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## **APPROVED MINUTES**

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL  
MINUTES OF April 19, 2017

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

### **DESIGN REVIEW BOARD:**

The notice of the meeting was posted on April 13, 2017.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Luthin called the meeting to order at 4:01 P.M.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

<b>Present:</b>	Ted Luthin, Chair Lynn Deedler, Board Member Gregory Beale, Board Member Lars Langberg, Board Member
<b>Absent:</b>	Cary Bush, Vice Chair (excused) Christine Level, Board Member (excused)
<b>Staff:</b>	Dana Morrison, Assistant Planner Rebecca Mansour, Planning Technician

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** January 18, 2017

Board Member Deedler made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted.

Board Member Langberg seconded the motion.

AYES: Board Members Deedler and Langberg  
NOES: None  
ABSTAIN: Chair Luthin and Board Member Beale

**4. PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATES:**

Staff updated the Board on the following:

- The first round of Zoning Ordinance updates were recently approved by the City Council.
- The City Council formed a Housing Subcommittee to discuss affordable housing and related topics, meetings are underway.

The Board asked questions of staff.

**5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA:** There were none.

**6. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** There were none.

**7. CONSENT CALENDER:** There were none.

**8. REGULAR AGENDA:**

**A. MAJOR DESIGN REVIEW:** This is an application for a project located at 7203 Bodega Avenue. The applicant is looking to add a second story to the existing 1-story building. The proposed second story will contain a single residential unit which will convert the existing building to mixed-use. One of the existing office tenant spaces, located on the ground floor, is proposed to be converted into the entrance to the residential suite with a guest suite, or den/office space. The remaining section of the ground floor will consist of 4 office tenant spaces. The redesign includes the addition of a residential elevator which will lead to the residential unit and the roof top deck.

Assistant Planner Morrison presented the staff report and was available for questions.

The Board asked questions of staff and the applicant.

The applicant, Paul Fritz, gave a presentation and was available for questions.

The Board asked additional questions of Mr. Fritz.

Chair Luthin asked if members of the public wished to speak on this item.

Hearing none, Chair Luthin closed the public comment period and brought it back to the Board for discussion.

Board Member Langberg commented:

- Overall this is a very handsome looking building.
- This feels like it wants to be adaptable for future apartments so the idea of having it as a single family residence is an interesting one.
- Like the look of the building a lot.
- The materials are nice.
- The upper façade facing Bodega Avenue, adjacent to the tower, might be nice with more openings. The same could be good for the cedar volume behind it.
- The cedar itself gives it scale.
- The back side that faces the parking lot feels blank as well.
- With privacy being less of an issue at the back corner, the railing, as it heads to the west, could be a more open railing as it wraps the corner so it's not just solid all the way back.
- Encouraged looking for other opportunities to add scale to the building.
- It is nice to have contrast.
- The reveal detail, from first floor to second floor, works well. The same could be done between the stucco and the cedar to add a level of detail to the verticality of the building.
- The massing feels very much in keeping with what is already there.
- The façade will feel very nice and varied as you walk around it.
- The tower is awesome, glad it is there.
- Expressed being all for adding density anywhere in the center of town.

Board Member Deedler commented:

- Introduced a handout that staff had provided to the Board prior to the start of the meeting, on his behalf.
- The existing building is very attractive and prominently located. It is a classic art deco building and is prized in this town.
- The proposed building seems incoherent, awkward and feels like it was designed from the inside out.
- The Board has a job, and that is to evaluate the outside of the building.
- Strong elements characteristic of streamline moderne and art deco are horizontal lines used to break up masses. This project needs horizontal elements.
- Wood siding is not a characteristic of streamline moderne or art deco architecture.
- Two stated goals in the staff report are, wood siding to make it look more modern and preserving the classic architecture. Those are in conflict with one another.
- This does not look like streamline modern architecture. It looks like a hodge-podge.
- Expressed being in agreement with most of Board Member Langberg's comments about the windows and about some of the walls being a little blank.
- Some of the windows, particularly on the lower eastern edge, look very small for such a massive wall. The proportion is very unattractive.
- Likes the idea of the tower but it is floating unattached from the rest of the building and that is a visual and artistic problem.
- This building needs major work before it can be an attractive place for this very featured location in town.

Board Member Beale commented:

- The design is very interesting.
- Appreciates the level of detail in the renderings.
- The massing at the northwest corner feels top-heavy.
- Understands privacy needs.
- Like Board Member Deedler, but in a different way, has a hard time relating the result of this design to streamline moderne or art deco.
- The attempt of this architecture does not seem to be either streamline moderne or art deco, rather it is inspired by them.
- The existing structure has limitations.
- This project is eclectic in the way it blends the old and the new.
- The existing building is very unique.
- Suggested connecting the two small balconies facing easterly. Connecting them could provide a covered entry for the lower level and may give the building a more horizontal feel there.
- This will be a big improvement for this property.
- While he understands the reasons why, he agreed on it being odd to have a single-family residence there.
- Overall likes the design.
- The most important presentation of this property is heading west on Bodega and that is the most attractive elevation with the most dimension and features to it.

Chair Luthin commented:

- Really likes it.
- The massing is really interesting, especially the northeast facing corner and the whole east side.
- Thinks that the house will be really nice and will have a really cool feel.

- Agreed on this seeming to be an odd place for such a large single-family home, however, we may be seeing more of this type of thing because people want to live in the center of town. This may mark the beginning of something really interesting.
- It is great that somebody wants to make this type of investment here.
- Mr. Fritz's statement that this architecture uses the streamline moderne style of the original as a point of departure for a contemporary addition sums up the vision for this very nicely.
- The proposed is a contemporary building.
- This type of development can be found elsewhere.
- Reiterated that he really likes it and that he thinks that the massing will be really interesting.
- The north elevation at the butler's pantry needs some work.

The Board asked additional questions of Mr. Fritz.

Board Member Langberg referred to a drawing from the handout that was provided by Board Member Deedler and commented that horizontal jettying could be added, in place of additional windows.

Chair Luthin comments continued:

- Expressed not being bothered by the small window on the cedar wall in the back area facing the residents.
- Expressed not being bothered by the back area facing the parking lot either.

The Board asked additional questions of Mr. Fritz.

In response to some of the comments he had heard, Mr. Fritz commented that the cedar could be brought down below the floor line on the south wall with the two smaller windows.

Chair Luthin commented that that could help.

Board Member Deedler commented:

- If this is contemporary, pretty much of the rest of downtown Sebastopol is not.
- This is a whole new kind of architecture for our downtown.
- Personal tastes may think that this is cool, but in representing the community, we need to ensure that this will fit in with our town.
- Allowing this would be a little out of place for our town.

Board Member Langberg commented:

- Board Member Deedler brought this up for the Hotel Sebastopol project in a very public way and the response from the architect of that project to him was so telling.
- There is no downtown style, there is a huge mixture of styles in our downtown.

Chair Luthin commented:

- Spoke on the varying styles in our downtown.

Board Member Deedler responded to Board Member Langberg as follows:

- You can cherry pick images to show our community how diverse our architecture is.
- Becoming too diverse will result in there being no theme, nothing to tie together.

- If you look hard enough there are themes and common elements to the architecture in Sebastopol.
- We can focus on the diversity, or we can focus on what blends with what we already have.

Chair Luthin commented:

- Did not believe that a 2-story streamline moderne building would fit any better than a 2-story contemporary building.
- Streamline moderne does not fit in the mold of what Board Member Deedler is talking about.

Board Member Deedler commented:

- In a general sense, Chair Luthin's comments are absolutely true.

Chair Luthin commented:

- Board Member Deedler is saying that the contemporary style of architecture is not compatible with the town.

Board Member Deedler agreed and added:

- Expressed having trouble with the massiveness of the walls that are dominated by the decks that have parapets that create unusual masses.
- Expressed having an issue with the combination of horizontal and vertical lines that do not have any identity one way or the other.

Chair Luthin asked if the Board was leaning toward a continuance.

Board Member Langberg commented that the Board has made a number of pretty minor suggestions for the applicant to consider and noted that he did not feel the need to continue this application.

Board Member Beale commented:

- Agreed with Board Member Langberg.
- The existing building is very unattractive.
- There is no shortcut way of improving this property without going big with the project.
- We have an applicant who is potentially going to be spending a lot of money on this property.
- This project is consistent with the influence that the City wants to have as far as density and promoting residence above commercial space.
- This is a great design given the restrictions of the existing style and layout.
- This will be a huge improvement over what is there now.

Chair Luthin commented:

- Agreed with Board Member Beale.
- Reiterated that it is awesome that somebody is willing to make this type of investment here.
- Did not feel compelled to continue this application.

Board Member Langberg made a motion to approve the application as presented with the comments of the Board being noted for the applicant's consideration.

Board Member Beale seconded the motion.

Board Member Beale commented:

- The reason he was asking so many structural questions was out of a concern over teetering on the edge of remodel or rebuild.
- Hopes that an engineer can make it work without requiring the modification of the lower walls which would then trigger modification of the commercial spaces.

Chair Luthin asked for further discussion. Hearing none, the Board voted on the motion as follows:

AYES: Chair Luthin and Board Members Langberg and Beale

NOES: Board Member Deedler

ABSTAIN: None

## **9. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **A. Designation of liaison to Public Arts Committee.**

The Board asked questions of staff.

Board Member Deedler expressed an interest in serving on the Public Arts Committee.

Chair Luthin nominated Board Member Deedler to serve as the liaison.

Board Member Langberg asked a question of Board Member Deedler.

Board Member Beale seconded the nomination.

The Board voted on the nomination as follows:

AYES: Chair Luthin and Board Members Langberg, Beale and Deedler

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

### **B. Portable Sign Policy**

Assistant Planner Morrison presented the staff report and was available for questions.

The Board asked questions of staff.

Board Member Langberg questioned the effectiveness of sandwich board signs.

Chair Luthin responded:

- Has not heard of a study about their effectiveness.
- Thinks that they make the business owner feel good, more than they actually do anything.
- Pedestrian wayfinding systems, like in Healdsburg and Sonoma, may be effective in certain areas.
- Pedestrian wayfinding systems may not stop sandwich board signs though.
- The Board has discussed this previously and their motivation level to change anything has been pretty low.
- Even if we prohibit them, they will still show up.

Board Member Deedler commented:

- This is not something worth spending much time on.
- Some of them look tacky and dirty.
- Would like to include language in the ordinance about them being clean and bright in appearance.

Board Member Langberg added that they should also be well maintained.

The Board agreed.

The Board asked questions of staff.

Board Member Deedler commented:

- Has only ever seen two sandwich board signs in town that were effective. One was Coffee Catz, the other West County Cycle Service.
- While effective, the West County Cycle Service sign is out of compliance because it includes a sculpture.

Board Member Beale commented:

- Most of the sandwich board signs that he has seen are not attractive.
- Likes the Coffee Catz sandwich board sign.

Chair Luthin commented:

- Does not love sandwich board signs.
- A sign permit should continue to be required to allow the City authority when needed.

Board Member Beale commented:

- It could be good to place some kind of indicator on the sign, like a sticker, once a permit has been issued.

The Board agreed.

Board Member Langberg commented that businesses should not be allowed more than one sandwich board sign.

The Board agreed.

The Board asked questions of staff.

The Board expressed being okay with the sandwich board sign regulations otherwise.

## **10. REPORTS FROM THE BOARD/STAFF:**

Board Member Deedler asked to hear from the Board on what they like and don't like about art in Sebastopol.

The Board discussed local art.

**11. ADJOURNMENT:** Chair Luthin adjourned the meeting of the Design Review Board at 5:40 p.m. to the next Design Review Board meeting to be held May 03, 2017 at 4:00 p.m., at the Sebastopol City Hall, 7120 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol, CA.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Dana Morrison  
Assistant Planner