

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN COMMISSION

MEETING OF

OCTOBER 8, 2020

Members Present

George Davis
Andrew Hessler
Adam Jones
John Ranson
Courtney Nicholas
Peyton Keesee
R.J. Lackey

Members Absent

Staff

Doug Plachcinski
Lisa Jones
Clark Whitfield
Ken Gillie

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

ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

- 1. Certificate of Appropriateness Request at 401 Bridge Street to install a four (4') feet by eight (8') feet vinyl sign facing Bridge Street that advertises lofts for lease.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ranson stated the only question that I have is this temporary or is this limited to six months. Is this permanent?

Ms. Joie Ford was present to speak. I am with Wilkins and Company and I am associate broker and property manager. The sign is not proposed as a permanent sign. We had one over at the old Durham hosiery building at the Lynn Street Lofts and we were very successful on getting those fully leased. We are fully occupied at every property now in the River District. Therefore, we are hoping that this one will get finished quickly. We are able to tour now by letting the contractors know that we have appointments. We are hoping to get this approved and start scheduling tours.

Mr. Davis stated worst-case scenario. If you didn't feel it up within whatever you figured was a limited time would it stay on the building beyond six months or beyond a year?

Ms. Ford stated in my opinion it doesn't need to. The quality of the work in the lofts kind of speaks for itself. We have a lot of inquires every day. If it needed to come down in a specified amount of time for you all I would not object to that.

Ms. Nicholas stated is there amount of time that you would request it to remain up.

Ms. Ford stated I would like for it to be up for twelve months just because of the end of the year there is some turn over. Then again in June when most of the medical students and medical residences start coming in. They do tours typically in March and April. If we had it up for a year that would get us through that transition with them and theoretically back to where we are now. Which is at 100% occupancy.

Mr. Ranson stated I thought there was a limit on temporary signs staying up. I mean it's just yes or no for her information.

Ms. Nicholas stated Doug is there.

Mr. Plachcinski stated I'm not seeing it.

Mr. Hessler stated in the past there were recommendations for a six or twelve month duration, but I don't recall the guidelines.

Mr. Whitfield stated I think twelve months is within the guidelines Mr. Ranson but I don't think you can go beyond twelve months.

Mr. Ranson stated I know we have had this discussion on temporary signs. I know some of them we have said a month.

Mr. Whitfield stated that is because they were promoting a specific event and they only needed it up a month, because at the end of the month the event would have taken place.

Ms. Nicolas stated like the autism run.

Mr. Ranson stated it is all right with me but I thought she needed to know that.

Mr. Davis stated isn't that for a banner not a sign. My question is if it is a well-made sign what difference does it make how long it stays up there.

Mr. Lackey stated I think the answer to that is normally we are trying to get signage for businesses and places but not for a For Lease sign. I think that is the difference, but I don't really care. This is a business here and here is their sign so if they wanted to leave River District Lofts up there, I think that is different than River District Now Leasing up there.

Mr. Ranson stated I don't know if it is or not. I just thought we'd discuss for her information.

Mr. Davis stated you are okay if we set a time limit of twelve months.

Ms. Ford stated yes.

Mr. Whitfield stated Mr. Ranson to further answer your question the guidelines state that they should be considered on a case-by-case basis. I would assume that would also include time, design, and all of that.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Ms. Nicholas made a motion to this request be granted for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 401 Bridge Street for a building mounted flat sign subject to the condition that the applicant confirm that the sign location is above the first floor and below the second floor windows or cornice, to the greatest extent possible until twelve months from when it is hung or until one year later. Mr. Hessler seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

2. *Certificate of Appropriateness Request at 510 Spring Street to renovate the front building façade. The applicant removed the non-historic building façade and proposes replacing windows, doors, and a street-level windowed storefront.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Ronald Ford, owner was present to speak. I am here for any questions that you may have. To make one clarification on it is that it is not double hung windows to the front but that it is aluminum clad casement windows.

Mr. Ranson stated could you explain looking at the picture what is going to be done?

Mr. Ford stated I have done some research. Cunningham put the double doors that you see in the photo in the 20's at Hughes Funeral Home, which was Cunningham at the time. The Arch that you see was cut out. What I am requesting is to go back to what Cunningham and Hughes put in, which was a store front area. Where that double door would be, where the double doors are showing but where it has the single door, converting that into an entire store front window verses a door.

Mr. Ranson stated so you are going to have double doors there and a storefront in these other openings.

Mr. Ford stated it would be storefront windows solid in the opening and it would be one divider in the middle.

Mr. Ranson stated a divider here?

Mr. Ford stated yes.

Mr. Ranson stated what about this opening here?

Mr. Ford stated it would become part of that window.

Mr. Ranson stated so you're not going to lower them?

Mr. Ford stated it will be brought out to an even filter. Right now it is turned in kind of sideways in the opening. This picture doesn't show it well.

Ms. Nicholas stated so the door on the left would disappear.

Mr. Ford stated correct.

