

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN COMMISSION

MEETING OF

March 12, 2015

Members Present

Peyton Keesee
George Davis
R.J. Lackey
John Ranson
Courtney Nicholas

Members Absent

Justin Ferrell
Sheri Chaney

Staff

Ken Gillie
Renee Burton
Scott Holtry
Shanta Hairston
Alan Spencer
Corrie Teague

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

ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

- 1. A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Craghead Street Streetscape project from Loyal Street to Colquhoun Street.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Emily Williams was present on behalf of the request.

Mrs. Williams stated Hello my name is Emily Williams. I am the applicant in question so I'm speaking for the Board. We're going to be creating a studio apartment in the back addition of that warehouse; and so in order to have it separate from the eventual commercial area we're going to have a separate entrance to the outside. So we'll keep it as historically nice as possible as indicated on the application. I believe that might be all you need from me unless you have any questions for me.

Mr. Davis stated I have one. Can you tear down that building next to you?

Mrs. Williams stated we would like to see something done with it along those lines.

Mr. Davis stated I'd like to see the street open.

Mrs. Williams stated yeah and some sort of nice little court yard or something to that effect. I'm with you on that one.

Mr. Davis asked do you have any other questions?

Mrs. Nicholas asked has everything been okayed for the studio apartment?

Mrs. Williams stated yeah so far so good.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ranson made a motion to approve the request as submitted. Mrs. Keesee seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

2. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 541 High Street to install a new door in the rear addition to create an apartment unit access.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Ms. Corrie Teague with Economic Development for the City of Danville was present on behalf of the request.

Ms. Teague stated my name is Corrie Teague with the Economic Development office on behalf of the IDA. This is an IDA owned piece of property. There's a cinder block shed that is in very poor condition and the Utilities Department has approached the IDA to demolish that shed and use it as a pad for a transformer that's needed along Lynn Street. It's not a historically significant structure and again it's in pretty poor condition as it stands.

Mr. Ranson asked so the transformer is just an add on? It's not anything built on?

Ms. Teague stated that is correct.

Mrs. Nicholas asked the building that needs to be removed isn't being used for anything else at the moment?

Mr. Davis stated it has no roof. It just has cinder blocks, that's about it.

Mr. Keesee stated so it's really a fence.

Mr. Davis stated a block fence pretty much. Is there anybody who would like to speak against it?

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Lackey stated Kenny I have a question. The transformer does not have to be enclosed or we can require it to be enclosed?

Mr. Gillie stated you can but the concern with enclosing them is the National Electric Code requires certain distances around it. Also if there's an explosion you have to do certain things. So we try not to enclose them unless they're in a highly visible area then we'll do something like we did down here.

Mr. Lackey stated at 341 Main.

Mr. Gillie stated yeah at this site we don't feel it's necessary to do anything around it.

Mr. Keesee stated that's across from the fire department right Kenny?

Mr. Gillie stated yes.

Mr. Davis stated it maybe has like ten feet of tin roof.

Mr. Gillie stated the picture's a little bit old.

Mr. Lackey stated I guess have a concern for requiring enclosure for private citizens. If there's a safety issue, obviously you wouldn't; but you can get around safety issues as the City did on 341. So if we're trying to beautify and make this area look good, I think one of the ugliest things out there is utility equipment and transformers.

Mr. Keesee stated and gas meters.

Mr. Lackey stated I hesitate to allow it without an enclosure.

Mr. Keesee stated you don't have a picture of the transformer.

Ms. Teague stated remind you I'm just asking for permission to tear down the shed, not for the transformer.

Mr. Keesee stated so then you come back and say you need to enclose it?

Mr. Gillie stated they don't need to ask permission so if you want them to do something to beautify the transformer, you can request at this time that they do come back before the installation of that and we can bring it back. We need to work with electric folks on what we can do around it based on the location of it to get the distances and everything necessary. Maybe landscaping is a better option as opposed to some closed structure, but at this point I just don't know. There's still the size of the transformer and everything, I don't know how big that's going to be. They just need to get the building out of the way before they can even do any of the planning.

Mr. Lackey stated having been without power for six hours yesterday I'm all for upgrading our system. I just want to be fair to the citizens and make sure we're requiring the same thing from our government that we require from our citizens.

Mr. Keesee asked so we can put a stipulation on it that you put something around?

Mr. Gillie stated if you don't have a problem with the demolition of the building, then grant the approval of the demolition of the building contingent on them bringing back the

final plans for the transformer so some sort of screening can be applied. Then we'll bring that part back when they actually get ready to install the transformer.

Mrs. Nicholas made a motion to approve the request to demolish the building contingent upon the applicant bringing back the final plans for the transformer so some sort of screening can be applied. Mr. Lackey seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

- 3. A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness on Parcel #22078 (behind 528-532 Craghead St) to demolish a cinder block shed to allow for the installation of a transformer.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Karen Black was present on behalf of the request.

Mrs. Black stated I'm Karen Black with the City of Danville's Engineering Department and this Craghead streetscape project is an extension of the streetscape projects that we did on Main Street and Main Street Plaza. This phase is going to eventually encompass from Loyal Street to Colquhoun Street and with this project we're going to be looking at replacing some temporary traffic signals at Colquhoun Street that serves the fire station as well as the traffic signal at Craghead and Loyal. We're going to be putting in a new storm drain system because we analyzed it and it's about half of the capacity of what it should be. When it rains really hard, Craghead Street tends to flood so we're going to put in some inlets to catch the water as it goes downhill on those side streets before it hits Craghead. Starting this summer, the money is going to be available to start the first phase of the project and that's going to be from Loyal Street to Newton Street. So in this phase, we're going to replace the traffic signal at Loyal and carry the storm drain all the way up to Loyal as well. About a year ago we had LPDA- they're the consultants that did the work on Main Street and Main Street Plaza. They did this conceptual drawing extending the main ideas from Main Street down along Craghead- replacing the concrete sidewalks with brick, adding some nice landscaping, and also doing the crosswalks. One difference with this project from Main Street is that we're not widening the sidewalk; we're putting it back as is. On Main Street there's enough street width where we could extend them out; with Craghead we want to keep the on-street parking so we're just basically going to replace what is there with brick. These next slides just show the theme that we'll be looking for. The brick sidewalks should look about the same. We have LPDA coming down next week to walk through the project and make some final tweaks, but we suspect it will look very similar to Main Street and Main Street Plaza. We're going to have brick sidewalks and crosswalks through all the intersections. The traffic signals are going to look more like this one on Main Street because right now it looks like that. So this is just a few slides of Craghead. One thing

we're looking at, the power poles I believe our last recommendation was to get new power poles that look very similar if not identical to what's there now. The very least that little top thing may or may not be able to be salvaged but it will be more cost effective to put back poles that look the same. This is looking from Wilson to Newton. The next phase will be phase two so we'll just carry it all the way down from Newton Street to Colquhoun Street. Here are just some slides of what it looks like today. The emergency signal will be replaced with one of those nice traffic signals that is up on Main Street now. All these concrete sidewalks will be replaced with brick and we'll add the crosswalks.

Mr. Lackey asked where is the streetscape starting?

Mrs. Black stated at Loyal Street. We were going to extend on the north side or the top part down in front of the Golden Leaf to Main Street Plaza. So we will connect that little piece too.

Mr. Lackey asked but you won't connect Haymore and Holland? Because that's going to be the only piece of concrete in the entire area.

Mr. Kent Shelton was also present to speak on behalf of the request.

Mr. Shelton stated it's depending on budget. The concrete is in pretty good condition. I know it's just a parking lot. We were concentrating first on enhancing the parts that need redevelopment.

Mr. Lackey stated there's a parking lot but then there's that building.

Mrs. Nicholas stated right and there's the Law Offices of Haymore and Holland.

Mr. Shelton stated right on the side where Golden Leaf is. We will continue to Patton Street with the brick.

Mrs. Nicholas stated ok to Patton Street. You made it sound like you were going to stop at Golden Leaf then leave the rest.

Mrs. Black stated we will on the south side but not on the north in front of the buildings.

Mrs. Nicholas stated so on the parking lot side across from Golden Leaf, they're not going to put brick.

Mr. Lackey stated so the parking lot's going to stay concrete. I misunderstood, that makes sense.

Mr. Davis asked and as far as the traffic signals, they're going to be left where they are? But just new mountings and new posts going up?

Mrs. Black stated correct.

Mrs. Nicholas asked and you're stopping before you reach the Community Market?

Mrs. Black stated yes, due to budget.

Mr. Davis asked and who's going to do all the work? Do you know?

Mrs. Black stated it'll have to be bid out.

Mr. Lackey stated in this picture there's a stoplight and a telephone pole. Will the telephone pole stay there or be coming out soon?

Mrs. Black stated we haven't gotten that far in the design. I think right now it's going to stay, but we can look at that.

Mr. Lackey stated if you have nice stoplights then that's a really bad look.

Mr. Davis stated you have stoplights up on Main Street. They're underground aren't they?

Mr. Shelton stated all the utilities up on Main Street are underground. The lights circuit underground and it may still be some Verizon connections coming out on the street but the City's power line and lights will be underground.

Mr. Lackey asked is there a reason you wouldn't go ahead and require Verizon to go underground as well?

Mr. Shelton stated I think Ken is looking into that.

Mr. Ken Larking was present to speak on behalf of this request as well.

Mr. Larking stated well we want that backing, but they don't necessarily have to cooperate sometimes. We offer them every opportunity to join us as we're doing work to put ours underground to help them save money and encourage them to do that, but even with that they're not really willing to work with us. Sometimes they don't even have the customers it costs to do the work. They wouldn't benefit themselves, it would just be a loss to them. They've got a lot of rights that we can't infringe on.

Mrs. Nicholas asked during this streetscape project, is it going to have a major effect on roadway and traffic in terms of that?

Mrs. Black stated with any traffic and construction projects, it's going to affect traffic. We're going to look at basically taking out the parking dumpster parking and shifting the road so it will maintain two-way traffic. That's in an ideal world what we hope to happen.

Mr. Davis asked any questions? Karen thank you very much. Is there anyone who would like to speak against this motion?

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ranson stated I believe you said you weren't taking it to the Community Market because of budget concerns. Are there any plans in future budgets to extend this?

Mrs. Black stated we would like to if it's in the CIP.

Mr. Larking stated the areas that we are looking at specifically are Union Street, also Craghead and to the Community Market maybe to the bridge. Also the section on Main Street would be another place to look at eventually. There are also recommendations for improvements on Wilson, Ridge and some others which are kind of long term. What we are trying to do is do these streetscape projects as we feel development is earned. So we feel like we want to get ahead of it or do it at the same time so we're not affecting businesses that have just started. If we can get ahead of it a little bit, that's what we're trying to do. We want to try the best we can to lessen the struggle. We only have a certain amount of money so we have to do what we can while we've got it.

Mr. Lackey asked Ken is there any way in our guidelines that we could make Verizon take that ugly pole down?

Mr. Ranson made a motion to approve the request as submitted. Mr. Keesee seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

4. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install public art at various locations within the River District.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ken Larking with the City Manager's Office was present on behalf of the request.

Mr. Larking stated the Parks and Recreation Department has a small group of citizens who have applied for and received a grant for a public art trail and they've worked through the process of developing this art trail in various locations in the district. I think in your packet you have a listing of the public art that will be displayed throughout the River District. These will be temporary installations for about 18 months and they want to go ahead and start the installations in April. So that'll be April 2015 and they'll come out in October 2016 unless something changes. Maybe there'll be a piece of art that someone likes and they might purchase it or donate it to the City or it might stay there longer. We don't know; we're kind of open to anything. This is kind of the first step the City is taking with this community group to introduce public art to the downtown area. You can see the variety and different parts where the sculptures will be located. I can

maybe recall by memory where some of this is going to be. They're still sort of deciding on the location.

Mr. Gillie stated there's a map. It was a free floating map in the packet.

Mrs. Burton stated all the Commissioners have a map.

Mr. Gillie stated it was just folded up inside of your packet because it was too big of a copy.

Mr. Larking stated those are the locations. Where each piece of art will go is almost decided.

Mrs. Nicholas asked will it be somewhere along the event trail or highway trail? Which part?

Mr. Larking stated it'll be exactly where these pictures are.

Mrs. Nicholas stated okay. If the downtown site gets developed as the newspaper has been reporting it might, what happens to that piece of art?

Mr. Larking stated it might have to be moved a little bit, it may have to be moved a lot. We'll get to that when we get to it. Likely the parking deck might not start for 18 months. We have a five year plan for this. A lot of development would have to occur to move that parking deck up to 18 months from now.

Mrs. Nicholas asked the piece of art that would go at the Museum of Fine Arts, is that the same piece that they were asking for to put in front of the concrete pad at CAR?

Mr. Larking stated yes. They'll be putting a concrete slab just about everywhere. The two pieces of art that could potentially go up at the museum, one is yellow and red. I'm not an artist so I apologize for my description- it's called Autumn's Path. The other potential art would be Mixed Emotions. We haven't determined which one will be there yet, it's going to be one or the other. That's outside of your district I believe.

Mr. Gillie stated yes it is.

Mr. Larking stated whichever one is there the other will be at the library. The people sitting on the bench, sharing a story is going to be at the plaza. There was about an hour and a half to two hour debate on where these were going to go. It was vetted pretty thoroughly.

Mr. Davis asked are they pigeon proof?

Mr. Larking stated no, but they'll all be insured.

Mrs. Nicholas asked so if we run out of funding for new art after the 18 months are we just going to have concrete pads laying around?

Mr. Larking stated we won't let them and it's just a piece of concrete so it's not a problem.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Lackey made a motion to approve the request as submitted. Mr. Ranson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The February 12, 2015 minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Emily Scolpini made a presentation about Make Danville Shine. She announced that there would be a Home Maintenance expo at the Community Market on May 2, 2015 from 7:30 AM - 12 PM. She informed the Commissioners that they are seeking vendors for the event.

Mr. Kent Shelton presented a proposal for way finding signage for the River District. He discussed options for the number of signs to be installed, the locations of installation, and the coloration of signage.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Approved By: