



City of Ukiah, CA
Design Review Board

MINUTES

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2
3 **Regular Meeting** **January 8, 2009**
4 **Conference Room 3** **3:00 p.m.**
5 **Ukiah Civic Center, 300 Seminary Avenue**

6 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

7 **2. ROLL CALL Present:** Tom Hise, Tom Liden, Alan Nicholson,
8 Nick Thayer, Vice Chair Estok Menton,
9 Richard Moser, Chair
10 **Absent:** Jody Cole
11
12 **Others Present:** None
13
14 **Staff Present :** Jennifer Faso, Associate Planner
15 Kim Jordan, Senior Planner
16 Cathleen Moller, Economic Development
17 Coordinator
18 Cathy Elawadly, Recording Secretary

19
20 **3. CORRESPONDENCE–** None

21
22 **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 11, 2008**

23
24 **Recording Secretary Elawadly** advised the minute format has been revised and minor
25 grammatical changes will be made in this regard.

26
27 Other changes made by the DRB include: Page 3, Line 25 to read, 'Vice Chair Menton'
28 and reference to John Sutti's should be as the applicant's designer rather than the
29 applicant's architect.

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31 **Member Thayer** inquired about the review process relative to native plant species for
32 the Ukiah Natural Foods project.

33
34 **M/S Liden/Hise** to approve December 11, 2008 minutes, as amended. Motion carried
35 by an all AYE voice vote of the members present with Members Thayer and Chair Moser
36 abstaining.

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38 **5. AUDIENCE COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS –** None

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40 **6. RIGHT TO APPEAL –** None

41
42 **7. NEW BUSINESS –** None

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44 **8. MATTERS FROM THE BOARD –** None

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46 **9. MATTERS FROM STAFF**

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1 Façade Improvement Grant Program (FIP). Discuss potential revisions to the Façade
2 Improvement Grant Program.

3
4 **Associate Planner Faso** presented the staff report.

5
6 Program Boundaries:

7 Consensus of the Board was to recommend the following related to FIP boundaries:

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9
 - 10 ▪ Boundaries should be coterminous with the Downtown Design District
 - 11 boundaries.
 - 12 ▪ Properties within the Form Based Code boundaries should be included in the
 - 13 FIP.
 - 14 ▪ Mixed Use buildings should be allowed to participate in the FIP.
 - 15 ▪ Properties with Residential zoning *and* a residential use continue to be excluded
 - 16 from the program.

17 The recommendation was based on the following discussion:

- 18
19
 - 20 ▪ Perkins Street and Gobbi Street from the highway to downtown are key gateways
 - 21 into the City, visually prominent, could benefit from the program, and are
 - 22 currently included in the Downtown Design District boundaries. Perkins Street is
 - 23 a more prominent gateway than Gobbi Street.
 - 24 ▪ Almost all properties within the Draft Form Based Code boundaries are already
 - 25 located within the Downtown Design District. The properties that are not included
 - 26 are located along a City gateway. Including these properties in the FIP would
 - 27 provide an opportunity to improve and upgrade the properties and simplify
 - 28 boundaries.
 - 29 ▪ Mixed use buildings should be encouraged, so they should not be excluded from
 - 30 the FIP even if they are in a residential zoning district.
 - 31 ▪ Talmage Street from the highway to South State Street does not primarily include
 - 32 commercial uses and is a less direct route to Downtown. Including this area
 - 33 could reduce the amount of money available and dilute the effectiveness of the
 - 34 program. As such, the Board did not recommend including this area at this time.
 - 35 ▪ Parts of South State Street may not be as highly visible in terms of serving as a
 - 36 primary gateway to the downtown. Removing some of these properties would
 - 37 allow the FIP to focus on other areas of the City. The Board decided that it may
 - 38 be best not to remove properties from the FIP that are currently eligible for the
 - 39 FIP.
 - 40 ▪ It may be helpful to simplify and coordinate the boundaries of the Downtown
 - 41 Design District, FIP, and Draft Form Based Code.
 - 42
 - 43
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47 Eligible Expenses and Improvements

48 Consensus of the Board was to recommend that the current eligible expenses remain
49 unchanged and recommended clarifications to eligible expenses as noted in italics.

- 50
 - 51 ▪ Façade upgrades, rehabilitation and repair.

1 *On a case by case basis, structural work to support a new façade or storefront*
2 *may be eligible.*

- 3 ▪ Landscaping
- 4 *On a case by case basis, paving may be eligible.*
- 5 ▪ Exterior paint and surface preparation
- 6 ▪ Addition or renovation of exterior architectural elements, such as doors, windows,
- 7 awnings, exterior lighting in conjunction with façade work
- 8 ▪ Functional architectural features
- 9 ▪ Exterior of historic properties
- 10 ▪ Planning and building permit fees
- 11 ▪ Professional fees – engineering, architectural, historical, or design professional
- 12 fees

13

14 The recommendation was based on the following discussion:

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- 16 ▪ Evaluating projects case-by-case allows for flexibility and the Board has the
- 17 discretion to recommend approval or not.
- 18
- 19 ▪ The façade includes all exterior elements of the building. In order to create a new
- 20 façade or new storefront, structural modifications may be required. In this
- 21 situation, flexibility to allow the structural improvements as an eligible expense
- 22 may make this type of project more feasible. The Board would have the
- 23 discretion to recommend approval of this as an eligible expense or not.
- 24
- 25 ▪ The former Jerry's TV building project required interior/structural/foundations
- 26 improvements be made before the exterior facade could be made.
- 27
- 28 ▪ The Dave Hull project on Gobbi Street was requesting funding for
- 29 landscaping/paving in addition to façade improvements. The 'grey' areas
- 30 concerning facades improvements need to be more defined.
- 31
- 32 ▪ FIP funding should not be utilized for maintenance purposes because it is the
- 33 property owner's responsibility to maintain the building.

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35 Funding Cycle with Proposed Project Rating System

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37 Consensus of the Board was the following:

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- 39 ▪ Consider a quarterly rating system with projects reviewed during the quarter and
- 40 funding recommendations made at the end of the quarter.
- 41
- 42 ▪ Consider the following as components of a rating system: Location; Visual
- 43 Prominence; Design Professional; Sustainability; Durability; Historic Buildings;
- 44 Design; Removal of Blight.
- 45
- 46 ▪ Allow all of the money for the yearly funding cycle to be spent in a single quarter,
- 47 so that a good project is not delayed and/or there is not a lack of funds in a
- 48 quarter to fund the eligible expensed recommended by the Board.

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50 The recommendation was based on the following discussion:

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- 1 ▪ A funding cycle of more than 3 months may be too long for small projects and
2 discourage use of the program.
- 3
- 4 ▪ A quarterly funding cycle allows for the applicant to submit the application, the
5 DRB to review the application and provide direction, and the applicant to make
6 revisions (or not) to the project prior to the actual recommendation for funding.
- 7
- 8 ▪ A rating system would provide some objective criteria for the Board to consider
9 and the Board has the discretion to recommend approval of projects and
10 allocation of FIP funds.
- 11
- 12 ▪ A rating system would provide information to applicants as to the type of projects
13 the City would like to see and may encourage better projects.
- 14
- 15 ▪ The FIP has made substantial improvements to the Downtown by funding paint
16 and awnings. The DRB members are generally in agreement that FIP funding
17 should not be utilized for maintenance purposes because it is the property
18 owner's responsibility to maintain the building. However, there are cases where a
19 new property owner desires to improve the physical appearance of the building
20 by replacing the awning and/or painting the building and is encouraged by the
21 DRB.
- 22
- 23 ▪ Program funding is limited and this may allow the projects that provide the most
24 impact to receive funding rather than have all of the funding used for primarily
25 small paint and awning projects.
- 26
- 27 ▪ The DRB questions giving away all the funding to one particular project wherein it
28 is important for the DRB to know what funding is available per cycle so that the
29 best decisions can be made.
- 30

31 The DRB had the following general discussion related to the FIP and DRB
32 recommendations:

- 33
- 34 ▪ Façade improvements to older buildings in the Downtown, for instance, may
35 trigger more costly improvements to the interior of the building, such as sprinklers
36 and/or seismic improvements. Applicants are often reluctant to pursue a FIP
37 grant because of potential other costs involved.
- 38
- 39 ▪ Currently, staff makes a recommendation on a project reviewed by the DRB.
40 What if the DRB does not agree? Since the DRB is the recommending body for
41 the FIP and Site Development Permits, they should make the recommendation
42 they feel is appropriate.
- 43
- 44 ▪ The information and plans submitted by applicant's needs to be improved so that
45 the Board can adequately review the project especially since City funds are being
46 requested.
- 47
- 48 ▪ The DRB assists with the design aspects in the preliminary stages of
49 development/reconstruction/renovations by acting in an advisory
50 capacity/recommending body to the Planning Commission and Finance review
51 Committee for FIP grant applications.

