



City of Ukiah, CA

Design Review Board

MINUTES

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2
3 **Regular Meeting**

July 7, 2011

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

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

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9 **2. ROLL CALL Present:** Acting Chair Tom Liden, Alan Nicholson, Nick
10 Thayer, Howie Hawkes
11 **Absent:** Tom Hise, Estok Menton
12 **Staff Present:** Kim Jordan, Senior Planner
13 Cathy Elawadly, Recording Secretary
14 **Others present:** None.

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16 **3. CORRESPONDENCE:** None

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18 **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** - July 15, 2011
19 The Board tabled approval of the June 15, 2011 minutes until the next regular meeting.

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21 **Member Nicholson:** It may be the City should look at revising the existing Sign Ordinance. There
22 should be a sign ordinance contiguous with the DZC.

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24 **Staff:**

- 25 • Relative to the task of incorporating the Downtown Design District Guidelines for
26 Sign/materials into the DZC Guidelines the scope of the task and the only part that was
27 included in the DZC is the limited amount of sign language that is already included in the
28 Downtown Design District Guidelines for the Downtown.
29 • No direction has been given about any ordinance language related to signs, which has
30 been a 'touchy topic' that came out of the Charrette. 'Nothing ordinance-like' is allowed
31 to occur regarding signs in the new Downtown DZC because the scope does not include
32 a Sign Ordinance.
33 • It is likely the Downtown Design District Guidelines will go away and will when the DZC is
34 adopted. The Downtown Design District Guidelines contain information about signage so
35 it seems appropriate to look at signs related to the Guidelines.
36 • The design guidelines for the DZC will contain information about signs and will replace
37 the existing Downtown Design District Guidelines concerning signs.

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39 **Member Nicholson:**

- 40 • It is a good time to review the Guidelines and not propose an ordinance.

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42 **Staff:**

- 43 • The task is to address the Guidelines for signs as they presently exist and what is the
44 DRB's opinion about them.

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

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48 **6. RIGHT TO APPEAL:** There are no appealable items on this agenda.

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50 **7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1 **7A.** Continue working on development of Downtown Zoning Code (DZC) Design District
2 Guidelines, including incorporating the Downtown Design District Guidelines for Signs
3 and Materials into the DZC Guidelines.
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5 **Downtown Zoning Code**

6 **Section 7, Architectural Standards**

7 **Table 12: Architectural Elements and Materials**

8 **Materials**

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10 Materials, Façade(s) – Primary Exterior Finish (6)

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12 **Staff:**

- 13 • Council has expressed an interest in expanding the materials that can used.
- 14 • Add 'stone' to category that was inadvertently omitted.
- 15 • Footnote 6, allows synthetic materials to replace the materials in this section and/or that
16 mimics the required materials.
- 17 • Modification to Standard – with a minor exception, a different material can be used.
- 18 • The materials listed are recommended by the Planning Commission.
- 19 • There was one Planning Commissioner who did not want to see 'metal' on the list while
20 the other Commissioners did not seem to object.
- 21 • Are there other materials the DRB would like to recommend?
- 22 • To allow for an exception, it may be the DRB should review the material(s).
- 23 • Applicants are required to go through design review as part of the SDP.

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25 **DRB:**

- 26 • Questioned that 'any' synthetic material for the exterior of a building is acceptable with
27 approval of the Zoning Administrator in terms of allowing for a material substitution.
- 28 • Substitute materials should have some level of review. Supported revising the language
29 in footnote 6 that reads, 'All other substitute materials shall be reviewed by the DRB.'
- 30 • There was discussion about the look and composition of different synthetic materials and
31 it may be these materials will improve in the future.
- 32 • There was also discussion about T1-11/ plane panel siding that is not an acceptable
33 material for the exterior of a building. The initial design of a building is the most important
34 and the selection of the materials helps provide the design character and presentation.
- 35 • It is likely that applicants would want the DRB to review substitute materials early on for
36 projects.
- 37 • Strike 'cement siding.'
- 38 • Metal is an allowable material in Table 12. Should metal be like 'cement siding' and
39 considered as an alternate material in footnote 6.
- 40 • Questioned why the table does not address materials for roofs because it is an important
41 issue.
- 42 • What realistically constitutes a natural material? Stucco is not really a natural material.
- 43 • Supports prohibiting 'plane panel siding (T1-11)' as indicated in Table 12 and consider
44 brands/products of siding that should likely be prohibited.
- 45 • Is okay with requiring approval by the Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator for a
46 major/minor exception to use T1-11 materials with a recommendation by the DRB since
47 the DRB has familiarity with these materials that the Zoning Administrator, Planning
48 Commission and staff does not.
- 49 • There was discussion about the proper terminology for T1-11 and whether it should be
50 considered plywood siding. It was noted T1-11 is a brand name. Should 'T1-11' be
51 referred to as 'T1-11 type products' since there are many variations.
- 52 • Discussion about materials such as manufactured stone and 'cultured stone' noting
53 manufactured stone are typically used. How stone looks on a building whether
54 manufactured or otherwise depends on the masonry work.

- Supportive of the concept about encouraging the use of natural materials and discouraging imitation materials.
- Discussion of 'green walls' comprised of plant materials, such as a trellis structure that can be considered as a primary material. 'Stabilized earth' is another material type that can be used in conjunction with other materials and should be given consideration that is not addressed in the Table. This material is not stucco, stone or brick.
- Consider requiring a minor exception as opposed to major exception for T1-11 products with review by the DRB.

Staff:

- With regard to acceptable materials, the reference to 'stone' is likely manufactured stone and the Planning Commission was fine with this. Stone is typically accent material and not primary building material.
- Table 12 addresses primary materials and not accent materials.
- 'Green walls'/stabilized earth materials would require a minor exception as an alternate material.

Roofing Materials –Consider Adding to Table 12

DRB:

- There was further discussion concerning roofing materials, particularly metal and other types.
- Supports DRB review of roofing materials for areas that are visible.

Staff:

- Staff indicated the reason no roofing materials are referenced in the Table is because to a large degree most roofs are flat and would not be seen.
- What is visible is subjective.
- The Planning Commission did not make roofing materials recommendations.

DRB:

- A cool roof is encouraged and such a roof is typically white.
- Does the DRB want to be responsible for every single roof from every single building that is visible from every angle?
- Visible could be interpreted as 'anything in the public way' and is subject to review by the DRB.
- A roof that is visible is a concern.

Staff:

- When there is a site development permit that is subject to review by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission, the DRB would see the project anyway.
- Could create a category called 'roofing materials' and require the materials to be reviewed by the DRB as part of a site development permit.
- It appears roofing materials are changing over time and that it may not be possible to name the materials the DRB prefers.
- Are there roof materials the DRB would prohibit?

DRB:

- Identified plastic roof tiles, pressed metal/pattern pressed metal as possibly prohibiting.
- Some roofing materials may be good for the environment, such as made from recycled materials or a reuse of some materials.

Staff: It might make more sense to discuss roofing materials in the design guidelines for the DZC than codify.

1 **Table 12 DZC – Photo Voltaic – Location**

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3 **DRB:** There was some discussion. Okay with language noting a minor exception is required to
4 deviate from code requirement.
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6 **Table 12 DZC – Accessory Structures**

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8 **DRB:**

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- Do the Building Code requirements have some description about these structures.
 - If accessory structures are allowed examples of which include trellis, pergola, gazebo and other such structures, thoughtful consideration should be given to location and design.
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14 **Staff:** In terms of the DZC, accessory structures are limited whereby only one accessory building
15 is allowed and ‘pretty much’ no accessory structures are allowed.
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17 **DRB consensus:**

18 **Table 12 DZC- Façade(s) – Primary Exterior Finish (6)**

- Recommends materials include: brick, wood siding, stucco and stone. Strike ‘fiber cement siding’ with a footnote 6 that reads, ‘All other substitute materials subject to review by the DRB. Requires a minor exception for use of alternate materials and/or essentially use of any or ‘all other materials.’
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24 **Table 12 DZC- Materials Prohibited**

- Strike language ‘as the primary siding material to read, ‘Plane panel siding, such as veneer plywood, T1-11.’
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28 **Table 12 DZC- Strike ‘primary’ for Façade(s) – Primary Exterior Finish**

- The intent would be to address all exterior materials for a building, primary or accent.
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31 **Table 12 DZC- Roofs**

- No change to Roof section of the DZC regarding materials used. The matter of roofing materials will be addressed in the Design Guidelines for the DZC.
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35 **Signs - From current Downtown Design Guidelines**

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37 **Staff:**

- Addressed the current City Sign Ordinance that allows 1½ sq. ft. of sign area for every lineal foot of parcel frontage so the amount of sign area essentially has no relationship to the building frontage.
 - Further addressed signage for buildings on corner lots, freestanding/monuments signs and signage for buildings.
 - A freestanding sign cannot exceed the height of a building without approval of a site development permit.
 - The rules in the Sign Ordinance are not intended for change. City council did not direct staff to change the Sign Ordinance as part of the DZC or as a separate task.
 - There are no design standards for signs in the Sign Ordinance.
 - The sign information contained in the Downtown Design Guidelines is the only design guidelines that exist for signage.
 - The way the process works is if a sign permit application is submitted, see if the sign meets the guidelines. The problem is the Guidelines are simply ‘guidelines’ and not codified, so not enforceable if the applicant chooses not to abide by them.
 - Signs are very controversial and involve constitutional issues so amending a sign ordinance is very costly and time consuming.
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- The existing sign ordinance typically addresses amount of square footage, location, some lighting direction and/or other sign rules. The sign ordinance does not contain design or materials requirements.
- Essentially changing the sign ordinance is a 'touchy' subject.
- This is the opportunity to improve the guidelines.

Member Liden does not approve of freestanding signs and likes that the Downtown Design Guidelines exclude them.

Staff: There is not really room in the Downtown area for freestanding signs for most properties since the lot coverage is 100% and/or the building is located at the front property line, but there is room on Main Street and the Perkins Street Corridor.

DRB:

- Agrees there should be height restrictions for freestanding and monument signs.

Staff:

- Referred to page 14 of the Downtown Design Guidelines and asked the Board to comment on the sign types in this section.
- Signage for projects is required to be reviewed as part of the site development permit or use permit for a project.
- Signs mounted in windows count as part of the total signage for a project.

DRB:

- Looked at the examples on page 14 of the Guidelines and the language pertinent to sign types for commercial buildings and overall approved of the language and recommended sign examples.
- Regarding bullet 4: Flat signs can be attached to building fronts. These should be flush mounted. In other words, such signs should not project outward on buildings. Bullet 5 says 'projecting signs that are limited in size can be attached to building fronts.'
- Bullet 2, refers to painted window signs that can be used; The term painted could be expanded to include window graphics.
- There was discussion about bullet 1, 'Signs can be painted on a band above windows on stuccoed commercial buildings' and the different adaptations that could occur.

Member Nicholson addressed the language concerning sign types on page 14 of the Guidelines and proposed some changes:

- Bullet 1: Signs can be painted on a band above windows.
- Bullet 2: Window signs can be used.
- Bullet 3: Narrow and flat signs can be hung from stationary canopies. (No change).
- Bullet 4: Flat signs can be attached to building fronts.
- Bullet 5: Projecting signs can be attached to building fronts.
- Bullet 6: Detached, freestanding signs are not allowed for structures located directly on the sidewalk line. (No change).
- Bullet 7: Exposed tube neon signs are appropriate if integrated into the building's design. (No change).
- Bullet 8: Signs permanently attached or intended to be part of an awning. (No change).

Staff: It is not really necessary to change the language. If the Board approves of the signs shown on the page 14, the language can be modified to make better sense and to be consistent with other language that will be used in the Design Guidelines for the DZC.

There was discussion about signs on the side of buildings relative to placement, form and style/design citing examples in the Downtown, such as on the Odd Fellows building.

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2 **Staff** referred to page 12 of the Guidelines and asked the Board to comment on the language.

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4 **DRB:** Although somewhat vague, is okay with language.

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6 **Staff:**

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- 8 • Keep in mind the rules in the Guidelines apply more with the historic Downtown. It may
 - 9 be the sign guidelines should be somewhat different for Main Street and the Perkins
 - 10 Street Corridor.
 - 11 • It may be that a sign program would be appropriate for most projects on Main Street and
 - 12 the Perkins Street Corridor.

13 **DRB:** Questioned whether materials used for signs should be addressed in the Guidelines.

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15 **Staff:** The Sign Ordinance does not prohibit any materials so it would be problematic if the

16 Guidelines prohibit materials.

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18 **DRB:** Expand on the language in the Guidelines about what elements should be encouraged

19 for signs:

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- 21 • Does not like internally-lit can signs that are box-like and often over-sized.
 - 22 • Approves of signs that have individual channel letters.
 - 23 • A sign should have materials that are architecturally pleasing and complimentary with the
 - 24 building.
 - 25 • Signs can be halo and back lit.
 - 26 • Freestanding signs are appropriate for Main Street and the Perkins Street Corridor and
 - 27 not the Downtown because signs are essentially 'district specific.'
 - 28 • Include language in the Guidelines about what the DRB would like to see for signs that is
 - 29 not contrary to the Sign Ordinance or DZC.

30 **DRB:**

- 31
- 32 • Materials for signs are open to interpretation and are very subjective.
 - 33 • Signs should be individually personalized that make a statement/expression about a
 - 34 particular business.
 - 35 • Too much signage is not tasteful. Signage should be practical.
 - 36 • It may be at some point the allotted sign area in the Sign Ordinance should be reduced
 - 37 so that it relates to the building and not the parcel.

38 **Staff:**

- 39
- 40 • Is of the opinion that signs should relate to the building because they are an extension of
 - 41 the building.
 - 42 • Most applicants do not use all of the sign area allowed in the Sign Ordinance.
 - 43 • Some members of the business community were not supportive of reducing the allotted
 - 44 sign area when amendments to the Sign Ordinance were being considered in the past.
 - 45 • Asked Board to be thinking about how sign types, freestanding, monument, window etc.,
 - 46 should relate to buildings.

47 **8. MATTERS FROM THE BOARD:**

48 **Member Liden:** The Main Street Program wants to encourage façade improvements and at a

49 recent committee meeting there was discussion about formulating ways to stimulate business

50 owners/property owners in the Downtown to take advantage of the FIP. A way to do this is to

51 conduct workshops and invite business owners/property owners to attend whereby Main Street

52 would facilitate the invitation process. Asked the DRB for any ideas in this regard.

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1 **Staff:** It may be best to wait and see if redevelopment money will be available in the future since
2 this money is presently being compromised by the State. At this point, it is not known whether
3 redevelopment money is available to do any type projects.
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5 **9. MATTERS FROM STAFF:** None
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7 **10. SET NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNMENT:** The next meeting will be July 20, 2011 at 3:00
8 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.
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11 Cathy Elawadly, Recording Secretary