

Developer Workgroup report for 1/13/2020

The work group exists to explore how the art commission can encourage private developers to incorporate or otherwise support public art. The group consists of: John Kotarski, Jonah Copi, Mary Thiefels, and David Esau.

The Developer Workgroup did not meet but below is a report on what the Art Commission Liaison recommended at the Design Review Board (DRB) meetings

Art Commission Liaison

John Kotarski was appointed liaison at the 11/6/19 AAPAC meeting. The DRB met November 13, 2019 and December 11, 2019 to review projects. Kotarski met with both DRB staff, Jeff Kahan, and DRB chair, Dick Mitchell, prior to each meeting to discuss how public art recommendations might be best included. He also met with Board member Geoff Perkins to discuss how public art might be included in recommendation from the DRB.

Art Commission Liaison input

The November 11, 2019 DRB meeting was to review: The Standard a 50,000-square foot site at 405 S. Main Street for a new, approximately 240,000-square foot mixed use building. The project proposes to provide retail uses along E. William Street, a 10 story structure on the north portion of the site, and a 5 story structure on the south side of the site. The façade material is proposed to primarily consist of brick, metal and glass. Parking is proposed under the building. The site is zoned D2 (Downtown Interface) and is within the Main Street Character overlay district.

The DRB had serious concerns regarding building materials because the project would be a gateway to the downtown. "There was broad concern about the seemingly low-budget material Palette" (see attached minutes).

Kotarski recommended a small rotating sculpture garden, with seating, located at the corner of Packard and Main. The rotating aspect would add continual variety and minimize criticism of any one piece of artwork. Because of the concern regarding building materials, he also recommended a large 3-story trompe-l'œil mural in the rear of the building that would depict someone pulling the skin of the building to reveal classic Greek architecture. Additionally, he recommended murals at street level in the rear of the building fronting an alley. He suggested Instagramable images like wings and halos for visitors or students to place themselves in the photo. He also recommended a trompe-l'œil mural of a historic streetscape to front the alley.

The December 12, 2019 DRB meeting was to review: 340 E. Huron St. University of Michigan Credit Union. A proposal to renovate the southern portion of this existing building by converting the existing enclosed loading area into useable space. Proposed southeast corner façade modifications include installing large windows. 2,390 sq. ft. of new floor area is proposed within the existing building. The existing loading dock is proposed to be demolished and replaced with a pedestrian entry area with service

access, resulting in a net increase of the building size by 117 sq. ft. The existing dumpster will be relocated from the loading dock area to the southwest corner of the site. The parking area will be reconfigured to accommodate new 90 degree parking spaces and additional landscaping. The site is zoned D1 (Downtown Core) and is within the Midtown Character Overlay District.

There was some concern by the DRB that the proposed renovations would lose the art-deco appeal of the original 1933 Albert Kahn building. All but one of the subsequent renovations to the building used Art Deco design elements like cut limestone, polished black granite, and aluminum window/door/light scones. This renovation introduced a large glass curtain wall and a major strip of exterior blue trim for corporate branding.

Kotarski recommended that polished black granite be used for raised beds at street level on Washington Street to mirror the raised beds at the front entrance at Huron. These landscaping beds could provided pedestrian seating. He also recommended replicating the relief medallions originally designed by Kahn for the Ann Arbor News building. Those stone medallions related to published news topics (sports, news, travel, etc.). Kotarski suggested the Credit Union could design similar medallions and place them on the curved wall leading to rear public entrance. They could use the history of money (wampum to bit-coin) as the topic for those reliefs.

He also suggested that the screening for the dumpster would provide an opportunity for historical panels acting as a wayfinding map of Albert Kahn buildings on Central Campus (19 buildings were designed by Kahn's firm – Angel Hall, Hatcher Library, Clements Library, Hill Auditorium, Ruthven Museum, etc.), The panels could also promote the art-deco style and the history of the building.

Additionally, hazards to birds from the large glass curtain wall could be mitigated by adding bird-friendly public art to the large windows on State Street and Washington Street. Vinyl design artwork are currently used at Mott Children's Hospital and UMMA. The City is currently reviewing new ordinances incorporating bird-friendly window treatments to its building code. Bird-friendly window designs have been added to the Public Art Idea Book which is shared with developers and Design Review Board members.

Art Commissioner Sophie Grillet was in attendance and spoke to bird-friendly public art at the public discussion part of the meeting.



City of Ann Arbor

Formal Minutes - Draft

Design Review Board

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
[http://a2gov.legistar.com/
Calendar.aspx](http://a2gov.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx)

Wednesday, November 13, 2019

3:00 PM

Larcom City Hall, 301 E Huron St, Second
floor, City Council Chambers

A CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 3:00 p.m.

B ROLL CALL

Others present:

Jeff Kahan, City of Ann Arbor Staff

John Kotarski, Art Commission Liaison

Present 6 - Richard (Dick) Mitchell, William Kinley, Geoffrey M.
Perkins, Gary Cooper, Lori Singleton, and Corry
Buckwalter

Absent 1 - Tamara Burns

C APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Moved by Kinley, seconded by Perkins, approved unanimously as
presented.**

D APPROVAL OF MINUTES

D-1 [19-2180](#) Minutes of the September 11, 2019 Design Review Board Meeting

Attachments: 9-11-2019 DRB Minutes .pdf

**Moved by Buckwalter, seconded by Kinley, approved unanimously
as presented and forwarded to the City Council.**

E PUBLIC COMMENT (Three Minutes Per Speaker)

F REGULAR BUSINESS

- F-1** **19-2181** DR18-004; 405 S. Main Street The Standard
Revised architectural elevations have been submitted for the a 50,000-square foot site at 405 S. Main Street for a new, approximately 240,000-square foot mixed use building. The project proposes to provide retail uses along E. William Street, a 10 story structure on the north portion of the site, and a 5 story structure on the south side of the site. The façade material is proposed to primarily consist of brick, metal and glass. Parking is proposed under the building. The site is zoned D2 (Downtown Interface) and is within the Main Street Character overlay district.

Attachments: 405 S Main Street -Elevations 11-13-2019.pdf

The Design Review Board discussed the design plan for the proposed project and made the following comments.

In general, the Design Review Board is concerned about the design quality of this building as presented:

There was concern that the added demand to the alley (ride service, food deliveries, etc.) will create more congestion. See guidelines A1.7 and A4.1.

Opportunities were pointed out for public art along Packard and the Alley. See guidelines A3.4, A3.6 and A5.4.

Increased variation in cornice heights was encouraged. See guidelines B1.2 and B1.4.

The exterior treatment of the second floor at the William and Main corner could be reconsidered. See guideline A1.3.

There were several comments and questions regarding entry definition. The main building entry, with its very shallow recess for the lobby doors, access doors for water/fire pump room and bicycle storage stands out as an unattractive focal point of the Main Street façade. See guideline C.2

The corner of Main and Packard provides an opportunity for a gateway to downtown. In addition, the small triangle of land in that area is a bit of a pocket park situation in a highly trafficked part of Ann Arbor. Some attention to its design, particularly if it includes a sculpture, would be

important to streetscape and pedestrian interaction. Perhaps seating and an interesting paving pattern and storm water plantings? See guideline A1.3.

The site plan provided at the meeting was under-developed and comments relative to A.2, A.6 and C.1 were not possible due to lack of information. The board would like to see more detail on sidewalk and landscape treatments as well as potential for outdoor dining/seating especially along William and at the corner of William and Main.

There was broad concern about the seemingly low-budget material palette. For example, the juncture of the proposed thin-brick and metal panels will be more of a seam than a reveal. The mass changes on most of the building will be defined only by color and texture differences. Shadow will be minimal if two contiguous masses are on a common plane. The rendering of this seems to be an inaccurate representation. Refer to guidelines B1.1 and C.5.

The punched opening windows lack setback from the brick field. The same holds true for their adjacent thin brick panels. Both might read with more distinction with recessed brick jambs and a more generous sill. See guidelines C3.2 and C3.3.

The building color palette is rather 'cool.' It lacked a warmer richness that might be more appropriate in this location.

F-2 [19-2182](#) Approval of 2020 Design Review Board Meeting Schedule

Attachments: Draft 2020 Design Review Board Meeting Calendar.pdf

No action taken.

G **COMMUNICATIONS TO THE DRB**

H **PUBLIC COMMENT (Three Minutes Per Speaker)**

Name and address unknown, discussed the color pallet for the proposed building and encouraged a warmer color pallet, and expressed concern for students moving in.

Name and address unknown, stated concern with "vagrants" in the area,

expressed concern with deliveries to the Beer Depot as well as package deliveries, and expressed general concern with the alley area.

I ADJOURNMENT

Community Television Network Channel 16 live televised public meetings are also available to watch liveonline from CTN's website and also on demand at any time.

Live Web Streaming: a2gov.org/watchctn

Video on Demand: Replay public meetings at your convenience online: <https://a2ctn.viebit.com>

Cable: Watch CTN Channel 16 public meeting programming via Comcast Cable channel 16.

The complete record of this meeting is available in video format at www.a2gov.org/ctn, on "The Meeting Place" page (<http://www.a2gov.org/livemeetings>), or is available for a nominal fee by contacting CTN at (734) 794 6150.

Richard Mitchell, Chairperson of the Design Review Board

/kvl