Ms. Nicholas stated under the window what is the material proposed because the window does not go to the ground does it.

Mr. Ford stated no the window does not go to the ground. Right now, it is brick and we would relay the brick and cover it with wood veneer.

Mr. Ranson stated so that is under the big window?

Mr. Ford stated correct. Two stores on Union Street have a very similar wood that I have proposed. It is similar to a shiplap style.

Mr. Ranson stated is it one of these?

Mr. Ford stated that is a door that I am proposing a similar style to.

Ms. Nicholas stated that gives me a better picture.

Mr. Ford stated the ultimate plan is to where we are in the process of negotiating the lot next door and an outdoor dining area if this becomes a restaurant. We would tie the wood panels into that to the surrounding area. We are still in the negotiating phase for the lot.

Ms. Nicholas stated so you would take where you are closing up the door on the left you would take the brick all the way across and then the vineyard across that.

Mr. Ford stated correct I would bring it out even with the front of the building setback the same amount of the left side or right side that it is now.

Mr. Ranson stated so that dark is wood.

Mr. Ford stated that is correct.

Mr. Ranson stated would it be possible to do a stucco finish.

Mr. Ford stated it is definitely not out of the question but we were thinking about the wood because it would tie into the other store. Originally, there was a stable and a blacksmith's shop at that location. We were trying to tie everything back together and bring a little of the rustic feeling into it.

Mr. Ranson stated I understand but most of the buildings in keeping with the historic would not be wood.

Mr. Keesee stated did you say would not be wood.

Mr. Ranson stated I don't want to make it more difficult than necessary.

Mr. Ford stated it is kind of bringing a design together because with the two double doors, we want to do an iron double door, which is kind of represented in the picture but I know the door in the picture is not an iron door, but it is the same look of that door. The material that we want to use is kind of like wrought iron steel doors going into that double door or opening to bring that modern feel to the building. It would tie two things together.

Mr. Keesee stated hey John, Ron Ford is the one doing all the Ross and Garrett stuff downtown so he is very versatile with what is required, if you don't know who that is.

Mr. Ranson stated it would be my preference if it were stucco.

Mr. Ford stated the plan is we are going to lay brick back in that area so if somebody wants to take the wood off and we don't have the property anymore then they can take the wood off. It is the design that we wanted to go for. That is the biggest portion of the wood.

Ms. Nicholas stated John; I am going to fight you for wood. I want wood!

Mr. Keesee stated seconded.

Ms. Nicholas stated because I think it creates a more cohesive connection with buildings that are very close to it. There are buildings in that same section that do have the wood.

Mr. Ranson stated really.

Ms. Nicholas stated yes.

Mr. Ford stated just on Union Street there are two alone.

Mr. Jones stated is there wood where the picture with the red jeep Cherokee. Is that considered wood there?

Mr. Ford stated that is more of a painted style and we want to go with a dark stain.

Mr. Hessler stated in the picture with the red jeep, it's not my favorite look but I do like where we are going with this.

Mr. Ford stated the idea is to attract a high scale restaurant to go to this space. That is the idea.

Mr. Ranson stated no matter what you are putting under there, what you are doing is a great improvement to the building.

Ms. Nicholas stated just for my curiosity, as you take the storefront and move it flush because right now it is on that angle. Is that going to change the orientation of all the doors to the side or are they pretty much stationary?

Mr. Ford stated they would stay the same. We do want to widen the column to match the outer two columns and that is part of what we have submitted to make it look uniform.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Ms. Nicholas made a motion that a Certificate of Appropriateness to be granted at 510 Spring Street for a front building façade renovation as presented in their application submitted on September 29, 2020. Mr. Keesee seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-1 vote.

Mr. Hessler made a motion to add a request to the agenda. Ms. Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

3. *Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 539 & 541 Main Street to paint building and install new sign.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Kelvin Perry, Project Manager, City of Danville, Office of Economic Development was present and stated last month you approved Nana Karen's Kitchen to paint their building gray. The owners of the building want to paint the rest of it the same color. When he got the approval last year to repaint it the current color that it is, but since he has painted it gray it makes better sense to do the whole building the same color.

Mr. Lackey stated what is the sign? It says install new sign?

Mr. Perry stated just replace the sign that they have and update it with same color and size.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ranson made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for 539 & 541 Main Street that the items to follow are in accordance with the guidelines set forth

by the River District. Mr. Jones seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The September 10, 2020 minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Gillie stated I just want to give you a brief update. Last year we brought you 549 High Street, which the building was set for demolition, and we tried to salvage the building. We have been working with Economic Development to find someone that would take on that project. We were unsuccessful in finding anyone to take on that project and last week we noticed it and unfortunately the building had shifted and was as we feel a danger. They have started the demolition process on that building.

Mr. Whitfield stated I just want to let you know that the Appointments Committee Council has recommended Ms. Nicholas and Mr. Hessler to be reappointed and so at their October 20 meeting with Council they will be reappointed back to River District Design Committee.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

Approved By: