

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN COMMISSION

MEETING OF

September 13, 2018

Members Present

Peyton Keesee  
Courtney Nicholas  
John Ranson  
R.J. Lackey  
Sheri Chaney

Members Absent

George Davis  
Jonathan Hackworth

Staff

Ken Gillie  
Bryce Johnson  
Lisa Jones  
Clark Whitfield

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

**ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING**

1. *Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 530 Monroe St for a 32 square foot wall sign, reface of a historic roof sign, and an additional new wall sign.*

Mr. Keesee opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Tammy Poplin; I am with Piedmont Lands of Virginia. Ms. Poplin stated since I have submitted this I changed and amended it a little bit, so I emailed Bryce and Lisa earlier so you probably have not seen that email. I made copies of everything. So the sign that actually goes in front of the building it is 4' by 8', so it is a total of 32 square feet and I had attached pictures of that. We were also proposing to restore the old M & M sign that is raised above the roof, but we would like to hold off on that right now and maybe revisit at a later time. The letters of antiques we were proposing to go down the side. I actually had those printed out so they would be 4 feet tall by 35 feet long. They would be metal cut out letters and powder coated black, and they would be affixed to the side of the building. They would be a total of 140 square feet of space.

Mr. Ranson stated so is that in lieu of that sign?

Ms. Poplin stated well it's pretty much the same thing. I didn't have dimensions of it and it's more like that.

Ms. Nicholas stated the M & M sign is that still on the building?

Mr. Ranson stated how can they have so much square footage per sign?

Mr. Gillie stated the total is based on 2 square foot per linear foot. The building is a large building for downtown, so they are allowed to have that square footage.

Ms. Poplin stated the M & M sign is actually I don't know what you really call it, it's way up in the air and metal.

Mr. Gillie stated it is a roof sign according to the code.

Ms. Poplin stated I could not think of the word.

Mrs. Chaney stated it is kind of like the Dan River sign.

Ms. Poplin stated we would leave the M & M sign alone for now.

Mr. Ranson stated can they do the M & M sign won't that exceed their footage? Do they have to take that down?

Mrs. Nicholas stated if they leave that sign, does that exceed the square footage?

Mr. Gillie stated we do not permit roof signs according to the code anymore, so it's an existing legal nonconforming roof sign. The problem is with M & M still being up there, they are not a business that is located there anymore so the M & M portion should actually come down. They could put the furniture portion at the bottom of it but they will have to take the M & M from the top.

Ms. Poplin stated so if we just leave it alone do we have to remove it.

Mr. Gillie stated it is supposed to come down. We have not sent anything out on it. It is a question for the historic signage portion of it. If you going to reface part of it then the other part should really come down. You kind of can't have both.

Ms. Poplin stated so if we mark that part of and did not do anything and leave it as is, can we just leave it there.

Mr. Gillie stated we were not going to pursue anything until the board made that decision on whether it was considered a historic sign per say.

Mr. Keesee stated so it is up to us to decide.

Mr. Gillie stated on that portion yes.

Ms. Poplin stated we are going to withdraw that part.

Mr. Keesee closed the Public Hearing.

**Mrs. Chaney made a motion to approve the item as requested that it meets the guidelines and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness with the exemption of removing the M & M sign for a later date. Mr. Ranson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0-1 vote. (Mr. Lackey Abstained)**

2. *Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 733 Loyal St to install a standby generator and utility equipment to an existing equipment area.*

Mr. Keesee opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Johnson stated they had arranged for someone to come and speak but however due to the hurricane they are unable to come.

Mr. Gillie stated not to speak on their behalf, there are existing equipment shelters that are already there .They are just proposing to add another one as they are putting more antennae's up on the tower. They will look exactly like the ones that are already in place. It is a new installation so it does have to come here and based on the current situation we didn't feel that tabling this would really make sense, because these people are now heading off to other areas to try to keep the communication network up and that is going to be very vital.

Mr. Keesee stated so it meets the guidelines.

Mr. Gillie stated in our opinion yes it does.

Mr. Keesee closed the Public Hearing.

**Mrs. Nicholas made a motion that this meets the guidelines that are opposed and should be granted a Certificate of Appropriateness. Ms. Chaney second the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

3. *Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 224/226 N Union St to extend a fire escape, add double French doors, and add two windows.*

Mr. Keesee opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Ameer Nesmith, Real Estate Investor. Mr. Nesmith stated I have been investing downtown for over twenty years now. The building is 224/226, and I own that building and recently we got approval about a year ago to get the third floor rezoned to residential apartments. I have been working with building inspector David Cochran, and after we opened up the walls and windows, I was told to notify yall and address the situation. Hopefully, to get approval to extend a deck, patio door and two windows.

Ms. Chaney stated so you have already made all the necessary openings to the building to do that.

Mr. Nesmith stated yes.

Mr. Keesee stated you have a fire escape and you are now extending it.

Mr. Nesmith stated yes, the fire escape has been existing and I would like to extend it forward to make a nice patio to enjoy the view. It has a unique view of the river and by adding the double doors, you can view the river from inside. The fire escape is on my property as well.

Mrs. Nicholas so other than the top landing of the fire escape, anything else being done to the fire escape itself?

Mr. Nesmith no just pushed forward a couple of feet.

Mr. Ranson stated I am sorry but I am hard of hearing and you may have already said this, so you are adding the French doors and windows to the side of the second floor?

Mr. Nesmith stated it's on the third floor and the patio door is on the back of the building.

Mr. Ranson stated so the French doors will open up on the rooftop of the balcony.

Mr. Nesmith stated open up onto the fire escape. The windows are on the side of the building facing Abe Koplen.

Mr. Ranson stated is this a residence?

Mr. Nesmith stated this is a residence.

Mr. Lackey stated is this going to be one or multiple apartments.

Mr. Nesmith stated just one apartment.

Mr. Keesee stated did you say that you are working with the Inspections Department.

Mr. Nesmith stated yes sir.

Mr. Keesee stated and they are cool with everything that you are doing?

Mr. Nesmith stated yes and building inspection passed.

Mr. Keesee stated does this meet yall's approval.

Mr. Johnson stated as long as he uses the same materials elsewhere used on the building.

Mr. Keesee closed the Public Hearing.

**Mrs. Chaney made a motion that these meets the guidelines as presented and to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness with stipulations that each proposed addition alteration involved the same materials, present and current windows, doors and fire escape, and expand the fire escape shall not extend closer to Memorial Drive, or the space immediately above the first floor or building underneath. Mr. Ranson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

- 4. Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 523 Loyal St to replace four (4) storefront windows with aluminum and tempered glass, and to replace a wood/glass door with a similar door.*

Mr. Keesee opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Sheri Chaney; I am here to represent Southern Office Machines. Mrs. Chaney stated we have applied for the Facade Incentive Improvement Grant. We are looking to paint the building the same color that it is, but I would like to replace the

windows to match all the windows. I have already put in one prior to this program and one I got approved last year due to a broken window. They are only going to be the first floor windows and they are going to be replaced. The largest window is currently split into three sections it will be split into three sections again; it is my understanding from the quote. They might be able to do two but it depends on the size of the glass but if not it will definitely be three.

Mr. Ranson stated so the door that is being replaced, is that right here?

Mrs. Chaney stated that door will have to be replaced as a wooden glass door as soon as I can find one. That size opening if I put in a store front door will make it too small, for me to be able to use or equipment to come in and out. I want to replace that door with wooden glass.

Mr. Keesee closed the Public Hearing.

**Mrs. Nicholas made a motion to approve the item as requested that it meets the guidelines and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Lackey seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0-1 vote. (Mrs. Chaney Abstained)**

5. *Request a Certificate of Appropriateness to install three new Art trail pieces at locations not previously approved and expand one location previously approved. Locations are Community Market, City Hall, Worsham Street Bridge memorial and Main Street Plaza.*

Mr. Keesee opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Emily Ragsdale; I am here to represent City of Danville Parks and Recreation. Ms. Ragsdale stated we are expanding the Art Program and we purchased two pieces last round. New art pieces were installed in August at locations previously approved. We would like to add three additional locations to rotate in the pieces that we have purchased. Those locations will be at Community Market, City Hall, Worsham Street Bridge Memorial and Main Street Plaza.

Ms. Chaney stated you said that you already own the artwork that you are putting there.

Ms. Ragsdale stated yes.

Mr. Ranson stated what do you do if you purchase something and it rotates out.

Ms. Ragsdale stated I would like to add three locations, so we can display these pieces they will sometimes need to be rotated out of display, so we can do maintenance on them and Autumn's Path needs to be repainted. Even though we are suggesting to put the location in, that one won't be put on display right away because it needs to be painted, the paint is faded. They will not be permanently located at those locations but the location will remain. There may be a new piece there in eighteen months and the piece that is there now might move to another location. Just so everyone, regardless where you move in the district will be exposed to these pieces at one time.

Mr. Keesee stated what happened to the guys on the bench.

Ms. Ragsdale stated so the way that the Art Program works we find these pieces on loan. We pay artists for their pieces. That piece we extended the contract for the last round but we were unable to raise the money to purchase it.

Mr. Gillie stated just from a staff perspective, remember in the past you approved the locations but not the art work, which allowed them each time they got new art pieces to put new pieces in. Therefore, again, we are recommending only approving the location, that way if they decide to change out the artwork it does not have to come back to this Commission each time because it would be a new thing there and you do have that option.

Mr. Keesee closed the Public Hearing.

**Mrs. Chaney made a motion to approve the item as requested that it meets the guidelines and the option for them to rotate out the art work as they needed it to be issue a Certificate of Appropriateness. Mrs. Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

6. *Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 326 Main St Unit 100 to install a temporary 4' x 2' banner, and permanent door sign.*

Mr. Keesee opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Cheryl Sutherland, owner of Main Street Art Collective. Ms. Sutherland stated this is the temporary banner with the dimensions and the actually vinyl letters would be like this.

Ms. Chaney stated so you have two different sign options.

Ms. Sutherland stated this is the actually banner and these will be the permanent ones. It would be the circle with the vinyl letters.

Mr. Ranson stated when are you going to open.

Ms. Sutherland stated I was hoping for October 15 but it will take a miracle so hopefully by the end of October.

Mr. Keesee closed the Public Hearing.

**Mrs. Nicholas made a motion that the temporary banner and the permanent sign that it meets the guidelines and be granted a Certificate of Appropriateness as long as they meet the following conditions temporary banner be removed in 6 months of placement or upon opening the store which ever one comes first, that the permanent door sign measures no larger than 4'x2' by 4'x2' which is 5.29 square feet and no more than 20% of the door and any lettering on the door be a maximum of 6' tall . Mr. Keesee seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0- vote.**

**Mrs. Nicholas made a motion to add one to the agenda. It was approved by a unanimous vote. 5-0 vote.**

*7. Temporary Banner*

Mr. Keesee opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Fred Shanks IV. Mr. Shanks stated I hope you will consider a COA for another temporary banner. This is for where I was here the meeting before last and I got a sign approved for 509 Loyal Street. The reason why I think this is important is, because there is no lightning over that sign as it is currently. There would be a storefront window like other business down here, but it's not only blocked from the outside and there is a wall on the inside from the previous owner. I hoped by now to have had that opened up and currently there is no window other than the store front door so without lightning on the sign it doesn't look open. I will be at the office, I will have someone on the phone with me, I am trying to give them directions of where I am, and they drive by it. Therefore, I know people that are not looking for me do not know that I am there. As, far as the size I do not think there is a problem it is going to be secure. I got in trouble because I already put it up and I am trying to get out of the principal's office.

Mr. Keesee closed the Public Hearing.

**Mrs. Chaney made a motion to approve the item as requested that it meets the guidelines with the stipulation that it is removed within 6 months of this date issue a Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Ranson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**The August 23, 2018 minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.**

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

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Approved By: