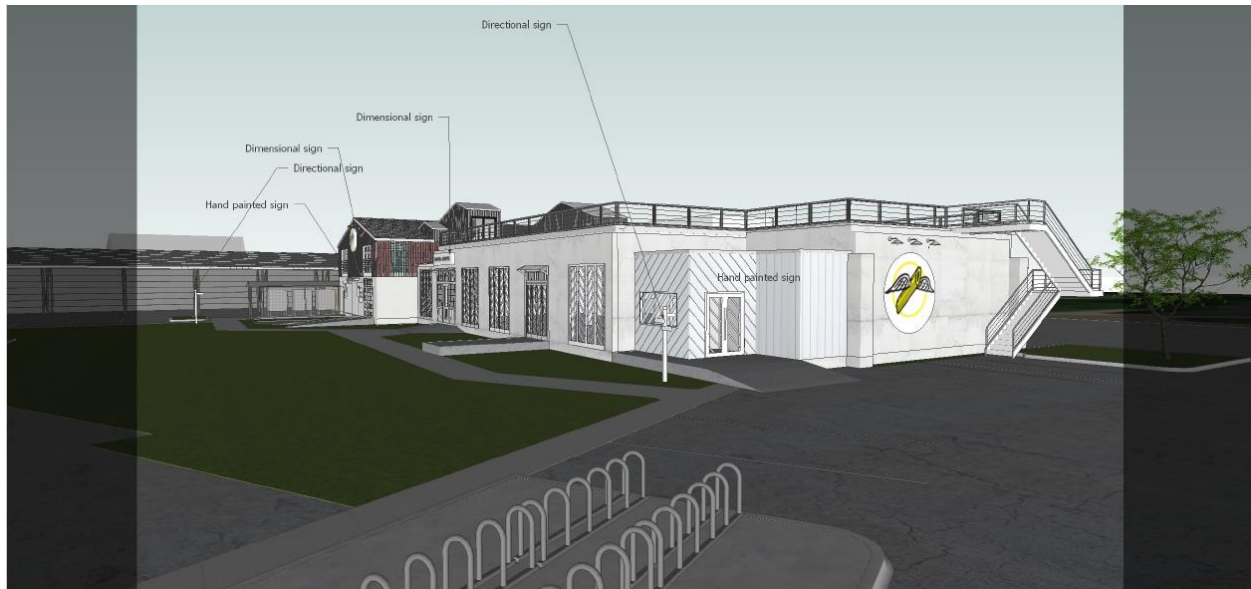


Figure 1: Revised Perspective Sketch

SITE VIEWS



Figure 2: Original Perspective Sketch

The original [design plan application](#) illustrates the existing conditions and proposed redevelopment.

## **STAFF COMMENTS:**

The March 13, 2019 [Planning Staff Report](#) provided a cursory zoning compliance review, noting there were many nonconformities that must be addressed such as a nonconforming streetwall, minimum building height, side setbacks, and landscaping requirements. Impacts to, and because of, the 100-year/1% Chance floodplain were noted as well.

Staff also expressed serious concern with the function of the proposed redevelopment as a downtown place supporting the downtown pedestrian experience to the fullest extent possible. Repurposing an industrial facility should include improvements that contribute an urban, pedestrian-oriented, active and enriching streetscape, opening the space to the downtown rather than reinforcing inwardly-focused enclaves.

Staff continue to find that the overarching goal of the [Downtown Design Guidelines](#), to foster excellence in the design of the built environment in the downtown, has not yet been achieved by the proposed redevelopment.