

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN COMMISSION

MEETING OF

April 14, 2016

Members Present

Justin Ferrell
George Davis
Sheri Chaney
John Ranson
R.J. Lackey

Members Absent

Peyton Keesee
Courtney Nicholas

Staff

Ken Gillie
Anna Levi

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 to add a sign reading Life Push LLC in vinyl lettering to the front bay window at 308 Craghead Street. The signage will also consist of two puzzle pieces.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present to speak on behalf of this request was the applicant, Nicholas Sturdifen. Mr. Sturdifen stated it is pretty self-explanatory it's a vinyl sign it's 3 by 4 feet in size. It's also being done by Power Signs they done the signs on the other side of the building. I have actually printed off a recent copy; I can pass it around for you all.

Mr. Ranson are these the three colors?

Mr. Sturdifen stated yes sir. This is the exact sign how it will appear when it is completed.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ranson made a motion to approve the request. Mrs. Chaney seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0-1 vote. (Mr. Lackey abstained from the vote)

2. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 200-208 N Union Street to replace existing roof with new roofing. Two inch insulation, .06 inch EPDM membrane, new flashing, and new termination bars will be installed. New gutters will be installed where necessary.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Corrie Teague, from Economic Development. I am here on behalf of the IDA. I am here in case you have any questions. The roof will be purchased with money for buildings that are in poor condition. They have tenants within the other part of the building so it all really needs to be replaced.

Mr. Lackey stated not that is relevant but when did the IDA purchase these buildings?

Ms. Teague stated I believe the IDA has had possession of them for maybe about a year and a half now.

Mrs. Chaney stated I'm assuming it's going to be similar to the roof that is already on the building?

Ms. Teague stated yes.

Mr. Davis stated are you going to replace the copings or anything?

Ms. Teague stated not to my knowledge.

Mr. Lackey stated were the gutters going to be replaced?

Ms. Teague stated whatever is there will be replaced. Some have large holes in them they will be replaced with the existing.

Mr. Lackey so no change?

Ms. Teague stated we are not changing the look at all.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

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

3. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 310 Main Street to paint the exterior of the building and to replace the existing front door. The building will be painted Colonial Revival Stone and the trim will be painted Tricorn Black. The Old 97 mural will not be painted. The existing door will be replaced with a black wooden door with glass panel.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request Corrie Teague on behalf of the IDA. The River District Association actually approached us about repainting this building. They will soon start repair of the mural on the side but they will come to you first. Before they start repairing

the mural they asked if we could go ahead and take care of the areas where the paint is chipping off. Where it is chipping off it is kind of a yellow color underneath so we thought this time it would be nice to give it a facelift with different colors. So we are going with a stone and the black on the trim.

Mr. Ranson stated tricorn black is that the color you have used on all the other buildings?

Ms. Teague stated you know what I'm not sure if it has been used on any of the other buildings. I just thought it was a lovely color.

Mr. Davis stated so the side with the mural that will be painted around the outline of the mural.

Ms. Teague stated yes and then the IRA's artist will go back and touch up the mural at a later date.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

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

4. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 531 Main Street to replace the second floor windows to match those on the first floor. The existing first floor windows were approved by the River District Commission on June 11, 2015.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Lackey stated Ken, the staff was recommending that we approve it. The old windows that are there were they the period windows? I'm a little curious; I'm trying to remember why we approved this. I thought there was damage to the windows and that's why we were approving them in the first place.

Ms. Levi stated in the report from the meeting before when you approved these bottom windows I don't recall anything about damage. But I was told by the applicant that they would be using the same contractor to do the top windows as they used for the bottom windows. So they should be able to pull the same exact materials to match these bottom ones.

Mrs. Chaney stated so she wants to do divided windows like the bottom windows?

Ms. Levi stated yes.

Mrs. Chaney stated I believe the bottom ones are insulated as well.

Ms. Levi stated yeah it would be the exact same thing on the top floor; really not much of a change except outside of the window panels.

Mrs. Chaney stated will they be solid or double hung windows?

Ms. Levi stated I imagine they would be solid because she said they were going to be doing the exact same thing. That's just what she told me.

Mrs. Chaney stated you can't get to those without a ladder anyway.

Mr. Lackey stated are the top ones more Historically accurate than the bottom ones?

Mrs. Chaney probably originally and the bottom ones were probably more historical to the building to start with. She was wanted to change the look of the building is what I remember from before.

Ms. Levi stated right, there is just one center divided then the break where the bottom part would slide up.

Mr. Ranson stated I would say I rejected it the first time because all the rest of the windows on that row and just solid not divided. I don't see why they can't just keep the same pattern as the existing. I think that would be more true to the spirit. I don't see any great advantage to the divided windows up there.

Mr. Gillie stated you can condition it to remain the two over two pattern that's up to you.

Mrs. Chaney stated two insulated windows is what you are saying but keep it a two over two.

Mr. Gillie stated if that is the pleasure of the Commission I'm not suggesting, those are just the options you have.

Mr. Davis stated which is more significant to the building? To have it the way it is right now?

Mr. Ranson stated I think if they used the same pattern you wouldn't know that they changed the windows. I don't know exactly what the pattern is on the street. But I think it would be better to keep the pattern the way it is.

Mr. Ferrell stated if we approved the bottom half as it is now are we breaking the integrity of the building by not approving the top half?

Mr. Ranson stated well the windows are so totally different.

Mrs. Chaney stated I think what she is trying to do it make it more cohesive by making the top windows look like the bottom windows.

Mr. Lackey stated I guess what I'm struggling with is that the regulation in 2.3 states the existing windows should be repaired if possible.

Mr. Ferrell stated which is more economical?

Mr. Davis stated are the windows wooden right now?

Mr. Gillie stated I believe so but I can't attest to that. You also have the option of tabling it until someone is here.

Mrs. Chaney stated that's what I was going to say table it until next month, until we can get more information.

Mr. Ferrell stated what question are we asking?

Mrs. Chaney stated why they wanting to make the second floor windows like the first floor windows? Is there something wrong with the windows on the second floor that can't be repaired?

Mr. Ferrell stated what if they come and say it needs to be more cohesive. What are we going to do?

Mrs. Chaney stated then we make a decision of whether we want everything to be cohesive or we stick to the fact that the windows are original to the building. John is on the Historical Commission we are not really a Historic Committee. Yes, we need to look at the building from the Historic aspect. But I also want to look at making the building functional. If look at my building and If I had those windows on the second floor the way they looked if I had to put those back in. You still want to be able to heat and cool the second floor; just because they are not energy efficient but they are original to my building.

Mr. Ferrell stated that's the point I think that I am trying to make. Is it about the integrity of the building or is it about downtown Danville business?

Mr. Davis stated we have a motion do we have a second? If not let's go ahead and table it.

Mr. Ranson stated I believe our mission is to maintain the Historic character of the district. That's why I guess we could make a decision on other factors but until we know all of the information I don't think we can make a decision.

Mr. Ferrell stated it just seems that we are talking about it being Historical and we have already broken that pattern.

Mr. Davis stated you all are asking great questions but I think it pertains to whether this is brought before us. What questions are we going to ask and what route are we going to? Are we going to perfect the Historical significance of these buildings or are we going to allow them to go ahead and change it according to what matches.

Mr. Ranson stated we need to be consistent with the guidelines. If the guidelines say the first you need to try and repair the windows then we need to make sure that they have tried to repair them and we don't know that. It may be more convenient for the owner to replace them but it maybe that they could be repaired.

Mr. Ferrell stated I may be wrong but it just looks weird that we have approved the bottom half of this building as is and we are not going to approve the top half. I just don't see where us tabling this and them coming back next month and saying okay we want this because it is economical and it's the same. If we are not going to approve it based on those factors today and for them to just come back next month and to alligate it.

Mrs. Chaney stated what if we suggest that they still keep them as the wooden windows, which I think that's what they are, but with the dividing so it would match the ones on the bottom.

Mr. Ferrell stated can we make that condition and if they don't like then they come back to us.

Mr. Ranson stated I don't think we made the right decision the first time. That was the wrong decision in my opinion.

Mr. Davis stated okay so we have a motion to table it until the next month and to inform the owners that they need to bring some information to us. We have a second to that do we want to go ahead and vote on that motion?

Mr. Ferrell stated I'm in favor of tabling it either we say yay or Nah. Because it is going to be pointless if they come and you have already answered logically for me.

Mrs. Chaney stated we are answering on assumptions that we are making. Not on information that they have provided.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Lackey made a motion to table the item. Mr. Ranson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-1 vote.

5. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 133 S Ridge Street to install temporary signage.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request is was Ms. Stephaine Ferrugia and Mrs. Denise Buckner, the Director of the Free Clinic in Danville. Ms. Ferrugia stated we are here today because we are about to launch a marketing campaign for the Free Clinic called the "Faces of the Free Clinic". We are hoping to highlight the volunteers, the physicians and some patients. We would like to have some mini billboards on the building. This is temporary, we are only asking for about a year. We would like to switch them out maybe every six months. But you can see the renders of course there will be different faces. It would be on the part of the building that faces Ridge Street in between the columns. It would be made of vinyl on a seven inch material, that the billboard company explained it would be made of something called a pocket. So that it would actually have a structure that it would be attached to. So that it wouldn't be waving in the wind. It will actually be steady and feel very permanently attached. So it would face Ridge Street and then on the second page these would actually be on the side that faces Biscuitville, so on Patton Street side. So we would have six of them we might be able to fit in seven.

Mrs. Chaney stated you said temporary just for a year that you are trying to promote different volunteers.

Ms. Ferrugia stated yes different volunteers, patients and physicians.

Mr. Ranson stated the size?

Ms. Ferrugia stated you know we are working with them right now it looks like about 4x8 or 4x10. It would fit in between the columns on the building each sign. So it would be very clean looking.

Mr. Lackey stated do temporary signs have to meet the square footage?

Mr. Gillie stated there is a separate section for temporary signage they are not supposed to be bigger than a 4x8. There is a period that they're supposed to be an extension but if you grant them a different time frame that's up to you. In fact, you guys have a little leeway with what happens in this district. It is usually thirty days and thirty day extension but you can grant longer.

Mr. Lackey stated which we have done and we have granted bigger signs.

Mr. Gillie stated yeah slightly larger especially on the projecting signs. This district we are trying to see things as if they work or they don't work.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ranson made a motion to approve the request with the length of one year no more than one year. Mr. Lackey seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 5-0 vote.

6. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 222 Boatwright Ave to install a metal sign with vinyl lettering that reads "Sign and Wonders".*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was Brian O'Neil. Mr. O'Neil stated we are requesting a 4x8 sign mounting right above the awning over the doors. It's the same sign that he has on Pineview. We wanted to take down the old sign that is there and put my side over to the right side.

Mr. Gillie stated but you're not going to put your sign on his building right? You're going to stay on your side?

Mr. O'Neil stated right exactly. It I put it over there where the adult care center it's blocked by all of those trees on the left side so we want to put it on the right side.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

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

7. *A request has been filed for a Certificate of Appropriateness at 506 N. Floyd St to install two concrete ramps at the front of the building and metal walkway at the rear of the building.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Present on behalf of this request was John Ranson. I represent DCC and the owner of the building. For a little bit of background DCC is getting ready to renovate the largest building on campus. In order to accommodate that renovation, we are going to have to move out of the building completely. So we are going to be moving into this 506 N. Floyd Street and I will say I appreciate you considering this. I had discussed this some time back with the City that we weren't going to making changes to the outside. All of a sudden we have had to add these ramps. As you can see from the drawing that the front of the building is going to be two six inch concrete ramps and the rear of the building there is going to be a platform, they are making a platform so that when you step you out on the platform it will take you out onto the ramp. So we have to use that back door as a required exit. So it's going to be another ramp for the back and two concrete ramps for the front.

Mrs. Chaney stated I'm assuming when you are looking at this these are the front?

Mr. Ranson stated yes.

Mrs. Chaney stated these are the two concrete and this is going to be the other one?

Mr. Ranson stated yes.

Mr. Lackey stated is this owned by William Gentry?

Mr. Ranson stated yes. They are getting ready to start construction as soon as they get a signed lease.

Mr. Davis stated do we have a quorum?

Mr. Gillie stated quorum of those able to vote. So you have four who are here it is acceptable but it's got to be unanimous because you can't then split the vote.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Chaney made a motion to approve the request as submitted with metal ramp instead of wood. Mr. Ferrell seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 3-0-2 vote. (Mr. Lackey and Mr. Ranson abstained).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The March 10, 2016 minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Levi stated have you guys had a chance to think about the projection signage? Last month I handed out a packet of some existing signage in the River District. We ask that you all just look over it and maybe look around to see what you could see in the district.

Mr. Davis stated I wish I had been here.

Mrs. Chaney stated I looked over this and the one we done for Dell'anno's pizza if I remember reading it correctly. You all stated it was over size but I thought that because it was on the second level that it was okay. That the second level was a different code size for a sign.

Mr. Gillie stated let us go back and double check.

Mrs. Chaney stated but I was thinking it wasn't within the limit for the first floor but for the second floor it met the requirements.

Mr. Gillie stated we will go back and double check.

Mrs. Chaney stated I don't have a problem with the size of it because I think when we approved it we said that it was within the guidelines. I just thought I had read, it says projecting signs for Dell'Anno's and the DRF all exceed the eight square feet limit set for

the guidelines. However, they don't appear too large for the buildings. But I was thinking since Dell'Anno's is on the second floor that was a total different set of guidelines.

Mr. Gillie stated we will look.

Mrs. Chaney stated so basically it's up to us to make the judgment call kind of like we did with the Nature Man's Seafood.

Mr. Gillie stated if you think we need to change the regulations and give people more options.

Mr. Lackey stated I would suggest that if we are going to doing something different on a regular basis that we change it. Someone could come in here not knowing that they could have a bigger sign but because they read the regulations and they just kind of followed it. All of a sudden they put a small sign because they read the regulations. To me I would rather pick a number we are comfortable with so that people know this is the biggest it can be.

Mrs. Chaney stated I just find it odd that the River District dimensions are smaller than what is set for the City zoning guidelines. I understand they are trying to make it more pedestrian. But I'm like RJ I don't speed going down Main Street but I don't know how many times I have been looking for a sign and I couldn't see it because it's too small.

Mr. Lackey stated let the record reflect that she said like me she doesn't speed down Main Street meaning I don't speed down Main Street.

Mr. Gillie stated when we wrote the guidelines it was our best first take of things. As this has progressed we see some changes are needed. The Free Clinic with the banners what they are asking for is a gray area in the code. We want to see how it works and whether we should open that up for more. Especially some of the businesses that are doing special events, we like the concept. The Free Clinic is not commercial enterprise so it's a test case to see how it works and we can apply that for commercial versus something like that. We are not opposed to anything. If you like Dell'Anno's the way it is we will go back and check the square footage and come back with something different. It's hard for someone when they come and we tell them alright eight square feet so then they design a little thing and maybe they do need something bigger. So if we have a different number to shoot for it easier on the client.

Mr. Ranson stated the Free Clinic those signs are almost like part of the architecture and it would look odd smaller. They fit right in there and they looked like part of the architecture. It's good for us to have the opportunity and for the owners of the businesses in the district to have the opportunity to incorporate those signs and make it part of the architecture.

Mr. Lackey stated could we do a suggested square footage?

Mr. Gillie stated with a max.

Mr. Lackey stated so you think their needs to be a max?

Mr. Gillie stated their needs to be a max because otherwise we could suggest 20 and someone would come up with 120 and they would say well you just suggested 20.

Mr. Lackey stated and we decline it and we won't allow it.

Mr. Gillie stated that's why we always give them a top number. The places that we patterned Alison Plat did this and she patterned it along things in Eastern Carolina that were more walkable. Also Eastern Carolina is very flat so you don't have the hill issues and things like that. We can look at doing some different things. It was just a shot and it has worked for you guys. You all have very good reviews and reputation for all the work that is going on Downtown. It is an alive place to be and you are a part of it.

Mr. Ranson stated last month when I wasn't at the meeting I was in Rhode Island and they are a historical district. They have the greatest mismatch of signs going up and down that street and I think it looks great. It adds life to the street. It's hard to pick out a sign but it has really animated the street life.

Mrs. Chaney stated If you start making them all have to look alike then when you go to Lizzy Lou, the Wine Shop you know you are kind of like it's where? You could be coming to town and somebody might say look for such and such but you are going to see Dell'anno's sign.

Mr. Lackey stated I just wonder if square footage because square footage on the Atrium building and square footage on the School Board are going to be different. It's a big building where a big sign is going to get engulfed by that building.

Mrs. Chaney stated I think that's already in the guidelines to take in account the size of the building.

Mr. Lackey stated is it? Okay.

Mrs. Chaney stated if there is more than one company in the building of course you would have more signs. That is already in the guidelines but I think just the initial eight square feet that we are allowing is too small. That's why I was trying to remember what the City's Zoning for signs is. I think it's more.

Ms. Levi stated you have got two main Zoning districts downtown which is the central business commercial and tobacco warehouse and they are different. Its eighteen square foot max for the central business and it's a little bit more than that for tobacco

warehouse. But it's a maximum of 50 per sign, 100 total. They can have up to four signs.

Mrs. Chaney stated it's just because they have bigger buildings.

Ms. Levi stated yeah.

Mr. Lackey stated the biggest we could go for would be 18 square feet because otherwise you have to have a Zoning change.

Mrs. Chaney stated if we set that max to be comparable to the City and we could have this legal aid to where it could go up to this but it is going to be compatible to what your building is.

Mr. Gillie stated but is the 18 square feet enough? That is really no that large of a sign.

Mr. Lackey stated we don't have the ability to make it any bigger. You do in part of the River District but not the other part of the River District.

Mr. Gillie stated right, but you have the ability to recommend changes to the City and then those changes would then go to the Planning Commission and City Council. As you saw last month Planning Commission sent a case back to you for your review and then at the meeting that was held this past Monday they recommended approval of it. I can't say only because but really they relied on you if you were okay with it they were okay with it. Because they said this is your area you guys are the experts. So if you think changes need to be made in these particular areas they are going to look at it and say these are the experts for that area.

Mr. Ferrell stated I make a suggestion depended on whether the sign is on the first floor or the second floor should we have bigger signage on the second floor as opposed to on the first floor? Is it possible that we can have 10 square feet on the first floor or 15 square feet on the first floor and up to 25 on the second floor?

Mr. Gillie stated yes it is possible to do that. My own suggestion is that you draw limits so that you don't have something on the Masonic temple that is 13 stores versus something that is three stores. Mr. Ferrell it's a great idea I agree with you I just think we need to put a cap on it.

Mr. Ferrell stated just the first floor and anything above the first floor.

Mr. Gillie stated that we can do.

Mr. Davis stated do you think anyone would question the Home sign over on the building the size of it and can they make their sign larger because of us allowing that? Will it set any kind of precedent?

Mr. Gillie stated no we don't feel it will because most of the people that have come and seen that sign, it's not advertising anything. There is not a business there. People seem to think it is art.

Mrs. Chaney stated that what it was put up for.

Mr. Gillie stated right. I'll say my son drove by it and said hey when did they put the big thing up. He didn't know the history of it even though he has lived here. It never clicked with the younger generation what it is. They thought it was kind of like the leaf man that is at the corner they thought it was an art park. So I don't believe it's going to create that type of thing.

Mrs. Chaney stated it this something we have to finalize today?

Mr. Gillie stated no you still have time to work on it. We were just bringing that information to you. We can go back and play around with it some more.

Mrs. Chaney stated I was thinking that I saw in the guidelines that the second level was a different square footage than the first floor and I understand that because you have people walking up and won the street.

Mr. Lackey stated would it be better for someone to mock up some signs so that we can see what 20 square feet looks like and what 25 square feet looks like?

Mrs. Chaney stated Dell'annos is 18 square feet is that front and back total?

Ms. Levi stated I believe that is 2x9. I pulled up the sign permit and it listed it as a 2x9.

Mrs. Chaney stated so that's at nine feet tall and that's probably about 12 or 13 foot ceiling height on the second floor.

Mr. Lackey stated that sounds bigger than I would personally want, bigger enough for you to see but not so big that is going to be intrusive.

Mrs. Chaney stated right even on the Masonic temple I think that would be good.

Mr. Gillie stated we can try for the Photoshop.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Approved By: