

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN COMMISSION

MEETING OF

SEPTEMBER 10, 2020

Members Present

George Davis  
Andrew Hessler  
Adam Jones  
John Ranson  
Courtney Nicholas

Members Absent

Peyton Keesee  
R.J. Lackey

Staff

Ken Gillie  
Bonnie Case  
Clark Whitfield

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

**ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING**

- 1. Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 214 N Union Street to paint a mural onto the rear of the building.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Davis stated that I do not see the gentlemen here that was here last month.

Mr. Hessler stated I thought they were going to have a color, filled in image to show us.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Gillie stated I met with the applicant yesterday and they don't have the color rendering yet so he had asked me to ask that this be continued on to allow them to obtain that. They may actually move it to springtime. There are some other things that they need to do to secure funding and other things for the proposal. So it's not that they have given up, they don't have the drawing and they don't have the money yet, necessarily. He was supposed to get it to me in writing but I have not received it in writing but I did get verbal communication to hold this until spring when the weather is going to warm up because they think they are going to run out of time at this point in the year.

Mr. Whitfield stated I believe the appropriate motion will be if the commission so wishes is to postpone for an indefinite period of time.

**Ms. Nicholas made a motion to postpone this request for an indefinite period of time. Mr. Jones seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

2. *Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 401 Bridge Street to add decorative lighting to the bridge that crosses Bridge Street.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Garrett Shiflett was present to speak. I don't have anything to add to it and I am here for any questions that may come up.

Mr. Hessler asked will the flooring underneath the scaffolding, the existing flooring, is that going to stay or is that going to be removed? Where it's like completely open air and see through and there will be better highlighting of the lights that you're installing or will the floor still stay there for mechanical purposes.

Mr. Shiflett stated we are going to leave the floor there, not necessarily for mechanical purposes. The intent was to leave the floor there anyway, so that will stay.

Ms. Nicholas stated I appreciate all the specs on the lighting, but I was having a hard time visualizing where exactly the lighting goes to the attached.

Mr. Shiflett stated it's kind of hard to show. The bridge itself you have up there, is obviously two sides top and bottom and so along the bottom edge inside the bridge is constructed of angle iron. So inside that angle iron, down the length on both sides of the bottom shining out and both insides of the top as well coming down, it's LED strip lighting that is weather proof and outdoor rated. Just small LED's in tape form that will be affixed to the runs right there. It will light up the bridge. I didn't want to be obnoxious with it, so it's going to light up the bridge and show the detail of it and there's room in the future if we decided to add more to it. This is basic lighting that will accentuate the bridge.

Ms. Nicholas stated I read that there is options for different colors. The current version with RGB plus etc., does it have a variety of colors or is it limited?

Mr. Shiflett stated a variety of colors. For Christmas as an example, you could do red and green or Easter you could do yellows and blues. I think the main intent if we decided to change colors for a season or an event, we can do that. The main thing was a white light that would accentuate the bridge itself.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ranson stated a long time ago when they built those metal columns in the street and put lights on them, at that time it was deemed inappropriate. So I would like to say Danville is moving ahead.

**Ms. Nicholas made a motion that a Certificate of Appropriateness be granted at 401 Bridge Street to add decorative lighting to the bridge that crosses Bridge Street provided that the lights do not blink, strobe, move, or change in such a manner that creates a safety hazard for passing pedestrians or vehicular traffic. Mr. Ranson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

*3. Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 703 Wilson Street to build a 20' X 24' metal storage building 16 feet high and move the existing 8' x10' storage building.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Teresa and Darrell Wyatt were present to speak. We are the owners of the property and as the application states, we would like to build a warehouse on the property and would like approval. We are basically here for any questions that you may have.

Mr. Davis stated when you say you are going to move an 8x10 building, are you going to move it or are you going to tear down, secure it to the back of the building, or what?

Mr. Wyatt stated we might move it to a different location on the property or we might just move it away. We're not sure about that yet. This is just a storage building.

Mrs. Wyatt stated we're hoping this warehouse will eliminate the storage building we have now.

Mr. Ranson stated I see the picture of the building but there is no indication of where it's going to be on site or where it's moving. It's a little hard to make a judgement.

Mr. Wyatt stated I have a map and I can show you where it's going to be at.

The commissioners reviewed the map.

Mr. Davis asked Mr. Gillie what is the code of how close he can build a building like that to an existing building that he has.

Mr. Gillie stated to an existing building has to be ten foot away or attached to if it's considered a detached accessory structure.

Mr. Davis stated ten feet away or attached to the building.

Mr. Gillie stated correct.

Mr. Wyatt stated even if this is all one property.

Mr. Gillie stated you have to have the separation so if one building catches fire it doesn't jump onto another building, so they have minimum separation.

Mrs. Wyatt stated attached, so can that almost be like a roof attached.

Mr. Gillie stated a minimum of 4 foot wide covered roof connecting them together.

Mr. Wyatt stated it still has to be ten feet off the property.

Mr. Davis stated ten feet off the building.

Mr. Gillie stated it can be abutted up to it so there's no physical separation between the two.

Mrs. Wyatt stated and that can be done.

Mr. Gillie stated it has to be together so you're making one large building out of it and you have to have that ten foot of separation or you do that connection with a breezeway because that's still considered a physical connection between the two. We consider it one large building in that point.

Mrs. Wyatt stated couldn't do ten feet away then build this, but we can bump them up together as long as the existing and new wall is together.

Mr. Gillie stated yes. When they bump them up together usually it's just some bolts or something else put between the two of them to physically attach them.

Mr. Ranson stated I guess with the size of the building, it won't be a problem with the set backs, with the property lines, or anything like that.

Mrs. Wyatt stated with a breezeway are you saying that has to be a certain footage between the two like three feet, five feet, like that.

Mr. Gillie stated if you connect them with a breezeway there is no stipulation. If it's a two foot breezeway, it is still considered connected together.

Mrs. Wyatt stated and the breezeway is more like a shelter going between them? I just want to make sure I understand.

Mr. Gillie stated there are options for it but if you want a completely freestanding building you have to be ten foot away. You don't want to, then we will work with you on figuring out the best way to get them that close.

Mr. Wyatt stated their neighbors have three of these buildings and they are not attached to each other. I don't know if they are ten feet apart.

Mrs. Wyatt stated it's the funeral home.

Mr. Gillie stated they are far enough apart. They built one since the River District Commission and they got approval for it and the other two should be ten feet apart. Those two were done prior to the adoption of regulations but I believe they were that far apart to begin with.

Mrs. Wyatt stated that's what gave us the idea in the first place and we definitely need more storage. It's good for us to outgrow our business but it give us a few headaches sometimes too. We don't want to move from the district because our customers love downtown so we'll just stay here so we want to work with you to make it a success for everyone.

Mr. Davis stated we just didn't want you to go ahead and build the building on the back side and have somebody come by and say oh no. You need to be right up against it.

Mr. Gillie stated we would have caught that in the final plan review process but it's good to point it out at this point.

Mrs. Wyatt stated it would not be a question about electricity going to the warehouse will it. We would have to do something for that as well?

Mr. Gillie stated that would be handled under building code. That's not something that this commission looks at. Most of the warehouses do have electricity in them, lights, plugs and things like that. It's kind of expected that will be there. I assume you are not going to put plumbing or anything else like that into it.

Mrs. Wyatt stated no.

Mr. Wyatt stated attaching this to that building, how can that be done without tearing down walls to the existing building.

Mr. Gillie stated there are plenty of examples around and we can show you how that's been done.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Jones stated he was wondering if this was going to throw a kink into things on Mr. Wyatt's part. Walking into this room they didn't expect to have to butt it up against the building. Does that change the whole dynamics of the structure. Whether it's going to be 20 or 24 foot. You can still make that happen even if you butting it up to the other building.

Mrs. Wyatt stated yes sir.

**Ms. Nicholas made a motion that this meets the guidelines as presented and a Certificate of Appropriateness at 703 Wilson Street should be issued to build a 20x24 metal storage building 16 feet high and the potential to move or remove the 8x10 storage building. Mr. Jones seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

Mr. Davis stated before I read number 4 we have a small change on the address. It is not 512 Lynn Street. It is 523 Lynn Street.

- 4. Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 512 Lynn Street, Suite 104, to install a sign that will be 4' wide by 4.5' tall, plus 18" x 18" vinyl decals on one glass door visible from the sidewalk that will simply be "River City Fitness Center" and hours. The applicant would also like to install lights over the sign to match those already on site.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Josh Francisco was present to speak. I have a mark-up for you. The only thing I have to add is that Crossfit asked that I switch the name to Old 97 Crossfit. I don't know why, but it's just one of their regulations, so that's the only change I have.

Mr. Jones stated I'm excited to see another fitness center promoting health and wellness downtown. I'm kind of biased to that topic. I would like to welcome you to the area.

