



# City of Ann Arbor

## Formal Minutes

### Design Review Board

301 E. Huron St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
<http://a2gov.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

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Wednesday, July 15, 2015

3:00 PM

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

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**A**      **CALL TO ORDER**

*Chairperson Tamara Burns called the meeting to order at 3:05 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**      **INTRODUCTIONS**

*None*

**E**      **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**[15-0866](#)**      May 20, 2015 Design Review Board Meeting Minutes

**A motion was made that the Minutes be Postponed to a following Design Review Board meeting. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.**

**F**      **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**G**      **NEW BUSINESS**

**G-1**      **[15-0867](#)**      Kinsley Parkside Design Review - A proposed design for a 5-story, 2-unit

contemporary soft loft with a traditional townhouse footprint. Exterior materials include brick and batted-panel siding with extensive windows, featuring backyard terraces and a roof deck. The design combines a commercial shape and volume with residential uses and materials at a scale appropriate for its downtown interface zoning designation. The site located at 213 West Kingsley Street is 3,168 square feet and zoned D2/First Street Character. (Ward 1)

*(Project Number DR15-001, Legistar #15-0867)*

*The Design Review Board met on July 15, 2015 to review the proposed design for a new development, "Kingsley Parkside," at 213 West Kingsley Street. The following report contains a summary of the discussion and the priority issues the Board would like the developer to consider in finalizing the design proposal and subsequent site plan submittal.*

#### *Description of Project*

*William Davis, Pete Deininger and Bill Meier represented the design team.*

*The design team described the proposed project to construct 5-story, 2-unit residential building on a 3,168-square foot site in the downtown interface and the Kerrytown character area. They described the design as eclectic and seeking to combine a commercial shape and volume with residential uses.*

*The Board asked several clarifying questions, such as the location of HVAC units, the materials of the driveway, the materials for the exterior facades, proposed landscaping and development code requirements for driveways and curb cuts.*

#### *Summary of Priority Issues*

*The Design Review Board concluded that the project may meet the intent of the Downtown Design Guidelines, particularly those for buildings and building elements, but felt the application did not provide enough detail regarding context and site design to confirm conformance. Specific suggestions were offered to enhance the application and improve the design to better meet the intent of the Guidelines.*

*Examples of especially applicable guidelines are noted below in parenthesis; the full text of each referenced guideline is provided at the end of the summary. Please note that the Kerrytown character area*

*guidelines also apply.*

#### *Context and Site Planning*

*The proposed design reinforces the positive characteristics of its immediate neighbors (A.1.1), but fails to recognize the existing predominantly residential context across West Kingsley (A.1.). A pitched roof was cited as but one example of a building feature that would honor the residential nature of the area. More information was requested in order to sufficiently determine how the proposed design responded to the challenges of incorporating natural systems into an urban setting (A.2). The Board especially felt that a rain garden at grade level and a vegetated roof to retain rainwater (A.2.6) needs to be included in the proposed development. More details regarding the proposed landscape plan were also requested; deciduous trees provide shade in summer, help with storm water management, and soften views of new construction (A.2.3).*

*The plan includes two curb cuts and two driveways leading to private garages at the street and sidewalk level. If both are allowed by code, the Board noted they do not meet the guideline to minimize impact on pedestrians (A.4.1). One of the benefits to urban development is more efficient use of curb cuts and driveways as each typically serves multiple-user garages. The proposed plan is very suburban in this regard with each dwelling unit having its own curb cut and driveway leading to a private garage.*

*[Staff note: Based on the site's 48 feet of street frontage, only one curb cut is permitted, see Chapter 47, Section 4.20.]*

#### *Buildings*

*The proposed design includes massing that minimizes its impact on adjacent lower-scale areas (B.1.1), using more than one of the suggested strategies in the Guidelines.*

#### *Building Elements*

*The Board unanimously agreed and liked the overall architecture of the proposed building (C.1), it is the proposed design's strongest aspect. Building elements are proposed that provide a sense of scale, surfaces have visually interesting detailing, textures and colors (C.1.1, C.1.1.b, C.1.1.c, C.5). The primary entrances are not oriented toward the street*

*(C.2., C.2.1), however, the Board specifically noted that building element guideline was not appropriate in this case. Building operational systems are, could be, and should be, incorporated into the design of the building (C.6, C.6.2). Sustainable building elements (C.7) were mentioned as possible by the design team and encouraged by the Board.*

*Referenced Sections of the City of Ann Arbor Downtown Design Guidelines:*

*A.1. 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.*

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

*A.2. 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.2.3 Where location and site features allow, use deciduous trees, which provide shade in the summer and sun in winter months.*

*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.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.*

*B.1.1 Design a building to minimize its impact on adjacent lower-scale areas.*

*C.1 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.1.1.b Architectural details that provide a sense of scale*

*C.1.1.c Wall surfaces with visually interesting detailing, textures and colors*

*C.2. 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.6 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.6.2 Locate and sufficiently screen mechanical systems to minimize or eliminate noise impacts on adjacent sites and buildings.*

*C.7 Consider sustainability when selecting structural and façade materials and designing functional building elements.*

#### *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.*

#### **H** **PLANNING COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS - STAFF REPORTS**

**15-0869** Staff Reports from Planning Commission Meetings

**Received and Filed**

#### **I** **COMMUNICATIONS**

**15-0868** Various Communications to the Design Review Board

*Staff noted the announced retirement of Planning Manager Wendy Rampson on September 4, 2015. Ms. Rampson has served the City in a variety of positions all related to planning, zoning and development for over 31 years.*

#### **J** **PUBLIC COMMENTARY (3 MINUTE MAXIMUM SPEAKING TIME)**

*None*

#### **K** **ADJOURNMENT**

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