

**DERRY TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN CORE DESIGN BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 27, 2023**

The Monday, November 27, 2023, meeting of the Derry Township Downtown Core Design Board was called to order at 5:01 p.m. by Chairman Rick Zmuda in the Meeting Room of the Administration Building in the Derry Township Municipal Complex, 600 Clearwater Road, Hershey, Pennsylvania.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Rick Zmuda, Chairman; George Achorn, Vice Chairman; Lou Paoletti, Secretary; Jim George; Ajay Patel; Jack Raudenbush

Member Absent: Tom Hollerbach

Township Staff Present: Chuck Emerick, Director of Community Development; Jenelle Stumpf, Planning/Zoning Coordinator; Billy Warner, Community Development Secretary

Public Registering Attendance: Scott Davis, Stephen Hrivnak – Hord Coplan Macht; Michelle Emerick, DHA; Craig Smith, RGS Associates; Erin Mariano, Ken Gall – Hershey Trust Company; Mike Callahan, Benchmark; Kathy Cerullo-Frick, LivingWellCare

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On a motion made by Member George, seconded by Vice Chairman Achorn, and a unanimous vote, the minutes from May 22, 2023, meeting were approved as presented.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Consideration of signage replacement at 20 Valley Road (LivingWellCare; DCDB 483)**

Kathy Cerullo-Frick of LivingWellCare explained that the existing sign is in disrepair and falling down. Ms. Cerullo-Frick would like to replace the sign with something more attractive. Chairman Zmuda noted that per the application, LivingWellCare is proposing 1/4-inch-thick acrylic letters. Acrylic is not a permitted sign material in the Downtown Core Overlay, but that is out of the purview of the Downtown Core Design Board.

Chairman Zmuda voiced his concern with sight distance and the sign’s location relevant to the adjacent intersection. The sign creates a little bit of a blind spot when looking to the right. Ms. Cerullo-Frick responded that there is 10 feet from the sign to the end of the pavement. That easily fits a car and not many cars use that alley. In response to a question from Secretary Paoletti, Ms. Cerullo-Frick stated that the proposed sign will be placed two inches in from the current sign, but pretty much the same location.

Member George commented that the proposed sign is an improvement over what is there now.

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Chairman Zmuda asked if the smaller sign will also be replaced. Ms. Cerullo-Frick answered that it will not be replaced.

Motion

On a motion made by Member George, seconded by Vice Chairman Achorn, and a unanimous vote, the Downtown Core Design Board issued a Recommendation of Appropriateness for the proposal as presented.

In response to a question from Jenelle Stumpf, Ms. Cerullo-Frick said she will make sure that aluminum or metal is used for the letters instead of acrylic.

**B. Consideration of new building at 339 West Chocolate Avenue (Hershey Lumberyard, LLC; DCDB 484)**

Erin Mariano of Hershey Trust Company introduced the proposal. The project is being developed by Hershey Lumberyard, LLC, which is a joint venture between Benchmark Realty and Hershey Trust Company, as Trustee for Milton Hershey School. Milton Hershey School will be the primary user of the facility. Hershey Entertainment and Resorts will utilize the unused capacity. Both employers will provide housing of various types.

Scott Davis of Hord Coplan Macht explained the design of the site and the building. The site is comprised of three tracts. The majority of the site sits off North First Street, a finger extends onto West Chocolate Avenue, and L street divides it. From the beginning, the design team and construction team worked together to study the history of this site. Milton Hershey founded the Lumber Company in 1927 to build the homes in Hershey. The legacy of it over its 42 years, before the fire in 1971, was important to not just lumber in the town, but design, construction, engineering, and architecture. The intention is that the project honors that history through the design of the building, naming, and graphics. The design of the new building takes cues from the mercantile style of the surrounding area. The site is trying to rebuild L Street and First Street as proper Township streets. There will be a widening of First Street down to Orchard Road. The goal is to create a 26-foot alley right-of-way. The applicant will not be modifying any the properties that have garages to the south.

Mr. Davis stated that the building will be in a "C" shape; this will include a private courtyard for residents to enjoy. The site drops 10.5 feet in the rear, right beside the Norfolk Railroad tracks. The applicant will be connecting a circulatory lane for onsite traffic; this will connect to the parking lot. There will be overflow parking for the businesses in the area along with the project's commercial space, which will have public access. The primary entrance to the building is along First Street, and it will have a canopy for a drop-off and pick-up location. The majority of the residents may not have cars and therefore will not be utilizing the parking lot. The building is very friendly in the pedestrian connections.



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Mr. Davis noted that there are 5,000 square feet in an area to the left of L Street, and the applicant is proposing this for bike share racks, benches, and trash receptacles. A small median will be constructed to define L Street as a more typical street. This will protect cars backing onto the street from backing into the lane of travel.

Mr. Davis stated that the building height, using the calculations from the Township, will be approximately 63 feet, and the maximum permitted is 65 feet. The visibility from First Street will only be about 60 feet because of the way the site drops. The building will not be uplighted. The lighting is for safety and movement and not for the purpose of attracting people passing by. The majority of the lights are downlights and are shielded. The parking lot fixtures are ones that have been used in the Township before. Catenary lights will be used in shaded areas such as the courtyard.

Regarding signage, Mr. Davis explained that the applicant is not trying to encourage new tenants to come to the building or garner new residents. The signage will be used for wayfinding. There will be a painted "legacy mural" on the building. The painted band will continue around the building, but the lettering will only be on the side of the building facing West Chocolate Avenue. The canopies will be used for signage. There will be two freestanding signs to direct vehicles to the parking area. There will be some glass decals on the front doors to identify the entrance, using white or light grey colors.

Mr. Davis explained the front of the building. The base will be a light-colored grey brick and then there will be red brick, which is common throughout the Downtown Core Overlay. Beyond that there will be a painted band and some dark fiber cement. To connect with the Lumberyard history, there will be elements of wood throughout the project. The commercial space on the first floor will be a light office or retail use that will be determined at a later date. Regarding the courtyard, Mr. Davis explained that there was a railroad track that fed the Lumberyard. The applicant is hoping to reuse the track components that sit in the courtyard and are partially buried under the asphalt. They will be recreating where the track was and will be using lumber component benches and furniture to tie into the branding of the Lumberyard.

*Downtown Core Design Board comments*

*Building Typologies and Principles*. The Board did not have any comments.

Member George inquired if there is any use for the narrow piece of land along the railroad tracks. Mr. Davis responded that the applicant studied the area and there was a desire at one point to make this a pedestrian connection to Ridge Road. Craig Smith of RGS Associates noted that there are challenges on the narrow piece of land, including topography, and an emergency access connection was not feasible. There were also safety concerns in terms of using the land for a pedestrian connection.

In response to a question from Member George, Mr. Davis stated that L Street will not be two-way traffic the entire way around the building. It will be two-way traffic to get into the

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parking lot and then it will transition to one-way traffic. Mr. Smith added that one-way signage is depicted on the land development plan for the project.

Vice Chairman Achorn asked if it was the applicant's intention to depict First Street improvements all the way down to Orchard Road. Mr. Davis answered yes. The development team is working with Hidden Still and The Car Barn properties to continue those improvements.

Building Elements (awnings, roofs, porches, etc). Chairman Zmuda asked how far the awnings will extend from the building. Mr. Davis stated that one will be four and a half feet to five feet and the other one will be 10 feet. They will be set back 10 feet from the right-of-way.

Elements in the Courtyard. The Board did not have any comments since it is not visible from West Chocolate Avenue.

In response to a question from Member Patel, Mr. Davis stated that Rite Aid will be accessible from First Street. Currently turns cannot be made from L Street onto First Street because there is a telephone pole in the way. This project is placing the utility underground to allow for left turns.

Materials and Applications. Chairman Zmuda inquired if real brick will be used on the front of the building or if it will be brick facing. Mr. Davis responded that it will be real brick. The Downtown Core Design Board did not have any issues with the colors or materials proposed.

Storefronts. The Board did not have any comments.

Signage. The applicant has requested a modification from dimensional requirements to be allowed to paint the legacy mural directly on the building. The Board did not have any issues with the modification request.

Chuck Emerick noted that the signage proposed on the canopies does not meet Zoning Ordinance requirements. The canopy lettering has to be on the canopy and cannot be located above or below the canopy. Zoning Hearing Board relief would be required if the applicant decides to proceed as proposed.

Member Raudenbush asked if any lighting is proposed on the signage. Mr. Davis stated that he does not think any lighting is desired on the legacy mural. There may be small up lights for the ground signs. The applicant is not trying to attract new customers or new residents. The goal of the signage is wayfinding.

Site Elements (public realm improvements, pedestrian connections, etc.). Member Raudenbush asked if any of the elements match any other parts of town. Mr. Davis answered yes, the public realm elements will match. Mr. Emerick added that the private courtyard is outside of the public realm, so the wooden benches that are proposed in the courtyard will not be in conflict with Downtown Core Design Standards.



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Member George commended the design team for the legacy appearance of the project.

Motion regarding Site Development

On a motion made by Member Patel, seconded by Member George, and a unanimous vote, the Downtown Core Design Board made a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors that the proposed construction of the signs, awnings, outdoor improvements, walls, fences, driveways, parking areas, and lighting devices associated with the Dwellings for Employees and Students building be approved as presented and granted the modification request regarding the dimensional requirement for the proposed "legacy mural" wall sign. The Downtown Core Design Board also recommended that the canopy signs be approved as depicted even though they do not meet the Zoning Ordinance requirements. The applicant may either seek and obtain relief from the Zoning Hearing Board to allow the letters to be placed above the roof line of the canopy, or they may mount the letters on the face of the canopy.

Motion regarding construction of the new Dwellings for Employees and Students Building

On a motion made Secretary Paoletti, seconded by Member George, and a unanimous vote, the Downtown Core Design Board made a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors that the proposed construction of the Dwellings for Employees and Students building be approved as presented.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion made by Member George, seconded by Vice Chairman Achorn, and a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m.



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Lou Paoletti, Secretary