Mr. Francisco stated thank you. I appreciate that.

Mr. Hessler stated are you related to Spec or the one on Loyal.

Mr. Francisco stated we are basically Spec but moving into this location. We bought them out.

Ms. Nicholas stated so this is not Dominion Cross Fit.

Mr. Francisco stated no.

Ms. Nicholas stated and it is proposed to be lit up. So then is the COA to actually install the lighting and the sign or is it just about the sign?

Mr. Gillie stated the lighting, the sign, and the smaller decals on the door.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

**Mr. Ranson made a motion that the request meets the guidelines. Therefore the applicant should be granted a Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Hessler seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

*5. Request a Certificate of Appropriateness at 410 & 412 Lynn Street to remove the existing aluminum sided façade and renovate the storefront. (This removal has been partially completed). The work will include repair of brick, replace the existing metal garage door with a glass type door (similar to Garage Restaurant), repaint windows and doors a dark brown, open side window that had been bricked over.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Ms. Nicolas stated as it appears, it says it is for 412 and 412.

Mr. Hessler stated it has to be for 410 and 412.

Mr. Gillie said my apologies. I was out on Covid exposure leave and so I was working on all this from home. I was looking up maps and stuff on the laptop. I'm use to a big screen and I was working on this little one.

Ms. Nicholas stated I just wanted to make sure I had that right.

Mr. Davis said thank you for pointing that out.

Mr. Hessler stated I did drive by there and it said like health food inside the window. Is that just a sign that was just there?

Mr. Mark Lavinder stated it was already there. I'm planning to move my office into one of the units and the other unit will be leased out. That's the plan, to move the insurance agency from Main Street.

Mr. Davis asked did you state your name?

I'm Mark Lavinder.

Mr. Davis stated so are you going to move part of your agency from Main Street or all of it over here.

Mr. Lavinder stated all of it.

Mr. Hessler stated the right hand side store front or left hand side.

Mr. Lavinder stated the left hand side. We don't have a lot of walk-in traffic so I'm going to leave the right bigger spot open for a business that will have more walk-in traffic.

Mr. Lavinder stated I know you all have color copies and other than making some color changes I just got in today, basically it will look very similar to that.

Ms. Nicholas stated I'm trying to follow all the documents and going back and forth between them. Is there a plan for what you're doing on the left side of the façade, the garage door?

Mr. Lavinder stated yes that will be my office.

Ms. Nicolas asked will the whole thing function as an actual lift up and down garage door?

Mr. Lavinder stated no. We are going with the same idea as the BBQ Garage place did. So that area right there on the right hand side will be a pedestrian door. We wanted to maintain the look of the garage that is there. It was a garage in the past and I'm trying to find some more pictures of when it was still a garage.

Ms. Nicholas stated then there are questions about whether you would put either a window sign in the middle or a sign above the door instead. In this draft here you've got window sign indicated there in number 8 on the middle page.

Mr. Lavinder stated so if you focus more on the one with the awning on the left side and the door on the right, that is the one we want to do. The business name would be at the top.

Mr. Ranson stated Option B?

Ms. Nicolas stated on page A.3.

Mr. Hessler asked if the signage square footage is within the guidelines. I know there is historic signage allowance as far as the size of the sign based on footage.

Mr. Gillie stated there are no dimensions provided so I can't say square footage wise. In general, the location looks alright. That's an 8 foot door and then the sign is about 2 foot tall give or take, that's 16 square feet, that would be fine. We will have to get the final dimensions on it to make sure.

Diana Schwartz, River District Association, stated the architect that drew that has all the River District Guidelines and uses those, so she didn't say anything about them.

Ms. Nicholas stated even though both businesses would be owned by...will the building be owned by the same person but because it is two separate businesses, there is not a square footage issue between this one and this one, right?

Mr. Gillie stated no m'am. They could have a sign here and a sign there and each one would be because they are separate addresses. We would take the square footage of 410 and take the square footage of 412.

Ms. Nicholas stated rather than treating it as one building.

Mr. Lavinder stated when you say 410-412, I don't think the city has it listed as this right now. I think it's just one location at 412.

Mr. Gillie stated we've got a 410 and 412.

Mr. Lavinder stated when I went to the utility department to cut it on, they couldn't find 410.

Mr. Jones asked will you have a separate entrance?

Mr. Lavinder stated yes that area right on the right hand side. We may make that a different color to make that stand out so that people know it's right there. One other thing that they did not put on here and I didn't have enough time to go back to the architect and ask. There was an old window on this side of this wall. There's an alley way right here. You can see the old metal frame still in there. I would like to open that up and put the window back in.

Ms. Nicholas stated so that will be right here in this last picture. It's barely visible there.

Mr. Lavinder stated that's a window that is currently there. There is another one. It's a big, big window that's bricked over right now and we would like to open that up.

Ms. Nicolas stated these photos here from the blog are just to give a sense of what the color would look like.

Mr. Lavinder stated yes, that is kind of the color scheme we are going for.

Mr. Hessler asked if there was much fire damage to the building the other year.

Mr. Lavinder stated yeah I didn't know about that. The back part of the roof has been replaced but we are going to replace the whole thing. And I don't know if this is the appropriate time to bring it up, but another long term idea is that we want to have a rooftop restaurant and bar because there are apartments right behind there and you can walk right up to it.

Mr. Hessler asked if that was adjoining from the V-C Restaurant to Angela's Catering. Is that a joint lot or is that your lot?

Mr. Lavinder stated I have already contacted the property owner that owns that lot and he's willing to sell but I haven't bought that yet. That's an idea. We're not going to do anything right now. We want to run in the plumbing and electrical to do that with this initial phase but that will be something later on and I'll have to come back.

Mr. Gillie stated that will be mechanical systems and other things that will penetrate the building and you will have to come back.

Mr. Lavinder asked during this initial build out?

Mr. Gillie stated no, when you do your restaurant, because you will have your grease trap, smoke arrestor and stuff like that. That will have to be addressed. It's a good concept but you'll have to bring that part back later on.

Mr. Lavinder stated I had planned on spending some money up front, but if that's not a possibility I need to know.

Mr. Gillie stated it may be. We just have some things that aren't on here that we have to talk about. We may can come back next month with some other stuff.

Ms. Nicholas stated so the one you are really looking to approve would be Option B. Correct?

Mr. Lavinder stated yes on page three of three.

Mr. Ranson stated with the addition of the window.

Ms. Nicholas stated so there's a note here saying the brick shown wire brush patched and repointed on Option B. So that's just the brick that's already there would just be brushed and then anywhere new brick would need to be, would be infilled? I know here there are paint options and I know there are stipulations about painting brick that is not painted.

Mr. Lavinder stated I just found out yesterday or the day before that I need to contact the company to find out what I need to be make sure that brick is stable. It sounds like an easier option would be to paint. We don't want to paint but I don't know if we can not paint. We don't want to paint but if we have to, we have to.

Ms. Nicholas stated I know there are real strict rules on painting brick.

Mr. Lavinder stated we don't want to but I'm not an expert on masonry at all. I've got to talk to some experts that are and do whatever we have to do to make sure it's a safe structure.

Mr. Davis stated there are real strict rules. Peyton painted his building right there and if you can show that there's damage that's been done, it's my understanding that you can go ahead and paint but he would have to come back.

Ms. Nicholas stated we granted a variance on that to be allowed so that would take a second additional step.

Mr. Gillie stated the one side is painted now and in my opinion the front of that building has substantial damage the way they put the previous façade on it. It removed a lot of the exterior portion of that brick and that's going to open that brick up to some intrusion. It really damaged it a lot. They may be able seal it but I have concerns based on the number of buildings I've seen in the past. My opinion is it's probably going to have to end up being painted. That's just from staff perspective. That's why we recommended that may be an option that they would have to paint the brick because I'm not sure if that's going to be salvageable.

Ms. Nicholas asked if we can allow that without having to grant a specific variance. Can we allow it under a COA?

Mr. Gillie stated because of the amount of damage you can.

Mr. Whitfield stated it cannot be a part of your motion.

Mr. Gillie stated an undamaged building, you have to do a two step motion because it says brick should not be painted. In this case, this is damage repair. Options are severely limited so it doesn't require a second step in my opinion.

Mr. Hessler stated so in other words because of the damage it meets guidelines.

Mr. Davis asked can we vote on it today and allow him approval of deciding whether he leaves it or paints it.

Mr. Whitfield stated the motion can grant him the authority to paint it which means he has the ability to do so but if he finds something he likes better, he doesn't have to do so. By granting the authority to do it, it's not requiring him to do it but gives him the option.

Mr. Davis stated if he wanted to put siding up, he would probably have to run back by here again.

Mr. Lavinder stated that's not happening.

Mr. Gillie stated they did a number on that brick when they put that stuff on there.

Ms. Nicholas stated just from the pictures, it looks that way. This schematic here has a bit of new brick infill.

Mr. Gillie stated I walked over there and rubbed my hand on it and my hand was changing color and I'm color blind and I could see that it was changing so you knew it was in bad shape.

Mr. Hessler stated you said the colors might change or you're definitely going with like a gray hue or lighter gray with a deeper red.

Mr. Lavinder stated the dark gray here will definitely be over here on the side and the trim at least and we don't want that maroon color. Really I think it's going to depend on what we are able to do with the brick to make it look good with whatever we end up doing. If we end up having to paint we may have to change colors and if we have to change the colors of the doors to make it look good with the brick, is that something that will need to come back?

Mr. Hessler stated I know it's been a lot of times when we've tried to have old material salvaged or patches put in. If it's anything like our floor in one of the apartments downtown, they weren't allowed to stain the floor the same color as the new patch they put in. As long as it blends pretty well, it will look better than having all the patchy things we have downtown. We tend to have the things that look like a scab. I don't know who approved that. That's just my thoughts.

Mr. Davis stated in my opinion, you've given us two different renditions today either painted the light gray or leaving the brick as best as you can make it into the original of what it was. My suggestion would be if you're going to go with a different color altogether, that you come back and present it to us.

Mr. Lavinder stated okay.

Ms. Nicholas stated we can still approve something.

Mr. Lavinder stated again the goal is not to paint it but I just don't know if I'll be able to get by without it.

Mr. Davis stated if you went with a different shade of gray or a gray similar to the building that Peyton has where the other buildings are adjoining to it that are right next to yours, I think that would look fantastic but that's just my opinion.

Mr. Hessler stated like those three units in the middle that are gray.

Mr. Davis stated right. And of course the big buildings that are a part of that.

Mr. Lavinder stated I wouldn't imagine it being any other color. Maybe a gray or white if you can't do the original brick.

Ms. Nicholas stated the preference is the awning on your side because sheet two of three shows it in reverse. I just want approve the right thing.

Mr. Lavinder stated I want to dial it in to be more specific as well. I don't have a problem with that.

Mr. Jones stated Mark, I'm excited. I think you have good taste and the drawing looks good. I think it's another eyesore in the River District that's being renovated and blown new life into. I think the gray looks good. I know you don't want to paint the brick at all. I think it's going to be a really nice project in order to light up the end of that corner right there.

Ms. Nicholas asked if there is anything we need to address in terms of where the window would go on 412, the note about removing the windows and the concrete infill and the rest of that then placing in a new brick sill there will be put in. Is there anything we need to do in terms of that? It's making the windows larger, taking out that concrete fill that's in there.

Mr. Gillie stated your motion should include that. That was a concern that I had that it appeared that is was a full store front but that wasn't what was there. Your motion should include that it's a store front window to the soldier course brick that's at the layer edge. You can see that portion there that the concrete sets to it and extend the window to that point.

Ms. Nicholas stated so that's already there.

Mr. Gillie stated that set of brick was already there.

Ms. Nicholas stated I didn't get that close on it but I can see it very clearly in the proposed schematic.

Mr. Gillie stated if you go to the picture that is there, if you look underneath the concrete on both sides of that, you'll see those bricks standing up, you'll see the other bricks are horizontal. That's already in place. The concern is beside the door you can see that set of brick is substantially damaged underneath it.

Mr. Davis stated Mark I think our question right now is exactly what we're voting on. Are we doing a color, not doing a color, is the awning going to be on one side or both sides or none at all?

Mr. Lavinder stated no awning on the right side, awning on the left.

Mr. Davis stated just awning on the left.

Mr. Lavinder stated no paint if possible.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

**Mr. Hessler made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for 410-412 Lynn Street that the items to follow are in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the River District and that would include, if salvageable, maintain the brick façade. If not salvageable, allowance for painting a gray or white with darker style trim, black or charcoal style trim; to also allow a window in alley way to be opened up that was previously bricked up; to allow for the windows on front to be extended down to the soldier course brick, the vertical brick; to allow awning on the left hand side above the restored garage door with a pedestrian door with sign mounted above. Ms. Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.**

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The August 13, 2020 minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

**Mr. Gillie stated there are cases filed for next month so we will have a meeting and hopefully next month I will have a new staff member here. On Monday, I have a new director of planning supposed to start so I will be turning this over and letting someone else handle it so you may see me at one more meeting and after that it will be completely different.**

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

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Approved By: