

DERRY TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN CORE DESIGN BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
September 30, 2019

The September 30, 2019 meeting of the Derry Township Downtown Core Design Board was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Chairman Justin Engle in the Meeting Room of the Derry Township Municipal Complex, 600 Clearwater Road, Hershey, PA.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Justin Engle, Chairman; Rick Zmuda, Vice Chairman; Andy Bowman, Secretary; George Achorn; Jim George

Members Absent: Pam Moore; Matt Luttrell

Also Present: Chuck Emerick, Director of Community Development; Lauren Zumbrun, Economic Development Manager; Jenelle Stumpf, Planning/Zoning Coordinator

Public registering attendance: Steve Fotos, 3 Spring Creek Lane, Hershey

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Zmuda, seconded by Chairman Engle, and a unanimous vote, the minutes from the May 20, 2019 meeting were approved as presented.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of replacement of vinyl siding with stone siding on the building located at 320 West Chocolate Avenue (Paul Smith; DCDB #437)

Chairman Engle asked the applicant how he decided on stone siding. Mr. Smith replied that he does not like vinyl and he likes the combination of brick and stone. The existing brick on the building is faded, so it is not a bright red color. Chairman Engle inquired if Dryvit was an option. Mr. Smith stated that he considered it, but he does not want his building to look the same as the neighboring building.

Chuck Emerick summarized his review comments. He asked how the applicant plans to address the existing columns on the building. Mr. Smith responded that he would like to replace the columns with straight stone.

Member George commented that he does not have any concerns with mixed materials but suggested that the applicant use the "PA Lime" stone instead of the proposed "Pine Hills" stone because it is more of a traditional bluestone and more in

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character with the surrounding area. Mr. Smith stated that he prefers the “Pine Hills” stone because it has a little bit of a red tint that would tie in with the existing brick on the building.

Vice Chairman Zmuda noted that the lack of a rendering makes it difficult to get an idea of what the front of the building will look like.

Chairman Engle stated that the applicant has a prominently located building and its appearance affects what people experience on Chocolate Avenue. It is not easy to make a porch look nice. There is also the investment that the applicant is making in the property. “Lick-and-stick” stone siding is not cheap. The applicant could be heading down a path where he is spending a lot of money on something that is not going to be as nice as he might think because a lot of the small architectural details will be missed.

Member Achorn commented that a rendering will help the applicant better visualize the result and asked if the proposal includes the pillars and latticework.

Mr. Smith stated that he will also be adding an accessible ramp to the building as a separate project.

The Design Board members concurred that they would like to see a rendering of proposal prior to making a recommendation. Mr. Smith noted that he was hoping to complete the siding replacement project quickly, and the extra time and money involved in generating an architectural rendering may lead him to decide to not do the replacement and retain the existing vinyl siding. There was discussion as to whether Mr. Smith would grant an extension of time for the Design Board to make a recommendation or if he would choose to appeal to the Board of Supervisors for a final decision.

Motion

Vice Chairman Zmuda made a motion that the Downtown Core Design Board issue a Recommendation of Denial for the proposal as presented. Secretary Bowman seconded the motion, which was passed by a unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

Lauren Zumbrun explained that the Downtown Core Design Standards recommend the use of decorative brick borders for sidewalk replacement; however, it is turning out to be a cumbersome element of projects and it is challenging to achieve a continuous border. Chairman Engle added that the Township has been getting a lot of push back from contractors regarding the installation and long-term maintenance

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of the brick. Every time the Township tries to price a simple improvement, it turns out to be much more complicated because of the decorative brick.

This subject came up in the Township's transportation meeting because the Township will be working with HRG on the design of sidewalk improvements along portions of Chocolate Avenue, and the construction is being funded through a grant. At that meeting, the attendees felt it made more sense to forego the brick border; however, Township staff wanted to review options with the Downtown Core Design Board.

Member George asked about other options, such as stamped concrete. Chairman Engle responded that the challenge is the project is not being done all at one time.

Mr. Emerick noted that the Township is in the process of revising the Zoning Ordinance and will be incorporating the Downtown Core Design Standards back into the Zoning Ordinance. As part of that, the Township is considering removing the brick accent aspect from the regulations.

Chairman Engle commented that tinted concrete seems like a simple concept, but it is not. It is expensive and difficult to achieve consistency between batches. The biggest struggle is maintaining consistency. After pricing the decorative brick several times and looking at several options, the Township has come back to it being important to make sidewalks wider; however, there may be other ways to achieve a dressier look for downtown other than the sidewalks.

Secretary Bowman agreed with the proposal to not require the use of decorative brick on sidewalk replacements since it is not feasible.

Member George also agreed with the proposal and that widening the sidewalks is more vital than including the decorative strip.

Chairman Engle stated that grass area improvements would be in the PennDOT right-of-way. Urban Design Associates (*whom the Township retained to do a study of the downtown*) has emphasized that the wide tree lawns in the downtown are a positive attribute, but it is in the right-of-way. The Township currently does not have much in the way of regulations regarding what can be put in the tree lawn so now regulations are proposed to be included in the design standards when they are incorporated into the revised Zoning Ordinance.

Member Achorn mentioned it would be nice to include regulations regarding sight distance and low branches. Mr. Emerick responded that these regulations currently exist in the Township's Tree Ordinance, which is enforced by Public Works.

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ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Chairman Engle, seconded by Secretary Bowman, and a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Secretary