



City of Sebastopol
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APPROVED MINUTES

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 18, 2015

SEBASTOPOL CITY HALL
CONFERENCE ROOM
7120 BODEGA AVENUE
4:00 P.M.

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD:

The notice of the meeting was posted on November 12, 2015.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Luthin called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present:	Ted Luthin, Chair Cary Bush, Board Member Christine Level, Board Member Alexis Persinger, Board Member (departed at 5:11 P.M.) Bill Shortridge, Board Member
Absent:	Lynn Deedler, Vice Chair (excused)
Staff:	Jonathan Atkinson, Assistant Planner Nicole Billups, Interim Administrative Assistant

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 4, 2015

Board Member Level made a motion to approve the minutes as prepared.

Board Member Persinger seconded the motion.

AYES: Chair Luthin and Board Members Bush, Level, Persinger, and Shortridge

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

4. PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATES:

Assistant Planner Atkinson provided the following updates:

- The City will host an open house as part of the General Plan Update on Thursday, November 19, 2015 at the Sebastopol Center for the Arts (282 South High Street) at

6:00 P.M. The draft policies will be on display for public review and comments. City staff and the General Plan Update consultants will be available for questions.

- The next General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 9, 2015 at the Youth Annex (425 Morris Street) at 6:00 P.M. The GPAC will conduct a Policy Review of the draft General Plan.
- The City Council will review the Laguna Wetlands Preserve Management Plan on Tuesday, December 15, 2015 at the Youth Annex (425 Morris Street) at 6:00 P.M. The plan is available for review at City Hall and the City's website.
- The annual City Holiday Luncheon will take place Thursday, December 17, 2015 at Wischemann Hall (465 Morris Street) at 11:45 A.M. Any Board members interested in attending can RSVP with Reyna Ramirez at (707) 823-5331.

The Board asked a question of staff.

The Board recognized that this would be Interim Administrative Assistant, Nicole Billups' last meeting and thanked her for her work.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA: None

6. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: None

7. CONSENT CALENDER: None

8. REGULAR AGENDA:

A. MINOR SIGN REVIEW CONTINUATION – Whole Body (Project 2015-103) - Whole Body (Project 2015-103) - This is an application, submitted by Ad Art, requesting approval for a sign that was installed without a Sign Permit for Whole Body at 6960 McKinley Street.

Assistant Planner Atkinson presented the staff report.

The Board asked no questions of staff.

A representative of Ad Art gave a brief presentation and was available for questions.

The Board asked questions of the applicant.

Chair Luthin asked for comments from the Board.

Board Member Bush commented that he liked the sign before and found this proposal to be acceptable.

Board Member Shortridge commented that he liked the sign and could see it being used as a model for a future Sign Program.

Board Member Level commented that she was in agreement with Board Member Shortridge in that this could serve as a model for a future Sign Program. She added

that her concern at the last meeting was with the previously proposed internal illumination being inconsistent and expressed liking the sign as proposed.

Board Member Persinger expressed having no objections.

Chair Luthin agreed.

Board Member Level made a motion to approve the sign as submitted.

Board Member Bush seconded the motion.

AYES: Chair Luthin and Board Members Bush, Level, Persinger, and Shortridge

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

B. MAJOR SIGN REVIEW – The Ford Building (Project 2015-101) - This is an application, submitted by Huck Hensley, requesting approval of a sign program for The Ford Building at 6791 Sebastopol Avenue.

Assistant Planner Atkinson presented the staff report.

The Board asked questions of staff.

Jim Wheaton, representing Huck Hensley, gave a presentation and was available for questions.

Mr. Wheaton and Mr. Hensley asked questions of the Board and of staff.

The Board asked questions of Mr. Wheaton and Mr. Hensley.

Chair Luthin asked for comments from the Board.

Board Member Persinger commented that he agreed with staff's direction in that the proposal seemed like a good start, however, more information was needed.

Board Member Level commented that she liked the concept behind the proposed monument sign. Agreed that more information was needed before rendering a decision. Cautioned the applicant's to think through their building materials a little more closely. Would like to see some landscaping around the base of the sign; doing so would enhance the sign greatly.

Board Member Shortridge commented that he liked art deco. Interested in seeing what had been previously approved for the façade. In addition, he agreed with staff and his fellow board members that more information was needed.

Board Member Bush thanked the applicant's for bringing this application to the Board and complimented the improvements they'd made to the building. He commented that he'd love to see their sign be advantageous for their building first and then for their tenants. Visibility of the sign is key. The brand is the building itself.

Chair Luthin commented that he agreed with Board Member Bush in that the building is the monument sign. No sign will command as much attention as that building will. To not use the building, specifically the front and the two wing walls, as the sign would be a huge missed opportunity. This Board tends to be pretty liberal when it comes to signage, so long as it is good and creative. Doesn't think that signs with small shingles are effective. Really likes the improvements that have been done to the building. A sign program can totally alter and improve the business atmosphere of this building. The Board needs a lot of detail in order to approve a sign program.

Board Member Level commented that it is important to respect a businesses need for branding. Reiterated the sentiment that more information was needed.

Chair Luthin cautioned against the use of wood for signage.

Board Member Level agreed.

Chair Luthin stated that aluminum would be a better material to use.

Board Member Shortridge commented that the Board's comments were designed to help the applicant's produce a sign that will work.

After some back-and-forth with the applicant's, the Board summarized what they'd like to see when this application returns to the Board. Their comments included:

- The Board has given a lot of good, useful feedback with regards to what they'd like to see.
- A materials list that would apply to all signs can sometimes set the path for a consistent sign program.
- Front view, side view, materials, colors, dimensions, placement and details on lighting, if proposed, should be provided.

Board Member Persinger made a motion to accept the staff recommendation to continue review of the sign program to a future meeting.

Board Member Bush seconded the motion.

AYES: Chair Luthin and Board Members Bush, Level, Persinger, and Shortridge

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- A. DRAFT SEBASTOPOL DOWNTOWN DESIGN STANDARDS – A City Council subcommittee has drafted proposed Sebastopol Downtown Design Standards to set forth urban design requirements in the CD: Downtown Core District and a portion of the M: Industrial District. The Planning Commission provided comments on the draft at their October 13th and October 27th meetings. The Board is asked to initiate the process for its recommended version of developing the draft Standards for consideration by the City Council.**

Assistant Planner Atkinson presented the staff report.

The Board asked questions of staff.

Comments from the Board continued:

- There are a lot of inconsistencies.
- If we are going to establish standards they should be few and far between and very simplistic.
- The document is too long and has some organizational challenges.
- The document is both too restrictive and vague at the same time.
- This document is meant to foster design excellence, however, it's cumbersome and wordy and is difficult to follow.
- Concerned with not being able to apply the suggested standards.
- Appreciates the content and the hard work that had gone into it.
- Unable to support the document as drafted.
- Admires the lofty goals within the document.
- The document is too vague and onerous.
- With this document as drafted, the City would be setting itself up for constant requests for exemptions.

Chair Luthin suggested that the Board take a bit more time with the document by deferring further discussion of it to their next meeting.

The Board agreed.

Board Member Level asked if the Board agreed that the update of the General Plan should precede finalization of this document.

Chair Luthin agreed by commenting that the General Plan would likely have some policy changes that may inform this document.

Board Member Level commented that going through the document in the meantime would be a good idea.

The Board agreed.

Staff stated that no motion was needed.

10.REPORTS FROM THE BOARD/STAFF: (None)

11.ADJOURNMENT: Chair Luthin adjourned the meeting of the Design Review Board at 5:38 P.M. to the next Design Review Board meeting to be held December 2, 2015 at 4:00 P.M., at the Sebastopol City Hall, 7120 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol, CA.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Jonathan Atkinson
Assistant Planner