

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES OF APRIL 17, 2019
Municipal Building Commission Room
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Design Review Board ("DRB") held Wednesday, April 17, 2019. Chairman John Henke called the meeting to order at 7:21 p.m.

1) ROLLCALL

Present: Chairman John Henke, Vice-Chairman Keith Deyer; Board Member Joseph Mercurio; Alternate Board Member Alexander Jerome

Absent: Board Members Gigi Debbrecht, Natalia Dukas, Patricia Lang, Michael Willoughby; Alternate Board Member Dulce Fuller; Student Representative Klea Ahmet

Administration: Nicholas Dupuis, City Planner
Laura Eichenhorn, Transcriptionist

04-18-19

2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES
DRB Minutes of March 20, 2019

Motion by Vice-Chairman Deyer
Seconded by Mr. Jerome to approve the DRB Minutes of March 20, 2019 as presented.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Deyer, Jerome, Mercurio, Henke

Nays: None

04-18-19

3) PUBLIC HEARING

None.

04-19-19

4) DESIGN REVIEW

None.

04-20-19

5) SIGN REVIEW

A. 2010 Cole – Braam’s Custom Cabinets

City Planner Dupuis reviewed the item.

Vice-Chairman Deyer said:

- He would like to know why this item went before the Planning Board, given that this was a design update with no increase in square footage.
- He would like to know why the Planning Board approved the plans for this item without defining or approving the sign band.
- The Planning Board should not have approved the awnings since they block the signage for the various tenants of the building.
- The signage for the additional tenants should be added to the sign band, and the part of the awning over the door blocking the sign band should be removed.
- This is a self-created difficulty on the part of the owner, not the petitioner, since the awnings were installed by the owner without consideration for sign band placement.

Chairman Henke noted the awnings are architectural, not functional. He said the DRB could recommend to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) that this item either be approved or denied.

Vice-Chairman Deyer suggested the DRB could recommend approval as the sign is designed, with the requirement that the sign be located within the sign band.

Chairman Henke agreed, saying the sign should be in the sign band above the transom.

Vice-Chairman Deyer added that the recommendation should require compliance with the ordinance, which would require the removal of a portion of awning. He noted that the petitioner could then take the recommendation to the BZA and try to argue that the recommendation constitutes a hardship.

Motion by Vice-Chairman Deyer

Seconded by Mr. Jerome to approve the sign design as submitted with the understanding that the sign must be placed in the sign band, which will require the removal of approximately six feet of awning.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Deyer, Jerome, Mercurio, Henke

Nays: None

City Planner Dupuis said this item would be before the BZA on May 14, 2019.

04-21-19

6) STUDY SESSION

None.

04-22-19

7) MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. Staff Reports

1. Administrative Approvals

Vice-Chairman Deyer noted that it has been DRB practice not to approve sign bands with surplus descriptors of a store's contents or function. He suggested that more descriptive signs could generally be placed in the windows of a business should a business choose to do so. He noted that this was his personal interpretation of the DRB's practices and the opinions of other DRB members might differ.

City Planner Dupuis said he would bring signs of a similar nature before the DRB for their review in the future.

Chairman Henke suggested signs for Woodward businesses could possibly be accorded a bit more leeway with verbiage since drivers are passing the businesses at higher speeds than drivers do in other parts of Birmingham. He noted past DRB discussions regarding whether Woodward business signs should receive different treatment than other Birmingham business signs given different speed conditions.

B. Communications (none)

Regarding Historic District Committee business, Vice-Chairman Deyer told the members present that he had provided City Planner Dupuis with DVD documentation of all the homes that received Heritage Plaques in Birmingham, the Certified Local Government (CLG) survey which was intended to reveal Birmingham buildings with previously unknown historic significance, and another DVD providing an example of a different Michigan City conducting a similar CLG survey.

Vice-Chairman Deyer explained that Heritage Plaques are for any Birmingham homes, not historically designated, which are over 100 years old.

04-23-18

ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the board motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Nicholas Dupuis
City Planner