



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
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Meeting Minutes - Final

Downtown Area Design Review

Thursday, November 10, 2016

4:30 PM

City Hall, Room 303

Call To Order

Chairman Christensen called the meeting to order at 4:40 p.m.

Members Present: Richard Christensen, Micah Waters, Ryan Rudie, Mike Rosiensi, Jeff Coe, Gary Wolfe, Amy Connolly

Members Excused: John Monefeldt

Also Present: Matt Sadowski (Assistant Director/Principal Planner)

Approval of Minutes for the September 13, 2016 Meeting

A motion was made by Alderman Coe, seconded by Director Connolly, to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2016 meeting. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

[0959-16](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) A review of designs submitted by Nathan Ward, representing Verizon Wireless Communications, for the placement of six rooftop telecommunication antennas at 201 Sixth Street, Dewey's Restaurant. (DC-16)

Nathan Ward representing Verizon Wireless stated he was present to provide any information the commission desired. Matt gave background of the project and noted that the state set more narrow parameters for review for cell towers and that they cannot deny the proposal on aesthetics alone due to it being a class 1 major upgrade to a co-existing structure.

Director Connolly questioned the applicability of such an interpretation due to there being no existing cell tower. Nathan responded that it applies to any major upgrade to a building. Amy was skeptical of this interpretation.

Assistant Director Sadowski brought up the question of other locations considered for the tower. Mr. Ward discussed at length the other locations considered including the YMCA building, Johnson Building, etc. Some buildings owners denied their request. The future longevity of the YMCA building brings into questions the justification of making such an investment. Other locations looked at were either too high, too low or were too obstructed for the equipment considered.

Ald. Coe asked about the building across from the Johnson building and Mr. Ward responded that it was too short and there was too much covering. Director Connolly asked about there being no supplied Coverage map. Nathan responded that providing coverage maps were not required but that he did provide a locational map.

Mr. Waters asked if the city was recommending approval. Assistant Director

Sadowski responded that they were with conditions of missing information to be provided including approval by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Mr. Ward said it was sent and brought it up on his computer for anyone to see this evening. Mr. Waters asked if any one opposed to its approval. Mr. Rudie questioned why this committee is involved if they cannot deny based on aesthetics were they discussing the location of the equipment?

Assistant Director Sadowski clarified that the facility cannot be denied based on aesthetics alone. He pointed out that Staff is not recommending denial but finds that the proposed design inadequate given the historic status of the building.

Alderman Coe voiced concern of this being a slippery slope with tech companies. Nathan re-assured that this would not set precedence all other major cell carriers were already represented downtown. Coe reinforced the aesthetics issue. Director Connolly also reinforced the issue of the aesthetics of the design and its compatibility with a historic structure. Mr. Ward stated they had looked at other aesthetic options through a long process and the one he was proposing at present was the one approved by SHPO. Assistant Director Sadowski clarified that SHPO does not approve of such project; they only indicate objection or non-objection.

There was confusion over which images in the packet provided were the plan currently being pitched. Mr. Wolfe questioned the support beams as necessary? He observed that they would be visible from distance. Assistant Director Sadowski also raised concern with inconsistencies with the dimensions of the parapet wall.

Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Rudie began to ask questions about the support structure shown on the plans with Mr. Ward to respond to the best of his abilities from images on his computer. Discussion ensued over the necessity of the proposed support structure to handle weight and wind load. Nathan reiterated that the SHPO office approved. Assistant Director Sadowski again clarified that SHPO did not object, which does not mean that they approve.

Mr. Rudie then brought up more concerns with inconsistencies in the plans provided between imagery and the actual drawings. Mr. Wolfe was concerned with this as well. Nathan showed greater detail from computer to discover it was 5x5 tube steel not I-beams. Mr. Wolfe questioned why not bevel the supports as well as cut the supports at angle or drop it into the space in the parapet. Could drop it a few inches to be less visible. Nathan stated a few inches on a 60' high structure is unreasonable.

Director Connolly questioned the approval from SHPO in that it was only section 106 review process citing there were no adverse effects stating that cannot be counted as approval. Mr. Ward stated that the statement from SHPO of "no adverse effects" was all that was needed, a statement that drew the disagreement of Director Connolly.

Director Connolly reopened discussion on the locations on the roof citing that the particularly bad appearance on the NE corner. Mr. Ward detailed the need for the structures to be pointed to the N, S, and SW. One must be on NE corner to get a proper angle to the N. Wall mounted Design was considered but Mr. Ward stated that they could not have façade mounted device too close to windows due to FCC regulations.

Assistant Director Sadowski questioned colors it was discussed and decided standard color would be best for the antenna. Upon further discussion of the color of tube steel on wall, Mr. Waters amended the motion to add that the tube steel be consistent to match the existing wall they will sit on.

A motion was made by Mr. Waters, seconded by Mr. Rudie, that the design with

the 5x5 tube steel be approved. The motion PASSED by a 3-2 Vote with Mr. Wolfe abstaining.

[0960-16](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) A review of designs submitted by Tracey Diehl for off-premises signage proposal at 25 Gaslight Drive (Gaslight Pointe Parking Garage) for the Double Tree Hotel at 223 Gaslight Circle. (DC-16)

The manager at Double Tree was representing Double Tree. Mike Maierle was present representing the Transit and Parking Commission. Assistant Director Sadowski gave the background for the project for a sign for Double Tree off property as approved by City Plan Commission and the Transit and Parking Commission. Mr. Rosiensi brought up a concern with the landscaping plan as provided it seemed out of date and would obstruct the visibility of the sign. The Double Tree Manager said providing an updated landscaping plan would be acceptable.

A motion was made by Mr. Rosiensi, seconded by Mr. Waters, to approve the design conditional on new landscape plan that can be approved administratively. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

[0961-16](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) A review of a façade remodeling project at 403 Sixth Street. (DC-16)

Todd Zehn was present to represent the project. Assistant Director Sadowski introduced the project and asked for information of what is under the crumbling façade and provided an example board. Mr. Zehn stated he did not know what was under the façade that was currently crumbling. There was discussion over the current façade. Mr. Waters asked if they would be receptive to the idea of a more appropriate material finish with this opportunity. Mr. Zehn said they would be open to it. Mr. Wolfe stated the current storefront windows were installed without approval but now with it the crumbling facade materials there is an opportunity to replace the failing façade material it all with something more appropriate. This idea was reinforced by Chairman Christensen and Mr. Waters. Alderman Coe suggested removing the current material seeing what is under it and offered to research what he can on what was originally in place and what a more appropriate solution would be.

A motion was made by Mr. Waters, seconded by Mr. Wolfe, to defer on both agenda items 0961-16 (façade design), and 0962-16 (façade grant). The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

[0962-16](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) A review of a façade grant request for a façade remodeling project at 403 Sixth Street. (DC-16)

See the discussion for item 0962-16

A motion was made by Mr. Waters, seconded by Mr. Wolfe, to defer on both agenda items 0961-16 (façade design), and 0962-16 (façade grant). The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned.