



# City of Ukiah, CA

## Design Review Board

---

---

### MINUTES

---

---

1  
2  
3 **Regular Meeting**

**September 13, 2012**

4  
5 **Ukiah Civic Center, 300 Seminary Avenue**

6 **1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Hise called the Design Review Board meeting to order at 3:00  
7 p.m.

8  
9 **2. ROLL CALL Present:** Tom Liden, Alan Nicholson, Howie Hawkes,  
10 Tim Hise, Chair  
11 **Absent:** Nick Thayer  
12 **Staff Present:** Kim Jordan, Senior Planner  
13 Jennifer Faso, Associate Planner  
14 Cathy Elawadly, Recording Secretary  
15 **Others present:** Richard Ruff  
16 Martin Breue

17  
18 **3. CORRESPONDENCE:** None

19  
20 **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** - None

21  
22 **5. AUDIENCE COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** None.

23  
24 **6. NEW BUSINESS:**

25 **6B. Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson**

26  
27 **M/S Liden/Nicholson** to nominate and elect Member Hise as Chairperson. Motion carried (4-0)  
28 with Member Thayer absent.

29 **M/S Nicholson/Hise** to nominate and elect Member Liden as Vice Chairperson. Motion carried  
30 (4-0) with Member Thayer absent.

31  
32 **6A. Site Development Permit File No. 12-13-SDP-UP-VAR-PC.** Conduct a public hearing  
33 and make recommendations to the Planning Commission on the design for the proposed  
34 new mixed use project at 528 N. State Street, APN 002-146-11.

35  
36 **Martin Breue, Ruff & Associates** gave a project description:

- 37 • The commercial use component will feature two commercial spaces that could be used
- 38 for office or retail, such as a small shop.
- 39 • The residential use component will feature 5 single room occupancy units (SROs) and 7
- 40 one bed-room units.
- 41 • Since the units are relatively small in size, storage units will be provided in the rear of the
- 42 site. There will also be laundry facilities.
- 43 • Parking would be provided in an open parking lot for seven vehicles located in the center
- 44 of the site and in carports located behind the commercial spaces that front North State
- 45 Street. There will be a total of 12 parking spaces. One parking space would be handicap.
- 46 • Six bicycle parking spaces are also proposed.
- 47 • The roof will feature space for photovoltaic systems. The intent is to utilize as much
- 48 natural energy as possible.
- 49 • The project will meet the City's 20% landscaping coverage requirement. The landscaping
- 50 will be located to the rear of the site around the residential buildings, including an urban
- 51 garden area.

- The project design and building would be guided by Green Building standards. Energy efficiency standards will be applied. Very close to getting a net-zero energy building.
- Rain water will be stored on-site to irrigate the urban garden.
- The material for the rear building on the first floor will be hardy panel.
- Referred to the site plans and explained the intent of the color scheme selected for the buildings was to provide for a nice blend of colors that complement and enhance one another yet distinguishes the commercial use from the residential.

**Richard Ruff, Ruff & Associates, project architect:**

- Commented on the site constraints and noted there are many 'utilities' in the sidewalk because of the traffic signals in the T-intersection of North State Street and Norton Street. Because there are many utility structures in the area and on the site, it is likely only one street tree can be planted as opposed to two trees.
- The traffic study conducted for the project pointed out that \$50,000 worth of work must be done to create an actual intersection so that pedestrians have a walk sign when they cross the driveway of the site.
- Provided a visual sample of what the 'green wall' will look like.

**Senior Planner Jordan:**

- SRO units are not allowed by City code in the city limits, but the DZC does have provisions for SRO units (Attachment 4). The Planning Director made a Determination of Appropriate Use to allow SROs for this particular project and the timeframe for appeal has now passed.

**DRB questions:**

**DRB:** Clarification the storage units must be five feet from the rear property line.

**Staff:** The proposed site is zoned C-1 (Community Commercial) and located adjacent to R1 zoning to the rear of the site. In R1 the required rear and side setback for a detached structure is five feet, so the rear setback for this project is 5 feet. The plans are proposing a three-foot setback, so a minor variance is required.

**DRB:** Will the units be all electrical or will there be gas too?

**Richard Ruff:** There is no gas on the site. The solar panels on the roof should significantly reduce energy bills.

**DRB:** Are the solar panels a part of the project or are they intended for the future as a Phase II? It appears the building will be well insulated so it would not take too much power to heat them. Is the installation of the solar panels a budget decision?

**Richard Ruff:** Is relatively sure they will be a Part I of the project. Confirmed the solar panels would be budget decision. If the panels are not installed for Part I of the project, they would be later. The panels would be a 'grid tie' system.

**DRB:** With the building orientation will there be any passive heat?

**Richard Ruff:** There will be some solar gain.

**DRB:** What is the roofing material?

**Richard Ruff:** The plan is for the roofing material to be metal.

**DRB:** Will the bottom portion of the buildings actually be orange as shown on the drawings?

**Richard Ruff:** The computer does not actually portray the true color, which would be more of a maroon.

**DRB:** Asked about plans for rain water storage and re-use? Consider if the underground tank makes economic or physical sense to store that much water.

1 **Richard Ruff:** There will be an underground tank to store rain water for irrigation purposes. It is  
2 likely the only water that will be collected would be off the two sloped roofs.

3  
4 **DRB:** What are the plans for the commercial space?

5 **Richard Ruff:** It is just one open space with an ADA compliant restroom. The windows are  
6 proportioned and surrounded by a 'green wall' as shown on the plans. The commercial space will  
7 likely be for office use.

8  
9 **DRB:** Where is the crosswalk located?

10 **Richard Ruff:** There is a crosswalk on the north and south sides of the site, including striping in  
11 the parking lot of the site for pedestrian use. Demonstrated the location of the proposed new  
12 driveway and noted the old one has been abandoned and is now a sidewalk.

13  
14 **DRB:** Is it possible to provide for a privacy gate to the complex?

15 **Richard Ruff:** It is not possible because of the traffic backing up into the intersection.

16  
17 **Staff:** The City Public Works Department is asking for a drainage study. The Building Official and  
18 Public Works Department will review the Project for ADA compliance.

19  
20 **DRB comments:**

21  
22 **Member Nicholson:** Read and provided a list of comments/questions that are incorporated into  
23 the minutes by reference as attachment 1.

24  
25 **Staff:**

- 26 • While street trees are not shown on the plans, two are required.
- 27 • There are several landscaping requirements for parking lots that do not apply to this  
28 project. These requirements apply to parking lots of 12 or more spaces. This project has  
29 a parking lot for 7 vehicles. The remaining parking spaces are located in carports rather  
30 than an "open parking lot."

31  
32 **Units:**

33  
34 **DRB:** Is fine with the unit size.

35  
36 **Chair Hise:** There needs to be more room on the site. Does not see a need for the storage units.

37  
38 **Richard Ruff:**

- 39 • The storage units cannot be eliminated for the project because this is a necessary  
40 component to the project. The storage units are single story. There are 10 storage units  
41 that would be metal with a flat roof.
- 42 • The project is hanging by a 'thin thread' in terms of making it work financially. It is about  
43 1.4 million dollar project. The utility costs are approximately \$183,000 and other City fees  
44 are about \$36,000 leaving approximately \$839,000 for the buildings/rest of project  
45 amenities. The rents for the different units range from \$475 to \$900. In order to make  
46 the project work, everything that is proposed must remain.

47  
48 **Staff:**

- 49 • The storage units are a requirement for the SROs.
- 50 • SROs are consistent with the recent General Plan Housing Element. The Project would  
51 provide a housing type that would be affordable for a specific segment of this community  
52 and in a location where many services are provided.

