

DERRY TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN CORE DESIGN BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
July 29, 2024

The Monday, July 29, 2024, meeting of the Derry Township Downtown Core Design Board was called to order at 5:01 p.m. by Chairman Lou Paoletti in the Meeting Room of the Administration Building in the Derry Township Municipal Complex, 600 Clearwater Road, Hershey, Pennsylvania.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Lou Paoletti, Chairman; Rick Zmuda, Vice Chairman; Jim George; Ajay Patel; Susan Fotos

Members Absent: Jack Raudenbush, Secretary; George Achorn

Township Staff Present: David Habig, Assistant Director of Community Development; Jenelle Stumpf, Planning/Zoning Coordinator; Liz Paul, Community Development Secretary

Public Registering Attendance: Michelle Emerick, Downtown Hershey Association; Allison Hanna, Pennoni; Ron Woleslagle, Fontana Outdoors; Chuck Emerick, Derry Township; Jay Krebs, Tender Years

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Zmuda, seconded by Member Fotos, and a unanimous vote, the minutes from June 24, 2024, meeting were approved as presented.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of new entrance gate and replacement of dumpster enclosure at 50 East Chocolate Avenue (Pennoni Associates, on behalf of 45 East Chocolate Avenue, LLC; DCDB 488)

Allison Hanna of Pennoni Associates presented the project details, along with sample bricks and gate materials for the Downtown Core Design Board to review. Ms. Hanna explained that a renovation project for the neighboring Hershey Theater includes a new loading dock that will require the Tender Years' shed and dumpster enclosure to be relocated. In addition, Tender Years felt this project provided a good opportunity to install an entrance gate to their parking lot to solve the issue of Theater patrons using their lot for parking during events. The appearance of the new dumpster enclosure will remain the same and will match the existing building's façade. The new entry gate will match the existing façade. The gate will open out towards the road as opposed to sliding open but will be located far enough back that it will not interfere with the existing sidewalk or pedestrians on the sidewalk when open.

Michelle Emerick, Downtown Hershey Association, inquired how the gate will be opened during emergencies. In response, Ms. Hanna suggested that the owner could give the Township a key or a Knox Box could be utilized.

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Motion

Chairman Paioletti made a motion that the Downtown Core Design Board issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposal, with the condition that a key or lock box be provided to the Township for emergency access to the parking lot.

Member George seconded the motion but felt that the Police and Fire Departments should be consulted about their preference for emergency access to the lot.

Amended Motion

Chairman Paioletti made an amended motion that the Downtown Core Design Board issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposal, with the condition that there is consultation with the Police and Fire Departments to determine the best way to provide emergency access to the parking lot. Member George seconded the amended motion, which was passed by a unanimous vote.

B. Consideration of pergola over existing patio at 13 Para Avenue (Lloyd Morgan; DCDB 490)

Ron Woleslagle, Fontana Outdoors, represented the Morgans. The Morgans want to place a vinyl pergola over the patio that has been in place for many years. The purpose of the pergola is to provide shade since the large tree that used to be there was removed.

David Habig informed the Board that the existing patio is in the floodplain so DEP approval will be required.

Vice Chairman Zmuda asked if there are any plans for electric at the pergola site and Mr. Woleslagle replied that he was not aware of any plans for electric.

Chairman Paioletti confirmed with Mr. Habig that there is no issue with the proposed material for the pergola.

Motion

On a motion made by Member George, seconded by Member Fotos, and a unanimous vote, the Downtown Core Design Board issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposal, subject to the applicant obtaining the required DEP approval due to the existing patio being located in the floodplain.

C. Consideration of park improvements (pavilion, veterans memorial, landscaping, flag poles, benches) at 48 West Chocolate Avenue (Derry Township; DCDB 489)

Chuck Emerick from Derry Township presented the new veterans memorial and planned improvements at Chocolatetown Park. Mr. Emerick described the improvements to include sidewalk replacement and relocation away from the curb, retaining and protecting the large Catawba tree and the historic stone wall, and development of the new "Court of Honor"

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veterans memorial. The memorial will have an archway, three sizes of chestnut-colored pavers, and will feature plaques honoring Hershey's veterans. To accommodate the new memorial, the existing oval will become slightly smaller, and the pavilion will be relocated. To clarify, the first responder's memorial, the Courtyard of Honor, will be located closer to the firehouse. The sidewalks outside of the memorial area will be concrete, existing benches will remain, and any new benches will comply with the Downtown Core Design Standards. The string lights that were strung from trees will be more formally strung from posts. The former pavilion area will be restored to grass.

Vice Chairman Zmuda asked why this project is before the Downtown Core Design Board now, after the Board of Supervisors had already approved the plan and with the project almost completed. Mr. Emerick responded that Downtown Core Design Board approval is required prior to the building permit being issued. At this point the Board of Supervisors has paid for the pavilion, so they have already approved the project.

Member Fotos inquired if the open land across from the park on the other side of Cocoa Avenue is also Township property and if there are plans to develop it. Mr. Emerick responded that the land was sold to Hershey Trust Company, and he is not aware of any plans for development. Member Fotos then asked if there will be a water fountain in the park, to which Mr. Emerick replied no.

Chairman Paoletti asked if there will be an opportunity to name pavers, and Mr. Emerick said the Township had not moved in that direction. Chairman Paoletti noted the importance of this memorial, stating that people do not realize the amount of war heroes we have in Hershey.

Motion

On a motion made by Chairman Paoletti, seconded by Vice Chairman Zmuda, and a unanimous vote, the Downtown Core Design Board issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposal, as presented.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Zmuda, seconded by Member Patel, and a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

Jack Raudenbush, Secretary