

**DERRY TOWNSHIP DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 27, 2015**

The Monday, April 27, 2015 meeting of the Derry Township Design Advisory Board was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Ed Buchan in the Meeting Room of the Derry Township Municipal Complex, 600 Clearwater Road, Hershey, PA.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Ed Buchan, Chairman; Joyce St. John, Vice Chairwoman; Sandy Ballard, Secretary; Pam Moore; Brian O'Day; Ted Herman

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Brandon Williams, Assistant Director of Community Development; Jenelle Stumpf, Community Development Secretary

Public registering attendance: Kenny Hinebaugh, Evans Engineering; Massimo Rizzotto and Jamie Pascotti, 169 Chocolate Group, LLC

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On a motion made by Member Herman, seconded by Vice Chairwoman St. John, and a unanimous vote, the minutes of the February 23, 2015 meeting were approved as presented.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Consideration of the addition of porch and stair railings to the building located at 56 and 58 Half Street (Larry Valerio; DRB #359)**

Mr. Williams reported that the rails will be 33.5 feet in height and will be painted white to match the existing trim on the house. No dimensional changes to the porches are proposed. The material of the railing will be vinyl.

Motion

The motion to issue a Recommendation of Appropriateness for the proposal as presented was made by Secretary Ballard, seconded by Member Herman, and passed by a unanimous vote.

**b. Consideration of the preliminary site layout for the redevelopment of several parcels of land (commonly referred to as the "Post Office site") located north of West Chocolate Avenue, west of North Linden Road, south of the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks, and east of Ridge Road (169 Chocolate Group, LLC; DRB #360)**

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Mr. Williams stated that the applicant will be presenting this project in phases, similar to how the proposals for Chipotle and the renovations at 19 East Chocolate Avenue were handled. Presented for this meeting is a conceptual site layout for two new buildings. A multi-level parking deck and renovations to the existing post office building are also shown on the layout; however, these improvements are outside of the Chocolate Avenue Preservation Overlay District. After this meeting, the applicant will proceed with land development plan review and approval, and then they will return to the Design Advisory Board for more detailed design approvals. Mr. Williams noted that this layout is subject to change, depending on whether any site restrictions are discovered during the land development plan process.

Kenny Hinebaugh of Evans Engineering represented the applicant. He explained that last year, 169 Chocolate Group, LLC, acquired the 8 parcels that make up the “post office block.” The owner is in the process of quit-claiming the private, “paper” streets (K Street and North First Street), and with that quit claim they will consolidate all of the parcels and the 2 private streets into 1 property.

Mr. Hinebaugh stated that this project will occur in phases. The first phase will include the interior demolition and renovation of the existing post office building, as well as the addition of a third floor. There will also be some site work and the installation of new utilities for the existing and new buildings. Phase 1 will also include the construction of the parking deck to the west of the post office building, improvements to the parking area on the east side of the existing building, and the installation of an access drive that will connect Linden Road to Ridge Road.

During the interim between Phases 1 and 2, the owner is proposing the construction of a right-in, right-out access drive off of West Chocolate Avenue. They are currently in discussions with the Township and HRG, and will soon be contacting PennDOT regarding the resurfacing of Route 422 that is planned for 2016. Part of that would be the streetscape project that the Township is working on, so the applicant will try to get their improvements along West Chocolate Avenue incorporated with the Township/PennDOT projects so that everything is done at the same time.

Mr. Hinebaugh explained that the second phase of the project will be the construction of the buildings along West Chocolate Avenue, and these buildings are conceptual at the moment. The owner has ideas regarding mixed uses that include retail, office space, restaurants, and even a potential residential component. Mr. Hinebaugh added that the owner will come back to the Design Advisory Board once there is more detail in the design of the buildings and their uses. There will most likely be changes to the site layout; for example, the applicant learned within the last week that, based on information from PennDOT and the traffic assessment, the parking spaces that are shown at the corner of West Chocolate Avenue and Ridge Road will most likely have to become a right turn lane onto Ridge Road because of the traffic anticipated from this project and the Park Boulevard realignment.

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Secretary Ballard asked if Ridge Road will remain one way north of West Chocolate Avenue. Mr. Hinebaugh said that is correct.

Member O'Day asked if one will be able to make a right or a left turn onto Ridge Road from the proposed parking deck. Mr. Hinebaugh answered yes, and added that the access drive to the high rise (at 215 West Chocolate Avenue) will not be impeded by this project.

Vice Chairwoman St. John questioned if there will be sidewalks along the perimeter of the project site. Mr. Hinebaugh answered yes. Pedestrian crosswalks will also be provided. Vice Chairwoman St. John asked if the parking deck will be for general use, or if the number of spaces is based on the anticipated uses for the project area. Member Herman also asked what the site's overall anticipated parking needs will be. Mr. Hinebaugh responded that the post office property is part of the downtown shared parking agreement, which allows various uses to utilize various parking lots in the downtown, and this project will expand upon the agreement. Today, without any new development, in the worst case scenario there are approximately 190 parking spaces that are not in use. This project will utilize not only those spaces but will provide as many additional spaces as possible. The future uses on the site will be based on the parking that will be available so that the shared parking agreement is still valid.

Chairman Buchan asked when more detailed information will be available for the new buildings. Mr. Hinebaugh stated that at the moment, the timeframe is unknown. It is possible the applicant will be ready to return to the Design Advisory Board with more detailed information by the end of 2016.

Secretary Ballard asked if any consideration has been given to limiting the number of access points to the site. The more times there are vehicles cutting in and out, the less pedestrian friendly the site will be. Mr. Hinebaugh agreed; however the issue is that because of the number of uses anticipated for this site, the fewer access points there are, the bigger the existing intersections will need to be.

Chairman Buchan commented that his initial opinion of the parking on West Chocolate Avenue is that it is a bad idea, but he is aware that the current design may change based on what comes out of the land development plan review process.

Member O'Day asked if the height of the proposed buildings is being contemplated. Mr. Hinebaugh stated that the building at the corner of West Chocolate Avenue and Ridge Road could be as high as 5 stories, with mixed uses. The other building might be 3 stories. The buildings will progress in height based on existing buildings, such as The Hershey Story. The upper level of the parking deck is proposed to be at grade with where the building is now. In response to a question from Secretary Ballard, Mr.

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Hinebaugh stated that the initial design of the parking deck will be able to accommodate more levels for a possible future expansion.

Secretary Ballard asked how much of a grass strip there will be between the curb and the sidewalk along West Chocolate Avenue. Mr. Hinebaugh stated that it will probably be 3 feet or 4 feet wide, depending on what PennDOT allows with their resurfacing project. Secretary Ballard asked about the Ridge Road and Linden Road frontages of the property. Mr. Hinebaugh responded that they will maintain what is there now, which is about 2 feet in width.

Member Herman asked if the applicant has worked with the Downtown Hershey Association (DHA) and Derck & Edson Associates to develop this site. Mr. Hinebaugh answered yes, they have had various meetings with Chris Brown of Derck & Edson, and Township staff. Additionally, Jamie Pascotti of 169 Chocolate Group, LLC, has become a member of the DHA.

Secretary Ballard asked if the buildings that will front on West Chocolate Avenue will have main entrances along that frontage. Mr. Hinebaugh answered that is the intention.

Motion

The motion to issue a Recommendation of Appropriateness for the preliminary site layout was made by Vice Chairwoman St. John, seconded by Secretary Ballard, and passed by a unanimous vote, with the condition that the following items are to be addressed under separate submittal(s) to the Design Advisory Board: 1) Architectural detail specifications of the buildings, including exterior elevations, finishes, signage, and directional orientation; 2) Material and design specifications of the finished exterior site elements, including lighting, signage, awnings, patios, and landscaping.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

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Chairman