



MINUTES OF THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB)

Wednesday, March 1, 2023
4:00 PM

Board Members Present: Michelle Ye, Victoria Young, Mike Hammond, Aaron Campbell, Mario Walker, Michael Winter, Sophorn Olsen, Blair Perry, and Brett Ragsdale

Board Members Absent:

DMC Staff Present: Paul Young, Christine Taylor, Brett Roler, Penelope Springer, Penelope Huston, Sara Barrera, Abe Lueders, Lauren Bermudez, Tori Haliburton, and Sam Caldwell

Guests: Joey Lewis, D Goodman, J Glover, Lee Wright, James Stokes, Nick Bommarito, Ryan Peterson, Glenn Vaulx II, Scott Van Der Jagt, David McKinney, David Bentley, David Perry, Tracy Skalski, Victor Robinson, Patrick Brown, Matthew Hudgins, Don Reeves, Jason, Weeks, Brandon Doss, Steve Hill, Jason Jackson, Susan Goldin, Valencia Pope, Alan Barne, Jayme Stokes, Jasmine Bowden, Corrine Kennedy (Commercial Appeal), A Downtown Resident, and Member of the Public

I-II. Call to Order & Approval of Minutes:

Chair Michelle Ye called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM Christine Taylor called roll to confirm quorum. After quorum was confirmed, Chair Michelle Ye reviewed the meeting process and protocols. Chair Michelle Ye called for approval of February 1, 2023, minutes. Aaron Cambell made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. Michael Winter seconded the motion, which after roll call vote passed unanimously.

III. Current Applications:

DRB #23-09 69 Pontotoc Avenue – Hotel Pontotoc

Abe Lueders presented the DRB application for exterior renovation for property located at 69 Pontotoc Avenue. The applicant plans major renovations that include restoring the building's historic masonry, installing new windows and doors, and a new monumental stair at the building's primary entrance. The proposed renovations will restore the building's notable stone façade, replace heavily deteriorated and missing components like windows, and help activate the street by connecting the basement restaurant space to the sidewalk. Significant new features like the wall and monumental stair have been designed to complement the original structure, and do not detract from the building's character. Applicant John Halford was present to answer questions and make brief comments. After board discussion, Michael Winter made a motion to approve the application as submitted, with the condition to return for signage approval. Mike Hammond seconded the motion, which after roll call vote passed unanimously.

DRB #23-05 123 South Front – Mobility Center Skybridge

Abe Lueders presented the DRB application for new construction for property located at 123 South Front. The Downtown Mobility Center will be located directly southeast of the Autozone headquarters at 123 S. Front, and Autozone plans to utilize a portion of the Mobility Center’s parking spaces for its employees. To facilitate direct access between the Mobility Center and the Autozone headquarters, Autozone is proposing a skybridge that links the two buildings. The proposed skybridge will connect level 5 of the Mobility Center with level 3 of the Autozone headquarters, spanning the intersection of Front Street and Peabody Place. The exterior materials will primarily be aluminum and glass – the vertical faces of the bridge will be wrapped in an aluminum and glass curtainwall system providing transparency into the interior spaces of the bridge. AutoZone representatives David McKinney, David Bentley, and David Perry were present to answer questions, also project architects Scott Van Der Jagt and Jason Weeks. Board chair Michelle Ye read two public comments that were emailed to staff regarding objection to the Skybridge. John Halford expressed his agreement with the public comments. Questions from board members regarding height and type of materials being used were answered by applicants. Paul young addressed the need for the skybridge and confirmed that the applicant is paying to have the skybridge installed with private funding. This project allows applicants to bring more employees to Downtown. After board discussion, Aaron Campbell made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Michael Winter seconded the motion, which after roll call vote passed unanimously.

(NOTE: Mike Hammond & Sophorn Olsen were recused from the vote)

DRB #23-07 830 Island Drive – Greenbelt Park

Abe Lueders presented the DRB application for new construction & landscaping for property that is a portion of Greenbelt Park, near the north end of Mud Island, which currently contains a surface parking lot and a single boat ramp. The proposed improvements are designed to help this portion of the park accommodate increased numbers of cruise ship dockings. In addition to providing additional capacity for boat docking, the proposed alterations to Greenbelt Park will improve the park’s pedestrian experience. The new pedestrian paths will help connect visitors to the park’s existing trail system, and the shade structures will provide a welcome amenity during warm weather. The proposed structures blend well with the landscape of the park, and the use of the golf cart storage structure for signage and art near the entrance to the lot will assist with wayfinding. Board members had questions regarding the shade structure, parking lot lighting (appeared in renderings but not in the site plans), the dumpster’s elevation, and enclosure, they would like to see more trees and landscaping on the parking lot. The program manager made a few brief comments and answered questions. After board discussion, Aaron Campbell made a motion to approve the application as submitted, with the condition to return for approval of public art and lighting. Mike Hammond seconded the motion, which after roll call vote passed unanimously.

DRB #23-013 1287 Vollintine Avenue

Sara Barrera presented the DRB application for exterior renovation, lighting, and public art for property located at 1287 Vollintine. The subject property is an approximately 3,000 square foot commercial building at the southwest corner of Vollintine Avenue and North Claybrook Street near the redevelopment of Northside High School. With this renovation project, three commercial units facing a major corridor will be added to the Klondike neighborhood. The

renovation will greatly improve the look not only of the building but also of the corridor and neighborhood. New windows, doors, and lighting will improve visibility and the perception of safety encouraging more pedestrian activity. The mural will add color and interest while showcasing local art and culture. Board members questions were regarding landscaping and placement and color of windows and door. Applicant Valencia Pope was present to answer questions. After board discussion, Michael Winter made a motion to approve application as submitted, with the condition to return for approval of signage and public art. Aaron Campbell seconded the motion, which after roll call vote passed unanimously.

(NOTE: Mario Walker recused himself from vote)

DRB #23-12 635 Madison Avenue – Creative Co-Working

Sara Barrera presented the DRB application for exterior renovation, lighting, and public art for property located at 635 Madison Avenue. The proposed project will add two storefronts to the back of this building facing the alley while making major improvements to the alley. An office for cnct. design + develop will be one storefront. Ugly Art Co. studios, gallery space, and retail space will be another storefront. Art will spill into the alley in the form of asphalt art and lighting. The alley will connect the site, strengthening access to a central courtyard and pedestrian traffic within the Edge District. This project activates a previously vacant space and introduces exterior improvements that go above and beyond typical building maintenance. It reinforces the creative character of the Edge District and builds upon a well-trodden path to create an intriguing connector. The many doors and windows bring light into the building and reinforce a sense of activity in the area. The artistic lighting installation not only adds visual interest but also greatly improves comfort and safety for pedestrians. Board members had questions regarding the current use of the space, location of the front of the building and the inspiration of the koi fish. Applicant John Halford was present to answer questions. Chair Michelle Ye commented that the Edge District is becoming a little hidden treasure. After board discussion, Mike Hammond made a motion to approve the application as submitted, with condition of later applications for public art, lighting, and signage. Sophorn Olsen seconded the motion, which after roll call vote passed unanimously.

IV. Adjournment

Seeing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.