

DERRY TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN CORE DESIGN BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
April 30, 2018

The April 30, 2018 meeting of the Derry Township Downtown Core Design Board was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Vice Chairwoman Susan Cort in the Meeting Room of the Derry Township Municipal Complex, 600 Clearwater Road, Hershey, PA.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Susan Cort, Vice Chairwoman; Pam Moore; Jim George; Justin Engle; George Achorn

Members Absent: Jennifer Harnden, Chairwoman; Andy Bowman, Secretary

Also Present: Brandon Williams, Assistant Director of Community Development; Lauren Zumbrun, Economic Development Manager; Jenelle Stumpf, Community Development Secretary

Public registering attendance: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion made by Member Moore, seconded by Member George, and a unanimous vote, the minutes from the March 26, 2018 meeting were approved as presented.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of exterior alterations and signage for Iron Hill Brewery at Hershey Towne Square (Bray Architecture, Inc., on behalf of Iron Hill Brewery; DCDB #408)

Brandon Williams noted that the applicant filed a Zoning Hearing Board application for relief in the form of a special exception regarding the two bird signs on the south and west elevations of the building to allow the signs to be more than three feet in height. The Zoning Hearing Board will conduct a hearing on the matter on May 16, 2018 and render a decision on June 20, 2018.

Mr. Williams stated that the applicant has also requested a modification of the Downtown Core Design Standards regarding the metal panel accent wall on the southwest corner of the building (facing West Chocolate Avenue) because the material is not specifically permitted by the Design Standards.

Jim Bray, Bray Architecture, Inc., explained the proposed alterations:

- The patio area will be expanded further into the plaza to allow for a more dynamic seating arrangement. The railing around the patio will also be altered.

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- The landscape area on the north end of the west elevation will be removed to allow for the expanded patio seating. The balance of the landscaping will be made up with planters around the patio area.
- There will be a 42-inch bar top infill below three of the overhead doors on the west elevation. Additionally, the southernmost overhead door will be revised to allow for an entrance to serve the patio area.
- The canopies at the southwest corner of the building will be elevated to better define the entrance.
- Steel channels will be placed at the entrance on the south elevation. The channels will be indirectly lit with LED tapelight to highlight the steel bird logo.
- Additional mullions and colored vinyl sheets will be added to the upper windows of the building.
- Double doors will be installed in the northwest storefront to allow for an employee entrance into the brewery.

Mr. Bray also summarized the proposed signage.

Mr. Williams asked if the public will be able to enter the building through the door located beneath the wall sign on the west side of the building. Mr. Bray answered no; it is an access to the building but not for public use.

In response to questions from Vice Chairwoman Cort, Mr. Williams stated that the proposed illumination for the signs and the number of signs is compliant with the Zoning Ordinance regulations.

Vice Chairwoman Cort inquired how the courtyard will be lighted during off hours. Mr. Bray responded that there are shell building lights that will light the building face and within the courtyard there is additional lighting. Ed Fetter, Hershey DTC, LP, commented that they are considering providing additional soft accent lighting in the courtyard, but the details still need to be finalized.

Mr. Fetter referenced the Downtown Core Design Standards requirement that building glass shall be constructed to no more than a 50% opacity on ground floor levels and the fact that the upper story windows of these buildings are considered ground level windows. He thinks the requirement creates many complications by not allowing the upper windows to be blacked out on buildings such as these. Mr. Williams indicated that staff originally interpreted the opacity requirements for all windows on the building, since they are single-story buildings, and that the purpose of this requirement is to keep storefront windows completely visible and see-through. Since

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the coverings are proposed only on the upper transom windows of the building, Mr. Williams indicated that he believes the requirement would be upheld since the ground level windows will not contain any coverings, so he expressed understanding of Mr. Fetter's argument. Mr. Williams continued to indicate that if there are instances where the Design Standards are not entirely clear, he believes that the matter can be decided in favor of the applicant without any problem. If the applicant proposes a darker covering on the upper transom windows only, he does not have an issue with allowing that.

Motions

Vice Chairwoman Cort made a motion that the Downtown Core Design Board issue a Recommendation of Appropriateness for the proposal and the modification request regarding the metal panel accent wall on the southwest corner of the building as presented. Member Achorn seconded the motion, which was passed by a unanimous vote.

On a motion by Member Engle, seconded by Member Moore and a unanimous vote, the Downtown Core Design Board supported the granting of a special exception for the bird logo signs. This motion will be conveyed to the Zoning Hearing Board for consideration at their May 16, 2018 meeting.

B. Consideration of wall sign for 131 West Chocolate Avenue, Suite 124 at Hershey Towne Square (Sign-A-Rama on behalf of Tropical Smoothie Café; DCDB #410)

Brandon Williams explained that, based on concerns raised by Township staff, the applicant has submitted a revised rendering for the proposal. In the first rendering the applicant proposed a carved panel sign with additional gooseneck lighting elements being installed above the sign panel. Mr. Williams clarified that the first rendering is compliant with Township requirements; however, it is not consistent with what was previously approved for other tenants. The Township asked for a second rendering showing similar signage but with aluminum full cutout letters and halo lighting instead of what was originally proposed. Township staff recommends approval of the revised rendering.

Ed Fetter of Hershey DTC, LP, stated that they prefer the revised proposal as well.

Member George commented that the revised proposal is much better and will blend better with the building and the other signs.

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Motion

Member George made a motion that the Downtown Core Design Board issue a Recommendation of Appropriateness for the revised proposal as presented. Member Achorn seconded the motion, which was passed by a unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Revisions to Decorative Sidewalk Plan for Hershey Towne Square

Lauren Zumbrun stated that within the downtown, the standards call for a wider sidewalk with a decorative brick border. However, although the developer showed the specification that was requested on their land development plan, during meetings with the developer it was determined that it might not make sense to include the brick band along the entire length of the Hershey Towne Square property, given the way the buildings are situated on the site and the amount of brick on the buildings. In lieu of the brick band along the full frontage of the property, the developer is now proposing to extend the decorative pattern within the two plazas and frame the areas with brick inlays.

Ed Fetter, Hershey DTC, LP, explained that their reasoning behind the proposed revision is that they are concerned about the maintenance for a brick border along the entire length of the property since it will end along grass instead of a curb.

Member Engle asked if there will be an 8-foot-wide sidewalk in front of the buildings and then a grass area between the sidewalk and the street. Mr. Fetter answered yes. Member Engle commented that people who park in the parallel spaces along the street will have to walk through grass to get to the sidewalk, which seems to be in conflict with the desired atmosphere for the downtown. He inquired if the developer has proposed a landscaping plan yet. Mr. Fetter responded that they are not proposing landscaping in terms of the streetscape and he would be concerned about choosing the proper kinds of trees so that they are not blocking the storefronts.

Member Achorn inquired about the width of the grass area. Mr. Fetter did not know the exact width; however, it is hard for him to believe it will be as wide as it is depicted on the rendering from the engineer. Member Achorn asked if it would make sense to bring the brick all the way out to the curb in order to create walkways across the grass. Member Engle suggested running a 2-foot-wide piece of concrete on the curb so that when it is raining, people who park on the street could walk on that concrete to get to a point where they can access the sidewalk. Mr. Fetter wondered if people will be tempted to cross Chocolate Avenue if pedestrian connections are provided from the sidewalk to the street in areas outside of the crosswalks.

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Member Engle questioned if an 8-foot-wide sidewalk in front of the buildings will be wide enough for a downtown setting. Member Moore commented that she does not like the grass. Member Achorn added that it seems as though the on-street parking will be popular and the grass will be a mess pretty quickly as a result of people walking on it.

Member Engle commented that the scope of Phase 1 of the Township's streetscape project is pretty much set at this point. He asked if it would make more sense to continue to work with the developer for Phase 2 of the project instead. He inquired if the developer would be agreeable to planting trees in the streetscape, as long as the trees do not block the storefronts. Mr. Fetter answered yes.

Ms. Zumbrun inquired about extending the plazas' decorative walkway patterns out to the curb instead of installing the brick frame as proposed. Mr. Fetter stated that would be a greater expense to the developer than what is currently proposed.

Vice Chairwoman Cort asked if the Design Board can hold off on making a recommendation on the proposed revision to the decorative sidewalk plan until the next meeting, when more information is available. Mr. Fetter stated that they do not have a lot of time. He thinks the sidewalk will be ready to be poured as soon as the storefronts are done. Mr. Fetter asked if they should forego the proposed revision entirely in case the Township decides to extend the concrete out to the curb. Member George thinks the brick inlay will look out of place if the plazas' walkway patterns are brought out to the end of the sidewalk. There is no brick on any other portion of the sidewalk.

Member Engle commented again that he does not believe 8 feet will be wide enough for the sidewalk in front of the buildings. In response to a question from Ms. Zumbrun, Mr. Fetter stated that he can obtain an estimate for what it would cost to extend the sidewalk to the curb. Member Achorn asked whether it would make sense to extend the sidewalk to the curb for the entire length of the property or just in the area of the parallel parking spaces. Ms. Zumbrun responded that in terms of pedestrian flow, the extra sidewalk width could be beneficial. Mr. Fetter pointed out that there is extra capacity for concrete in front of each storefront, which will help when there are a lot of people on the sidewalk.

Mr. Williams summarized that the Design Board is not concerned with the brick framing and the developer should continue the plaza walkway to the edge of the sidewalk. No official motion is required. There will have to be some internal discussion with the Design Board and eventually the Board of Supervisors about whether the sidewalk should be widened. Mr. Williams can find out the existing width between the curb and sidewalk for discussion at the next meeting.

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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Chairwoman