

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN COMMISSION

MEETING OF

February 13, 2020

Members Present

Courtney Nicholas
Andrew Hessler
Peyton Keesee
John Ranson
R.J. Lackey

Members Absent

George Davis
Adam Jones

Staff

Ken Gillie
Lisa Jones
Clarke Whitfield

Mr. Keesee called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

- 1. Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 530 Patton Street to replace the existing wood frame windows with vinyl replacement windows.*

Keesee opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Mark Harris. Mr. Harris stated our plan is that several of the windows are rotting so we need to replace them. They will be vinyl and the same configuration. I can answer any questions that you may have. We are asking for your approval for vinyl windows.

Mr. Keesee stated the windows are wood and he wants vinyl windows.

Mrs. Nicholas stated the building was built in 1987.

Mr. Ranson stated which building is this?

Mr. Harris stated it is 530 Patton Street and it is right across from the Public Library. It looks like a brick house with green shutters on it.

Mr. Gillie stated it is All Virginia Title. If you look out the window, you can see it.

Mr. Keesee closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Hessler made a motion that it meets guidelines as presented and to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness with the staff recommendations. Mrs. Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 3-2 vote.

- 2. Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 312 Wilson Street to hang "Pretty Distressed" wooden 4' x 8' sign on Lynn St. front door side above the door, add a mailbox on side of building (Wilson St), paint over the light blue cement around the entrance on Lynn Street a light gray color, repaint the stoop walls white and the stoop steps gray and hang "312" numbers.*

Mr. Keesee opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Kacie Gerrell's, Baylee Millard, we are opening up a new business at 312 Wilson Street, and it is right beside Furniture World. We wanted to hang a new sign so people will know where we are. The sign would be flush against the wall above the door where the stoop is to enter the building. There is nothing there right now and we would like to put one above the door. There is no mailbox there and we would like to add a black mailbox with numbers so people will know our address. The painting right now it is white with the blue and we just want to repaint it gray and inside just paint that white.

Mr. Ranson stated so the sign is 4x8?

Ms. Gerrell's stated yes.

Mr. Ranson stated so it will be above the door?

Ms. Gerrell's stated yes above the entrance.

Mrs. Nicholas stated where are the numbers going to be?

Ms. Gerrell's stated right where the mailbox will be. The logo will be white.

Mr. Ranson stated what do yal do?

Ms. Gerrell's stated refurbish furniture.

Mrs. Nicholas stated do we know why the brick area is painted blue? Is there any significance is that historically?

Mr. Gillie stated I didn't know it was blue.

Ms. Gerrell's stated the front door is blue and we would like to paint it gray.

Mr. Whitfield stated on that block I can't see any reason why it is blue and not on that block around Furniture World.

Mr. Keesee closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ranson made a motion that it meets guidelines as presented and to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness with the staff recommendations including painting the door gray. Mr. Hessler seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

- 3. Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 119-121 S. Union Street to create a pocket park.*

Mr. Keesee opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Kelvin Perry, Project Manager with Economic Development. Mr. Perry stated with me is Trena Levitt with Bistro Design and Brian Nichols with Blair Construction. I will let them explain what we are doing and let them answer any questions that you may have.

Ms. Levitt stated this is an exciting project and it is on South Union Street. It is going to be a sunken park. The building was structurally unsafe and so the building has been removed. What we are proposing is a sunken park that you will enter from South Union Street. You will enter on a platform where we are preserving the walls or existing walls because we are going to keep those as a story, we as a history of the building. There are various colors of the stories of the building. There will be a water feature within the park that kind of falls into almost like a water park. The lower floor is filled when you see the stable, so we are trying to honor that and tell the story of not only the Pythian building. We will be using structural boards that were in the basement. We have granite cobbles, salvage brick, and a beam that is on South Union Street that was part of the Pythian building and all of this will be reused within the park. It will have a lot of interesting features from the building that has been demolished. It will be incorporated into the public park. There will be a group of trees in the park that we are bringing in from nearby nature park facilities. The new Honey Dew Hotel is going to wrap this park on all three sides and it is going to be a nice feature for that hotel. It will be good access from South Union Street and it will be a public park.

Mr. Keesee stated so you get down there by elevator?

Ms. Levitt stated we have stairs and elevator. We did consider a ramping system or universal accessibility but the ramps were taking up too much space in the park.

Mr. Ranson stated how far below the street is it?

Ms. Levitt stated approximately ten feet.

Mr. Ranson stated the sign that talks about the history of the building that is going to be up the street?

Ms. Levitt stated correct.

Mr. Lackey stated ten feet and not being able to be seen from the street if you are up against the wall. What is the idea with sanitary conditions? In other words, people using it for bathroom.

Ms. Levitt stated we have thought about putting surveillance cameras.

Mr. Perry stated its not open late night so people will not be able to get in.

Mr. Lackey stated is there going to be a gate?

Mr. Nichols stated yes.

Mr. Lackey stated how tall is the gate?

Mr. Nichols stated four feet.

Ms. Levitt stated the gate is going to be five feet high on top of the building wall and it will have spikes at the top to keep people from climbing on it.

Mrs. Nicholas stated from what I'm looking at the elevator will be in closed?

Ms. Levitt stated yes.

Mrs. Nicholas stated I've peeked in there recently with all of the rain that we have had is there something in place to deal with flooding and plans for that?

Mr. Nichols stated there is a trench drain system for that area and also that trench drain will empty out into a drop inlet and it will have an overflow.

Mrs. Nicholas stated is the trench drain not in place yet?

Mr. Nichols stated no.

Ms. Levitt stated the trench drain will be the entire length of that space. It will be in the middle of the park and it will be sloped.

Mrs. Nicholas stated that is not going to be a tripping hazard is it?

Ms. Levitt stated it is a typical drain.

Mr. Nichols stated it will have a grade on top of it.

Mrs. Nicholas stated I was just making sure that we were not setting people up to turn their ankles.

Ms. Levitt stated it will have a covering over it that will prevent anyone with high heels on from catching them.

Mrs. Nicholas stated great. Will there be access from within this park into the Honey Bee?

Ms. Levitt stated yes. The Honey Bee is in the back corner so if you are facing it from the street it's in that back right corner.

Mr. Keesee stated is that beam that is in the middle of that space is it going to stay?

Ms. Levitt stated half of it is going to stay and the other half is going to be moved.

Mr. Keesee stated the existing brick wall sitting there. Nothing holding it up except for itself. Is that going to be secured somehow?

Mr. Nichols stated I don't see any issue with it at this point. There will be some masonry repair that needs to be done. I know the top will have to be covered.

Mr. Ranson stated the people that own the hotel, will they maintain the park? It won't be a City park?

Mr. Perry stated The IDA owns it.

Mr. Ranson stated is The IDA going to maintain the park.

Mr. Perry stated we are talking now and there are two options on the table. We may turn over the maintenance to Parks and Recreation or we have also had conversation with the hotel since they are going to have staff on hand already taking care of the hotel. We may get them to take care of the park and pay a fee for them doing so.

Mr. Lackey stated has City staff discussed the name? It is named after a Greek Goddess.

Mr. Whitfield stated it's because that's the name of the building.

Mr. Perry stated that's something that came down, but also I know there were some concerns about taking it down from the Historical Society. We wanted to make sure that we retain as much as historic original material in use and name as possible to please as many people as possible.

Mr. Keesee stated will the people staying at the Honey Bee, will they have lights down there at night, inside?

Ms. Levitt stated the idea is to have lit at night and the hotel guest will have a key card pass to get into the space. They will have access to the space and it will give more surveillance as well. It also gives the City an opportunity to rent it out for Weddings.

Mrs. Nicholas stated if it is a rental space then is it a space also available for alcohol license and those type of things?

Mr. Perry stated probably, one of the things that we have talked about in the office today, is we need to go back and look at what rules are valid for renting the spaces with Parks and Rec and kind of make sure that we are covering all the things that comply to happen. We are starting to have those discussions to work that out.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Nicholas made a motion made a motion that it meets guidelines as presented and to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness with the staff recommendations. Mr. Ranson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0- vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The January 9, 2020 minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Approved By: