

**MINUTES
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
December 11, 2008**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Estok Menton, Vice Chair
Jody Cole
Tom Hise
Tom Liden
Alan Nicholson

OTHERS PRESENT

Lori Rosenberg
John Surri
Renee Felciano
Judy Pruden

MEMBERS ABSENT

Richard Moser, Chair
Nick Thayer

STAFF PRESENT

Jennifer Faso, Associate Planner
Kim Jordan, Senior Planner
Kathleen Moller, Economic
Development Coordinator
Cathy Elawadly, Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Design Review Board was called to order by Vice Chair Menton at 3:00 p.m., at Ukiah Civic Center, Conference Room No. 3, 300 Seminary Avenue, Ukiah, California.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll was taken with the results listed above.

3. RIGHT TO APPEAL

Vice Chair Menton read the appeal process. For matters heard at this meeting, the final date for appeal is December 22, 2008.

4. AUDIENCE COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No one came forward.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 30, 2008 minutes

M/S Liden/Cole to approve the October 30, 2008 minutes, as submitted. Motion carried by an all AYE voice vote of the members present.

6. NEW AND MODIFIED CONSTRUCTION

6A. Site Development Permit 08-38 Ukiah Natural Foods, 721 S. Street, APN 002-226-08; Applicant: Lori Rosenberg, Site Development Permit for proposed 3,725 sq. foot expansion to an existing building along with modifications to the existing parking lot and landscaping. New outdoor seating at the north side of the building is proposed and a new exterior stairway will be added for egress. Recommendations to the Planning Commission.

Associate Planner Faso commented:

- The project involves an expansion to the north end of existing natural foods store to include a 2,008 square foot first floor addition and a 1,719 square foot mezzanine. A new seating area is also proposed outside the addition along Gobbi Street and the existing landscaping and parking stalls in front of the building will be modified and enhanced. New canopies, awnings and trellis are proposed to soften the hardscape.
- The project complies with the Airport Compatibility Zone as the subject property is located in the B-2 Airport Zone, the Ukiah General Plan and zoning designation for this commercial property.
- Staff recommends the DRB address the criteria for consistency with the Commercial Downtown Development Design Guidelines relevant to the site as provided for on page 1

of the staff report and possibly make a recommendation to the Planning Commission concerning the building and landscaping design aspects.

- **Member Nicholson** provided written comments as follows:
 - In designing a remodel and addition to such a popular and visible community resource, it is a worthy endeavor to bring a sense of unity of design to the urban fabric rather than a patchwork of unresolved elements patched onto the original, and not very distinguished commercial box. Every project has the potential add a beneficial element the city when it is derived from design sensitivity to the client's goals and the context of the site.
 1. The North Elevation is discordant and confusing and is not a proper Street front Façade. I suggest moving the stairs off this elevation and place them on the Porzio Lane East Elevation; on the exterior and perhaps to line up with the interior stair landing on the Mezzanine level.
 2. The West Front Façade is also confusing and awkward. The bottom of the awnings and attached roods are all at different elevations and overhang the building in multiple dimensions and shapes. Please review and try to unify this element of the plan.
 3. West Elevation again; the multiple entry and exit doors are of different proportions and elevations. Either raise the existing entry windows to match the new windows or lower the new window sill to match the existing.
 4. The Trellis on the East Elevation near the north corner ramp could be more unified in size.
 5. What is the specific proposed landscape planting plan?
 - There are so many design decisions made here that seem to be driven purely from function without a concern about how they create a cumulative impact to the building and the human experience. Rather than a cohesive overall design we are given a hodge-podge of elements that are unrelated to each other or the building.
 - The best urban streets are lined with buildings that welcome people with charm and a dignity of human scale. The north elevation is an afterthought and cut off from the street with a private and exclusive courtyard wall, and a stair that looks like an expedient egress / fire escape. I hope the applicant will do better at this important intersection of Downtown Ukiah.
- **Member Thayer** provided written comments as follows:
 - I am glad to see the Ukiah Natural Foods moving forward with a remodel of their existing facility.
 - I have reservations about the proposed design.
 - It seems the interior have been well thought out as to the space planning needs of the store itself, but the buildings exterior appears to have been an after thought.
 - The new addition seems to have been tacked on to the existing structure without much thought to integrating the whole. I understand this may have been a budget driven design constraint, but I would hope for something better.
 - I am supportive of the comments and suggestions made by Mr. Nicholson.
 - As to the remodeled landscape portion of the project, I am glad to see a professionally created plan drawn to scale with some details provided. Having spoken with Ms. Felciano regarding the project, I understand that the client had requested the use of endemic plant materials, of which I am supportive.
 - The current plan does not reflect the design criteria. I assume that an updated plan will reflect that element and I look forward to seeing it. I would also hope that a little more seasonal variety would be added that could be addressed by adding some large scale planters at the store front. I would like to see the vine planting that is proposed on the other portions of the building used again on the front façade.
 - The front enclosure wall could be opened to the west with a small portion of walling around the bike rack added to connect these areas.

- The proposed low water use irrigation system is a welcome element in the design. The backflow prevention unit needs careful siting.
- **Vice Chair Menton** – Requested review of plans relevant to the north elevation.

Staff/DRB/applicant comments:

Member Hise is in agreement with Member Nicholson's comments regarding the project.

1. Form, color and texture of the roof should be considered an integral part of the building design.
 - ❖ More design attention and/or design criteria other than the paint scheme should be given to the exterior elements of the building in order to make the proposed expansion more compatible with the existing building.
 - ❖ The mezzanine is very 'vulnerable' to Ukiah's intense hot western summer sun wherein a covering or some sort of protection is necessary.
 - ❖ The building essentially has two fronts, a western and northern elevation wherein the existing parapet theme should continue around to the north addition. This would improve/enhance the overall function and aesthetics of the building, since these elevations are the 'anchors' of the shopping establishment.
 - ❖ **Member Liden** stated his project concerns pertain to parking and traffic congestion on Gobbi Street. There was a discussion about the parking accommodations and site constraints relevant to the parcel configurations for the shopping complex. Consideration should likely be given to whether closure of the Co-op's Gobbi Street/Porzio Lane-Main Street artery is a good idea.
 - ❖ The applicant inquired about purchasing the property adjacent to Ukiah Natural Foods to the south wherein this is not an option. The coffee kiosk in the center of the parking lot was 'grandfathered in' wherein nothing can be done about this situation in terms of parking and traffic circulation in the business complex.
 - ❖ Staff noted the issue of parking, site circulation/patterns and traffic problems on Gobbi Street during peak hours will be addressed by the Planning Commission during discretionary review for the Major Site Development Permit.
 - ❖ **Member Cole** supports the proposed three color palette/color scheme for the project.
 - ❖ It was noted the sign on the western elevation will be moved more toward the north elevation to provide better visibility and it will be illuminated at night in compliance with the International Dark Sky Association.
2. Emphasize pedestrian orientation by creating attractive, friendly pedestrian spaces.
 - ❖ The site plan presented was very helpful.
 - ❖ **John Surri, Architect**, stated the project and design aspects are subject to budgetary constraints. The comments made by the DRB will be considered.
 - ❖ **Member Menton** stated the western elevation can be incredibly hot in the summer and inquired whether there are plans to plant shade trees in the parking lot.
 - ❖ **Lori Rosenberg** stated the owner of the dry cleaners also owns portions of the parking lot and does not support planting trees in the parking lot. While Mendocino Department of Social Services also owns portions of the parking for the shopping complex, it is amenable to planting shade trees. However, they do not want to share in the cost. Ukiah Natural Foods does not own any portion of the western parking lot wherein the property line ends at the sidewalk.
3. Accent building entries with strong architectural definition.
 - ❖ The site plans show the proposed new windows and exit-only door coming out of the food area.
 - ❖ The outdoor seating is on the north elevation that is accessed only from inside the store.

- ❖ There was a brief discussion concerning the problems with undesirables in the area.
 - ❖ Accent building entries pertain to what is existing.
 - ❖ Moving the sign on the western façade farther to north will guide customers to the entrance, particularly since it will be lit having a brighter presence. Also, the roofline and corresponding eaves/awnings will provide for a nice architectural presentation/definition.
 - ❖ The proposed new planters will also provide for a nice entrance presentation.
 - ❖ The site has little space for landscaping features.
 - ❖ There was a brief discussion concerning the north elevation and architectural design features wherein the project architect stated a 42-inch high barrier will be implemented in the outdoor seating area.
 - ❖ There was discussion concerning elements to keep non-customers from stepping over the wall and into the outdoor seating area.
 - ❖ There was discussion concerning landscaping features to help screen the outdoor seating area from a privacy perspective.
 - ❖ **Landscape Architect Renee Felciano** stated the plant selection has addressed the screening issue.
4. Plant species which are well adapted to the climatic conditions in Ukiah are preferred. Permanent plantings should be generally hardy and not require extensive maintenance. Trees on the south and west sides should be primarily deciduous. Color accents and annual plantings area encouraged.
5. The scale and nature of landscape materials should be appropriate to the site and structures.
- ❖ **Renee Felciano** stated the plant species selected for the north elevation will mature to a 4 - 5-foot height, which will sufficiently screen traffic on Gobbi Street, Safeway and the Gobbi-Street-Porzio Lane-Main Street intersection while still permitting a view of the western hills. In her opinion, allowing for an 8-foot high vegetative species is too psychologically confining. The plants would be on the outer perimeters of the 42-inch wall except for the area adjacent to the bus stop on Gobbi Street, which is another area that will require landscape screening relative to the outdoor dining area. Her intent is to propose a landscaping species that are durable, drought tolerant, looks good all year round, and require somewhat low maintenance. The proposed landscape plan does provide for some native plant species. Moraine Ash is proposed for the planter areas in the front of the building and street trees on Gobbi Street. She addressed street tree species chosen in other communities, noting one of the best street trees is the Chinese Pistachio located in the Downtown. Because these trees are very popular, growers have difficulty producing decent sized trees. Junipers, low growing Manzanita and Toyon Berries are part of the proposed Landscape Plan. She added Safeway has Junipers and Rosemary as part of the landscaping and supports using the same vegetative species in neighborhoods as opposed to each project having a different species. She addressed how the landscaping should be appropriately maintained/irrigated. Member Thayer supports using native plants and suggested such vegetative species as Bucyrus, Wildrose, and Snow Berry. There is not a lot of square footage for landscaping on the subject property. She supports implementing a 'strong design' to include native Manzanita (ground cover type) and Toyon Berry.
 - ❖ **Vice Chair Menton** supports the outdoor seating area be sufficiently screened for privacy purposes and that the western façade be sufficiently shaded from the hot summer sun and that the vegetation selected for screening will be as high as the existing parapet.
 - ❖ **Member Cole** was not particularly supportive of Junipers as part of the Landscape Plan.
 - ❖ **Vice Chair Menton** generally concurs with Member Nicholson's comments and reemphasized the importance pertinent to providing for an architectural pleasing

visual presentation of the north façade. The closing of the Porzio Lane exit is an acceptable proposal. He acknowledged the proposed two stairways for the project and supports the stairway on the north elevation be minimized so that it is visually less prominent. He noted the importance for the remodel to aesthetically complement the existing building relevant to providing for 'stronger' treatments for the north elevation and recommends specific attention be given to the design of the upper parapet and windows on the west elevation in order to provide for a more cohesive presentation for both the north and west elevations.

- ❖ **Member Liden** concurs with Member Nicholson's introductory comments and first three statements.
- ❖ **Member Cole** concurs with Member Nicholson's comments for the project.

M/S Hise/Liden to recommend the project move forward to the Planning Commission for discretionary review of the Major Site Development Permit application. Motion carried by an all AYE voice vote of the members present.

Member Cole left at 4:00 p.m.

Member Nicholson arrived at 4:00 p.m.

6B. Historic Downtown Direction Signs File No. 08-40, Ukiah Main Street Program, Proposed sign structures to be located at various locations within the downtown area to identify and provide direction to shopping, restaurants and other amenities. Recommendations to the Ukiah Redevelopment Agency.

Staff referred to the revised Shopping, Directional & Event Signage in Downtown Ukiah narrative and noted the addition of one paragraph. It was further noted the narrative provides drawings of the proposed signs.

Judy Pruden commented:

- Main Street has worked on the matter of directional signage for approximately two years.
- The signs are viewed as a pedestrian amenity rather than for use from vehicles.
- Five signs are proposed in strategic locations to include the post office parking lot, north side of School Street on the Courthouse corner of Perkins and School Streets, Alex Thomas Jr. Plaza, Grace Hudson Museum, and the Main Street parking lot north of the Library.
- The signs include a post encompassing two perpendicular arms containing information that point in different directions. Main Street when reviewing the type of information the signs should contain concluded in terms of effectiveness that general information be included, such as pointing toward the Post Office, Courthouse, historical homes, Civic Center etc.
- The directional signs will be of metal and powder coated; The color scheme is plumb and/or of a burgundy color. There is a cut-out on top of the signs that shows the City Oak tree logo on a copper background if available, otherwise gold. The signs will be slightly off-white with dark-brown writing and attached to the post will be a clear plastic/waterproof material holder containing the map and location of shops/eateries in the Downtown area.
- The intent of the holder is to provide flexibility wherein the signs can be changed and new signage added when necessary to include advertising for a special event and/or allow for any other changes necessary. Specially, the arrows containing the information will point in the appropriate direction for shopping and/or location of a significant building or special event.
- Main Street has established a maintenance fund for the signs.
- The posts will be placed on the inside of the sidewalks and/or where appropriate for ease of reading/understanding.

- The matter of the shopping, directional and event signage will come before the RDA on January 7, 2009.

Member Hise recommended the signs be comprised of a dark background with white lettering as opposed to a light background with dark lettering.

The DRB supports the project.

M/S Liden/Hise to recommend the matter of coordinated signage for selected blocks within Ukiah's Historic Downtown for the purpose of attracting and directing shoppers and diners to the amenities and events within this District to include Member Hise's suggestion of changing the background and lettering from a light background with dark lettering to a dark background with white lettering move forward to the RDA in January 2009. Motion carried by an all AYE voice vote of the members present.

7. MATTERS FROM THE BOARD

None.

8. MATTERS FROM STAFF

- 8A.** Review, comment and discuss revised Façade Improvement Program Application including submittal requirements.

The DRB deferred discussion of this agenda.

9. SET NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNMENT:

The next regular meeting will be at p.m. at 3:00 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

Estok Menton, Vice Chair

Cathy Elawadly, Recording Secretary