

**Tuesday, December 15, 2020
Virtual Platform
57 East 1st Street
4:30 PM**

A meeting of the Design Review Board was held by Virtual Platform at 4:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

*Chair Randy Carter
*Vice Chair Sean Banda
*Boardmember Scott Thomas
*Boardmember J. Seth Placko
*Boardmember Jeanette Knudsen
*Boardmember Tanner Green
*Boardmember Paul Johnson

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF PRESENT:

Nana Appiah
Lesley Davis
Tom Ellsworth
*Wahid Alam
Evan Balmer
Charlotte Bridges
Chloe Durfee-Sherman

OTHERS PRESENT:

(* indicates Boardmember or staff participated in the meeting using audio conference equipment)

Chair Carter welcomed everyone to the meeting at 4:31 PM

- 1 Call meeting to order.**
- 2 Consider the Minutes from the November 10, 2020 Design Review Board Meeting.**

A motion to approve the Minutes from November 10, 2020 Design Review Board Meeting was made by Vice Chair Banda and seconded by Boardmember Placko.

Vote: 7 – 0

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Carter – Banda – Thomas – Placko – Knudsen – Johnson – Green

NAYS – None

ABSENT – None

ABSTAINED – None

3 Presentation and discussion about the role of the Design Review Board.

Presentation by Nana Appiah, Planning Director and Rachel Prelog, Senior Planner

Comments:

Chair Carter

I would like to start with Dr. Appiah and Rachel, thank you for the presentations because I thought they were very succinct and right to the point. I have a question concerning Alternative Compliance. On some of the, well, I want to say most of the cases that we have reviewed at the Design Review Board I have found, are lacking in justification for Alternative Compliance to the Design Guidelines as you presented here. And I was wondering, is there any movement, that those might be treated in a more special manner? I do not know if it is voted upon, or in some other manner that they can justify the design that they have had, trying to justify the Alternative Compliance instead of the actual Design Guidelines. Now, I know that there have been some of the large tilt up slab warehouses that have come through that have been very nice and they have used that Alternative Compliance, but then there have been others. I'm thinking of a dermatology office or a dental office, I'm thinking of some others that we've seen, that really did not, in my opinion, meet any of the guidelines and anything that would give them a special treatment of Alternative Compliance. So, I'm wondering, is anything being done to help give us a better product for those.

Nana Appiah, Planning Director

Chair, members of the Board, that is actually a good point. One of the things that we have been working with the development community on as we get those proposals is to really make sure they conform to the Design Guidelines, as always, that is our first goal. But if there is any peculiar situation or circumstances where they need the Alternative Compliance, the ultimate goal for Alternative Compliance is for the alternative design to be superior to the base of what is required.

What we are pushing forward now is to make sure there is a thorough description of why they are proposing that alternative compliance and make sure they provide a justification of why what they have is superior to what would have been required. I am going to work with the Staff to make sure that whenever we come before the Design Review Board, we will not approve the Alternative Compliance, until we have done the meeting with the Design Review Board and we justify our recommendation of why we think we agree with the applicant and solicit

feedback from the Design Review Board, but I think it could be a good medium of discussing those recommendations before you.

But as you know, the Design Guidelines went into effect in February so some of these projects that may have come before you were just those that were initially submitted, or were part of it, were already in line, and probably had done a pre-submittal before the Design Guidelines going into effect so we were trying to find a hybrid. I think now that the Guidelines have been in effect, almost 10 months now, we are definitely pushing forward and making sure that projects that want to do Alternative Compliance meet the intent of that.

Chair Carter

All right, thank you, Dr. Appiah, the main reason I was asking was, if you all remember board members, the dental office they came across that was all stucco with a painted mural with marine stuff around it and they were trying for Alternative Compliance. In our role as a board, none of us felt that that even got close to any kind of, of Alternative Compliance. And so, I would like to ask for you all to investigate the possibility that on those cases where there is quite a bit of controversy that maybe we could see them a second time after they have gone through and shall we say repaired their design to be more in line with what you would consider as Alternative Compliance.

Nana Appiah

Chair, members of the Board, my recommendation to the Board is that we work with the applicants to try and meet the standards as much as possible. We have a complete package before you because then you can look at a whole complete package and give us a recommendation because of the time it takes to go back. To bring it back to you is a fairly long process as you only meet once a month and it tends to really prolong the meeting. My inclination is really work strongly with the applicants to make sure that when we come before you, we are almost close to perfection. If you have any recommendation of making a better process, then we can take that. But ultimately, if there is one that is way out of left field, and we need to really work together to bring it back, as you have seen happen a few times. I do not recommend that to be the normal process.

Chair Carter

Well, that is probably true. But I do think it is important for us to see even if it is just a quick PowerPoint of what happened on those without comments from the board. Board members, do you have comments for Dr. Appiah?

Vice Chair Banda

I want to piggyback off that Chair. It would be nice for those projects that we do have extreme comments on that we could just get a quick recap on maybe a

month or two later. But I know personally, I would love to see some of this stuff that we make comments on to see what the applicant does to resolve those with the staff.

Nana Appiah

Chair members of the board. That is actually the direction I've gotten from the Development Services Director, Christine Zielonka. Christine and I met with the Chair a couple of months ago and that was the direction Christine provided. We do that with the Historic Preservation Board and occasionally we do that with the Planning and Zoning Board. So, beginning next year, that is one of the things we're going to do whenever you give comments on projects when we finalize that we will bring the final products to show you what actually got approved every other month.

Boardmember Johnson

If I might just interject for a second. I think one thing that we need to be clear on is what is a binding comment? We are here to advise and hopefully better the design, but if we are throwing comments out there that are based on our professional judgment and our preference, not every one of those are intended to be a binding comment. Somehow somebody needs to be able to take that comment and decide if it is going to trigger a second review or if it is a comment just to take into consideration.

Chair Carter

Good point.

Vice Chair Banda

So, Chair, if I may? I guess my concern is with seeing the item if we had substantial number of comments. We do not say anymore. It is a complete redo. But some of these projects, in my opinion, should be a complete redo. Honestly, there are times when it really is something we should see again. Can we or should we be saying, this item really needs to be seen again? Because not everything can be addressed through staff. If it is that substantial. That is my opinion.

Chair Carter

Thank you. Who else would like to speak?

Boardmember Johnson

Well, I have a separate comment I would like to make regarding the guidelines themselves. I really think that a lot of effort has gone into developing these. And I think there is some really great things. I particularly like the areas where it was called the key elements sections, or it talks a little more abstractly about what

makes good design. I think we could do better at placing an emphasis on that section of the guidelines. That really characterizes what makes a good building, and where we get into specifics about moving the building in and out every 50 feet. I think what we have seen, from the Design Board standpoint, because we see a lot of projects are really just meeting the bare minimum when it comes to a prescriptive comment like that. And they are not focused on the real abstract kind of judgment, elements that actually have a greater impact on good design.

Chair Carter

I would agree with that, Paul. Paul and I have lived through other Design Review Cases in many other cities around. I have been in other areas and cities around the United States. It is a particularly picky and pithy problem to get good design and I think we, as a Boardmembers, have a responsibility per the Mayor, to do our very, very best to help the applicants create a building or a complex that will be a good asset to the City of Mesa that citizens can be proud of.

They may not say that directly, but they are certainly going to think it because I certainly get lots of comments about the bad stuff that they see out there. I do not know if you all have. Dr. Appiah, I hope that we can become a much more vibrant, progressive Design Review Board so we are not just looking at prescriptive architecture and trying to meet the very bare minimum of these things, but to give a much, better architectural menu to work with and I think those design guidelines that Rachel talked about, are a very, very good start. I've done projects under it, and they're difficult, but if you do it the right way, they create a much better product. Anyone have anything else before we move on to the cases?

Nana Appiah

Chair, I want to add a comment. I think the overall goal with a Design Review Board, the City Council, planning staff, Economic Development, and everybody else is to definitely work together to improve the urban form, and we all know that there is room to grow and improve. That is why Council actually also really pushed for the design guidelines. We need to be mindful of the whether the development going through the process is using those guidelines. And as much as yes, there is a prescriptive process, I think the goal is to create a predictable environment. It is unfair to the developer of the proposal, if they follow the Council approved guidelines, and then they come to the Design Review Board and have issues. So, I can tell you, the planning staff is very diligent on making sure their project meets all the requirements.

My recommendation is as much as we all want to make sure that every form is improved, we have to be mindful and be cognizant of those sometimes-arbitrary decisions. Board member Paul Johnson, I really acknowledge and appreciate

your comment that when we give the comments, we need to be precise. Then staff can actually work with a developer to really make sure those commands are addressed. We should always bear in mind the Zoning Ordinance requirements, the Design Guidelines, are things that developers always spend a lot of time going through to design their projects. We need to be mindful and respectful of that.

Chair Carter

Sometimes the staff works hard to get an applicant to do a project that is an asset to the city and they just do not comply. And we see a mess when it comes to us simply because there is no other alternative. Is there an opportunity to see these things maybe earlier in the process when staff is having difficulty with an applicant?

Nana Appiah

Chair, Boardmembers, we can look into that and see. As you know, there have been a few projects where we do sometimes initially recommend a study session with you before they are final product. but the goal is to make sure that we do not create a long review process. That is not to say we want to compromise quality. We definitely do not want to compromise quality, but we want to make sure that there is a balance between timeliness of the projects and quality all together. That is something that we all will have to continue to work on.

Chair Carter

Thank you, Board members, do we have any other questions or comments?

Vice Chair Banda

I have one comment for Rachel, about the design standards for industrial. I think as a recommendation, roof articulation every 100 feet makes sense. But when it comes to larger projects, scale wise, every 100 feet ends up having a kind of a waveform or it is moving a lot. These buildings are a quarter mile long or longer. Seeing that kind of articulation can be 26 roof movements in one building just on one side. I think I would rather have a meaningful roof articulation, especially on the larger scale buildings that make more sense. I think if we adhere to that it's great on a small-scale building but on a larger scale that doesn't necessarily work as well.

Senior Planner Prelog

Chair, Board member Banda I think that is a valid point. We can look into that and I know that has been one of the items that has come before for Alternative Compliance to try to address that. We will definitely look into that.

4 Receive an update and discuss the status of the City's Historic Design Guidelines and Zoning Ordinance Update with the project consultant.

Presentation given by The Lakota Group and the Historic Preservation Coordinator Arianna Urban

Comments:

Boardmember Green

I am curious about the engagement with residents. I know there was at least one meeting that I saw. I happen to live in one of the historic districts in the City of Mesa. I know there has been some communication with residents. I've seen some people out on streets doing photos. Are there additional ways for residents to be involved and how is that being communicated for residents to understand what these updates will be, what the preservation standards will look like and to provide feedback?

The Lakota Group

The one thing I did not mention is we do have a dedicated website for this project. That will be a platform where we will post draft documents, so that the public can access them. There will also be a survey that we're going to work with Arianna on, and distribute. That is going to be a digital survey so that we can get some more feedback on some key issues. In phase two, we'll do another series of stakeholder interviews to get some additional feedback. So those are going to be the primary ways in which we will gain some of that additional feedback.

Chair Carter

That is great. Thanks.

Arianna Urban

Chair Carter, members of the Board, if I may, we also have amassed a historic preservation mailing list with many, historic district residents and other interested advocates, parties, and stakeholders, from gathering their emails over the past year or so. That list has several 100 names on it. I would love to add yours. I'd love to hear if I can get your contact information and send you that too. We've also been distributing and mailing postcards in order to increase historic district resident's engagement as well.

Boardmember Green

That would be great. I appreciate that. I think maybe if I could just ask one other question somewhat related to this. I'm thinking from a resident perspective, but also thinking about the Design Guidelines and how we look at historic preservation. I guess the question that I have is around resources. Putting together resources for how to preserve certain items. For example, the construction technologies, the way that things were done, the processes that were used, at times when some of these buildings were built, have changed. So,

an example I think of, I have a son who happened to throw a ball through a window this last week and trying to find the skill set out there to fix such a window is difficult. I just simply have not been able to find any local resources for something like that. I think that that is just a question I would bring up in, as we're looking at these Design Guidelines, the intent to preserve is one thing but also the ability to actually preserve it through the processes or craftsmanship or workmanship is another. I guess I wonder is there something that has been incorporated into this from the City's perspective of how to assist residents if we want to preserve it? Or where can they go to find those?

Chair Carter

Thank you. Any other comments Board members? Then I would like to thank the Lakota Group for coming. It is late back there in Chicago and we appreciate it.

5 Discuss and provide direction on the following Preliminary Design Review cases:*

This is a preliminary review of Design Review Board cases. That applicant and public may speak about the case, and the Board may provide comments and suggestions to assist the Applicant with the proposal, but the Board will not approve or deny a case under Preliminary Review.

- 5-a DRB20-00575 District 3.** Within the 1300 block of South Gilbert Road (east side). Located south of Southern Avenue on the east side of Gilbert Road. (1.23± acres). Requesting the review of a restaurant with a drive-thru. Edin Coralic, Coralic Architecture, applicant; Global New Millennium Partners Ltd, owner.

Staff Planner Alam presented the case.

Chair Carter invited the applicant to speak.

Applicant Edin Coralic

- Thank you to everyone for working with us on our project
- We have gone through several reiterations to make sure to meet all standards and guidelines
- Popeye's has recently gone through an image update
- Just over 2,000 sq ft
- Design is unique as it has a regional training room which has represented a design challenge

Boardmember Johnson

- Likes the material palette
- Is the wood paneling only on the front pop out?
 - Yes. It is on the front canopy and wraps around the sides
- The wood paneling may not be needed

- Brick alone would be fine
- There does not appear to be any plan articulation or horizontal element
 - The brick runs horizontally and pops out
- Explore detailing with the brickwork
- Possibly soldier course over the windows and doors and add more authenticity to the brickwork

Boardmember Green

- No comment for the building
- Confirmed that the only landscaping that is staying is along the south side
- Confirmed that they are trying to blend in with the neighboring property's landscaping
- There are few trees along the north side or anywhere on the property
- There should be more landscaping

Boardmember Placko

- Likes the super wide landscape islands, which will help the trees.
- Concerned with amount of Turpentine Bush
- Should add other bushes so if the Turpentine Bush doesn't do well, still looks okay
- Concerned about the grass

Board member Placko leaves the meeting at 5:37PM

Boardmember Knudsen

- Likes the building and excited for Popeye's to come to the area
- Asked about the gray
- Is most of the building going to be painted in the white color
 - Yes, the gray was originally supposed to be used as the second EIFS color but will not be used
- That is good, the gray is a blue gray and will not blend well with the rest of the colors

Boardmember Thomas

- Previous Popeye's have had larger awning
- Especially in the summer, larger awning would be nicer

Vice Chair Banda

- Soldier course over the windows and doors
- Soldier course would really read well over the rest of the elevations

- Entrance is not very clear
- Like building
- Like color

Chair Carter

- Concerned about south elevation near the entrance
- Noted if the sign were removed the elevation would be very plain
- Suggests pulling out the exterior wall to the north near the training room to give it more definition
- The north elevation will be seen a lot

Staffmember Alam

- They may have to request a Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) for their signage if it exceeds code

Staffmember Alam Summarized

- Look at modifying the exterior wall at the training room to provide more definition
- Use the brick soldier course over the windows and doors
- Work on the main entrance on the south elevation to make it “more noticeable”
- Incorporate another plant material and reduce amount of Turpentine Bush
- See if drive thru canopy can be enhanced with a deeper canopy

Vice Chair Banda

- Appreciates the applicant’s attention to lighting

5-b

DRB20-00654 District 6. Within the 7200 through 7500 blocks of East Ray Road (south side). Located east of Power Road on the south side of Ray Road. (11.7± acres). Requesting the review of an industrial development. Wesley Balmer, Applicant; GTCC Ventures LLC, Owner.

Staff Planner McCann presented the case.

Chair Carter invited the applicant to speak.

Applicant Wesley Balmer

- They considered the whole building to create a comprehensive building design
- We think it is a very attractive design even though it is not following all of the City of Mesa Design Guidelines

Vice Chair Banda

- There is meaningful articulation along the roof line
- Combine the two center gray panels in the back to also reflect the front elevation

Boardmember Thomas

- The landscaping buffer impressed him
- Front is very plain
- Could step up the center
- Not a fan of the white rollup doors and they could be painted to blend in
- The rollup doors will be visible from the economy parking lot of the airport

Boardmember Johnson

- My comments have been raised by other Boardmembers
- This is an articulated building form and not just facade
- Parapets look like they are moving up and down when they are really just moving in and out

Boardmember Green

- Appreciate the building
- The moving in and out helps complement the design
- Agrees the south elevation will be visible

Boardmember Knudsen

- Appreciates the building
- Color selection is nicely done
- Confirmed the greys are green greys and warm not cold and blue

Chair Carter

- South elevation needs articulation and will be seen

Staffmember McCann summarized

- South elevation needs more detail
- Reflect the north side
- Paint the rollup doors
- Consider stepping up the elevations in some areas

5-c

DRB20-00685 District 3. Within 2000 to 2300 blocks of West Southern Avenue (South side) and within the 1200 to 1600 blocks of South Dobson Road (West side). Located west of Dobson Road and south of Southern Avenue. (76± acres). Requesting the review of an addition to an existing medical campus. Tracy Lauer, Applicant; Banner Health System, Owner.

Boardmember Johnson recused himself from discussion on this case due to a conflict.

Staff Planner McCann presented the case.

Chair Carter invited the applicant to speak.

Applicant Tracy Lauer

- Design ties into the children's hospital
- Introducing the Banner corporate brand
- Asking for alternative compliance for several reasons
- This project is a vertical expansion and will only touch the ground a small amount
Type of construction is 90% of the skin panels that are pre-manufactured
- This will reduce timing with 30 days of crane use to put in
- Increases safety
- Providing a covered play area in place of the current play area

Boardmember Knudsen

- Liked sample board
- Likes the building

Boardmember Green

- Likes the building
- There are several different 3D movements
- Consider adding some more 3D elements but not necessary

Boardmember Thomas

- Really likes the building
- Likes the new Banner look
- Likes the sandstone
- Likes the prefab panels, will help construction move quickly
- Like the tie in from other Banner locations

Vice Chair Banda

- Location is very interesting because of the Children's hospital
- Different architecture forms and forcing them together
- Blending the different forms can be difficult
- West elevation has the opportunity to create more interest
- So many moving points and planes that it doesn't really blend well
- Good attempt to blend, but could be done even better
- There are two different forms of architecture
- Landscaping is limited and any trees that have been pulled out

need to be replaced

Chair Carter

- Good addition
- No problem with the diversity of architectural forms
- Might be good to add some color for interest
- Supports revegetation
- Feels bleak without landscaping

Staffmember McCann summarized

- Look to bring in 3D elements for interest
- West elevation could use color or canopy
- Replace landscaping

- 5-d DRB20-00697 District 3.** Within the 100 block of South Dobson Road (west side). Located south of Main Street on the west side of Dobson Road. (2.5± acres). Requesting the review of a multi-tenant commercial building. Rick Daugherty, 3rd Story Architecture; WJC LLC, owner. **(Continued to the January 12, 2021 meeting).**

Staff Planner: Cassidy Welch

- 5-e DRB20-00703 District 6.** Within the 4800 to 5000 blocks of South Ellsworth Road (west side). Located on the west side of Ellsworth Road north of Ray Road. (46.5± acres). Requesting the review of an industrial development. Glenn Hurd, Applicant; Sunbelt Land Holdings LP, owner.

Staff Planner Balmer presented the case.

Chair Carter invited the applicant to speak.

Applicant Rick Butler

- Worked closely with Staffmember Balmer and the rest of the city of staff
- Made several changes

Boardmember Thomas

- Wish there were some color in the design
- Seems very plain
- Wants color to make the buildings pop and draw attention
- Want the roll up doors to be painted to blend in
- Hard to read the articulating roof line with plan colors

Boardmember Knudsen

- Likes the building

- Questioned the selection of the color the “Silver Spoon”?
 - The zoning case from Mesa Ray didn’t have Silver Spoon on the approved color pallet, but it was always planned for
- The existing color palette is very warm
- The silver spoon is a blue gray and cooler tone
- Doesn’t blend well
- Recommends a green toned gray
- Worried that blue gray will fight with the warm colors
- Careful of the Silver Spoon and paint it on a large board and take it outside
 - We are confident it won’t be too blue
 - It will be a warm gray

Boardmember Johnson

- Like the repetition of the vertical windows
- Like the entry and the time spent on it
- Agrees with the warning of getting too cool with the colors
- The vines on the building should hopefully help with the monochromatic color palette
- From the freeway there is great exposure of the building
- Building 3 exposes the worst side of the building
- Encourages looking at the southwest corner of the building and incorporate the architectural treatment to that area

Boardmember Green

- For building 3 and 5, be aware of their design and how they are built out
- The lighting on this kind of a building is critical as is the landscaping
- What is the treatment on the expose steel?
 - Black beam
- Make sure to keep the warm color palette
- Lighting will help with articulation
- Lighting and landscape need to help accentuate the building

Vice Chair Banda

- Good attention to details and verticality with windows
- Lighting addressed
- Use low lighting for the trail that runs through
- 4000 Kelvin will possibly have an interesting effect on the gray vs. 3500 Kelvin and wondered if it would warm or cool the gray
- Likes the attention to detail on buildings
- Accepts the alternative compliance
- Should look at more articulation on south elevation

Chair Carter

- No further comments
- Agree with other comments already stated

Staffmember Balmer summarized

- Provide additional colors/accent colors
- Paint rollup doors
- Look for warmer gray with green undertone
- Building 3 needs to be looked at in the future
- Minimum lighting 3500 Kelvin
- More bollard lighting on trail
- Color blocking needs work

Boardmember Knudsen

- When looking at the grays, look at all three as they are all cool grays. If you change one, it may affect the other two

Staffmember Balmer

- Looking for direction on adding Silver Spoon to the Mesa Ray color palette

Boardmember Knudsen

- Does not agree that those three grays will play nicely with the existing Mesa Ray color palette

Vice Chair Banda

- 3500 Kelvin lighting will provide a warmer gray

Chair Carter

- Split feeling on adding gray to Mesa Ray and will leave it to the applicant and staff

5-f DRB20-00707 District 1. Within the 1100 block of North Dobson Road (east side). Located north of Rio Salado Parkway on the east side of Dobson. (1± acres). Requesting the review of a restaurant with a drive-thru. Steven Albrecht, PM Design Inc., applicant; Sachs Ranch Co. LLC/Hurley Land Co. LLC, owner. **(Continued to the January 12, 2021 meeting)**

Staff Planner: Kellie Rorex

6 Discuss and take action on the following Design Review cases: None

7 Planning Director Update:

7-a Ongoing Projects.

8 Adjournment

Vice Chair Banda moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Boardmember Knudsen. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 PM.