53  
54 **Site Layout, Parking, and Pedestrian Access**

55  
56 **Chair Hise:**

**Design Review Board**

- 1 • The public crosswalks are not shown on the grading, site, or landscaping plan. These  
2 should be included as part of the plans so that the pedestrian facilities can be  
3 understood.
- 4 • Too much being proposed for the site, particularly with the landscaping for the parking lot.
- 5 • The parking, as proposed, has too many issues. The location of the planters in the  
6 parking lot makes several spaces unusable. In order for the parking spaces to be usable,  
7 these planters need to be removed.
- 8 • Looking at Sheet A1.1, the four trees would have to be removed to allow for larger  
9 parking spaces. The end parking spaces are the most difficult, need to be at least 9 feet  
10 wide. The person would have to back out straight and there is little room to do this. The  
11 carports also likely need to be wider than proposed in order to be usable.
- 12 • Reconsider the location of the handicap space. There is no clear path of travel from the  
13 loading zone to the entrance of the buildings without crossing behind other cars which is  
14 not allowed.
- 15 • Backup space for the parking lot is 25 feet. Any less backup space would not work,  
16 especially for the end parking spaces.
- 17 • Is concerned about the entrance to the residential units above the commercial space  
18 which forces people to walk close to the driveway with very minimal sidewalk width and  
19 space for an entrance to a unit. As designed, there is a danger as of a pedestrian/car  
20 interface that could be corrected. The 3-foot 8-inch sidewalk does not work for providing  
21 an entry to the building since the entry door is flush with the sidewalk. Consider widening  
22 the sidewalk to 4 feet and recessing the entry door to the units.
- 23 • A laundry area would likely work. Cautioned there are setback issues all the way around  
24 the site. By eliminating the storage units, the parking area could be re-worked.
- 25 • Agrees with many of Member Nicholson's comments (see Member Nicholson's  
26 comments included as attachment 1 of these minutes).
- 27 • The plans do not indicate the doorway is recessed and shows the doors right on the  
28 sidewalk.

29  
30 **Member Liden:** Understands the site has many constraints in addition to the fact it is a small lot.

31  
32 **Richard Ruff:**

- 33 • Difficult to re-work the parking area since the building cannot be moved closer to the rear  
34 property line.
- 35 • The doorway to the units above the commercial space is recessed.
- 36 • Will make the handicap parking work.
- 37 • Only one handicap space is required and the reason it is placed as it is on the site is to  
38 keep cars away. It also provides a place for loading and unloading of persons.
- 39 • One solution would be to provide a pathway. This would help make the handicap parking  
40 work.
- 41 • The City Public Works Department insists the project driveway line up with Norton Street  
42 to create a true intersection and this is the reason there are only two small areas possible  
43 for street trees on either side of the driveway.
- 44 • It is possible to provide for a narrowing driveway and use traffic calming measures to  
45 slow down people.
- 46 • The City Fire Department indicated there would not be problem turning the fire trucks  
47 around on the site with the 25-foot wide strip that a fire truck can turn around in and come  
48 back out.

49  
50 **DRB:**

- 51 • Likes the courtyard, central entry.
- 52 • One problem with the parking layout is once a person enters the lot, there may not be a  
53 space available. Turning around to exit would be difficult. However, it is likely the  
54 handicap space would be available for someone to use to turn around.

- Sidewalks next to the commercial space at the side of the buildings are too narrow. Should consider widening them and recess the entries to the units above to ensure adequate space and reduce conflicts. Recommend the sidewalk be at least 4 feet wide.
- Need 25 feet to provide adequate backup distance in the parking lot.
- As it is now, people have to walk around the rear of the cars when leaving the accessible parking space which is not allowed. Reconsider the location of the handicap space.
- Need to accurately show the elevations/grades for the site on the plans to understand the drainage and whether or not the project provides the required ADA access and facilities.

**Design and Materials:**

**Member Hise:** Understands that the owner needs to have a certain amount of rental income to make the project work so providing for a full two-story living room would not be economically feasible.

**Member Nicholson:** The conceptual design has no relationship between the front and rear buildings or with the adjacent built environment along the street.

**Member Hawkes:** Understands while the intent of the design mix was to distinguish residential from commercial the hardy panel used on the bottom of two buildings provides for a design connection. Is okay with the design and different designs for the front and rear buildings.

**Staff:** One of the concerns from all the comments regarding the DZC is that square or horizontal window orientations do not 'read' commercial especially on State Street. The windows for the commercial space appear to have a square orientation.

**Richard Ruff:**

- The intent with multiple style buildings is to differentiate the residential from the commercial. Also, the style blends in well with the Coffee Critic design and color scheme.
- The upper units have lofts. It would not be possible to extend the height of the roof to allow for more living space.
- The concern with large glass windows for the commercial buildings is safety, particularly with skateboarders operating in the area of the site. So, the window was raised.
- Would like to maintain a window for the front because it is nice to have a window to look out from.

**DRB Comments:**

- Two members have indicated the preference would be to have a single design as opposed to what is proposed for the buildings.
- One advantage with more than building style and color is that it gives the site more depth and provides for some variation.
- One selling factor would be to create a loft situation in the back as opposed to a mezzanine or allow for a full two-story living room.
- Is fine with the green wall.
- Is generally fine with the color scheme for the front and rear units.
- Likes the SRO unit concept.
- Site may be "too full."
- The commercial units on the ground floor do not have a 'commercial' appearance. The window in the commercial space does not create a 'storefront' look. It is a residential window. Options for a more commercial appearance would be a single door with no window since wall space may be at a premium in these tenant spaces, have a door with sidelight, create a more vertical window orientation, eliminate the window and provide more "green wall."

- The materials and project details need to be noted on the plans and better described. This information needs to be provided for Planning Commission.

**Landscaping**

**Member Hise:** Modesto Ash is not a good street tree for Ukiah’s climate.

**Staff:**

- While street trees are not shown on the plans, they are required.
- Street trees are required for the Project. Public Works determines the number of street trees required – requirement one for every 30 feet. The exact location of the trees can be adjusted by Public Works based on site constraints.
- Modesto Ash is not on the City’s Master Tree list.
- The parking requirements are associated with 12 spaces. In this case, there are seven parking spaces in a parking lot and the carports. Carports are not parking lots. So the rule about if there are 12 parking spaces a project must provide for shading and one parking lot tree every 4 spaces does not apply.

**Signage**

**DRB:** Provide a signage plan for Planning Commission review.

**Lighting**

**DRB:** Provide for a lighting plan and make certain there are no light impacts to neighboring properties.

**7. MATTERS FROM THE BOARD**

Staff advised the Design Review Board is now a City function as opposed to an RDA function where the purview is now citywide as opposed to only within certain boundaries. Accordingly, the DRB’s function is to look at all sight Development Permits and all Planned Development applications, including a Precise Development Plan for PD projects.

**Chair Hise** recommends the City formulate a conflict of interest policy and elaborated on how this would work.

There was discussion about various forms that relate to Projects reviewed by the DRB, such as the Downtown Design Guidelines, Planning Permit Application form that identifies the minimal submittal requirements for projects.

**8. MATTERS FROM STAFF**

None.

**9. SET NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting will be Thursday, October 11, 2012. The meeting adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

---

Cathy Elawadly, Recording Secretary

528 N. State St.,  
Mixed Use Proposal

Project Comments

from Alan Nicholson, September 13, 2012

**Proposed Units**

1. It is stated in the cover letter that the project design will be guided by the (California 2010, Title 24, Part 2) Green Building Standards (GBS). In addition to the California Building Code (CBC) it is a requirement to meet the Mandatory Measures of the GBS. It is not stated whether the applicant will incorporate the GBC Residential Voluntary Measures, or follow the US Green Building Standards.
2. It is not clear how the building will achieve a Net Zero Energy Building, aside from hope.
3. The Zoning allows 7 Units based on parcel square footage. The proposal is for 12 Units. The 7 one bedroom apartments are technically but barely over the maximum sf. for a SRO (400 sf.) and create an extreme density ratio for the parcel.
4. Regarding the rear unit first floor SRO and adjacent common area; other than to cram more rentable space into the property, why an (SRO) unit is needed when an ample 412 sq. ft. single bedroom apartment could be built in the same space. It is assumed that more income could be generated from a 1 bedroom apartment rather than a SRO, however the zoning will not allow another 1 BR unit.
5. Who would maintain the common area?
6. It appears the rear storage unit does not meet the required 5 ft. setback per zoning requirement on the north side and perhaps the south side also.

**Street Façade**

1. The massing of the two street front building provides central access gateway and a courtyard effect for the rear building providing a sense of privacy and identity for the interior of the site. However the conceptual design has no relationship between the front and rear buildings, or with the adjacent built environment along the street.
2. What location and what kind of commercial signage are proposed?

**Color**

1. According to the accepted Design Review Board guidelines published by the City of Ukiah; the use of exterior colors should relate to the natural building materials in the area and be compatible, without being identical to surrounding properties. Color selection for the purpose of individual statement at the sacrifice of the compatibility of the surrounding area, and the use of more than one vivid color per building is discouraged.
2. Neither building color nor a complete list of materials are called out on the received plans, however in composition, the front buildings have little in common with the neighborhood or the rear buildings, and present a rather discordant and jarring appearance in relation to each other. If the rear building is planned for future PV collectors, then one would assume the front units would also integrate a similar function, or at least a compatible and harmonic design vocabulary would tie the two together. This is particularly evident in the application of the color panel cladding with the early modernist, Mondrian inspired proportioning composition in front and the industrial arts and crafts design lineage implied in the rear. Either one could be dramatic and benefit the neighborhood if done well.

**Landscaping**

1. The 20% landscaping rule provides for a landscape that is irrigated and maintained by the owner. Although the idea of individual raised beds for food crops is admirable, there is no assurance that the residents will keep the raised beds in production, or actively maintain any landscape feature.
2. There are no street trees proposed; is there a City guideline for sidewalk landscaping in this area?
3. If the area between the storage unit and the property line is 5' then are the plant materials appropriate, and will they be maintained in such a long and narrow space?

---

**Parking**

1. The parking proposal of 8 spaces at 8 ft. wide by 15 ft. long is for compact cars only and is extremely tight for a small car to use and in practice, impossible to use with a full size SUV or truck if a door must be opened. This leaves 3 spaces for 7 one bedroom apartments, as the ADA stall may only be used for State approved ADA parking.
2. The bulb-out planter in the parking egress may interfere with movement of cars to and from parking spaces.
3. Are these planters supposed to provide the landscape requirement for 1 tree for every 4 spaces? As there does not appear to be the required planting for covered parking.

**ADA compliance**

1. Does the new sidewalk and driveway comply with current ADA path of travel requirements?
- 

**Project Statistics**

Parcel:	11,908 sf.	
Landscape Required 20%:	2,381 sf.	No sq. ft. on proposal
Zoning Allowance:	7 Units;	10 Residential proposed, 2 Commercial (12 Units proposed)
Total building square feet:	(no total provided)	
	3 two story bldgs.	

**Rear Building:**

**First Floor**

3 ea. 1 BR appt. (A):	403 sf.
1 ea. SRO, 1st Fl.:	212 sf.
1 Common area:	200 sf.

**Second Floor**

2 ea. 1 BR appt. (B):	438 sf. + 80 sf.
2 ea. 1 BR appt. (C)	438 sf. + 80 sf.

**Front Two Buildings:**

2 commercial at ground	293 & 198 sf.
2 SRO on ea. 2nd floor	220, 280, 300, 320 sf.

**Storage & Laundry Bldg. 475 sq. ft.**

10 ea. Storage	40 sf.
1 ea. Laundry	74 sf.

**Parking**

	12 Total
Front:	8 spaces at 8' x 16'
Rear:	4 spaces at 9' x 18'
	Incl. 1 Van Accessible ADA
	1 Bicycle pkg. area

---