



MEETING MINUTES

Planning & Zoning Commission

Thursday, November 9, 2017

AGENDA

- 1. PCD Tuttle Crossing West Corridor – Motel 6 5550 & 5570 Tuttle Crossing Boulevard
17-072FDP Final Development Plan (Disapproved 7 – 0)**
- 2. BSD SCN - Infiniti 3890 Tuller Road
17-085CU Conditional Use (Approved 7 – 0)**
- 3. BSD SRN Bridge Park, Blocks A, B, & C – Amendments to the MSP Riverside Drive
17-107MSP Master Sign Plan (Approved 7 – 0)**

The Chair, Victoria Newell, called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Other Commission members present were: Steve Stidhem, Cathy De Rosa, Deborah Mitchell, Bob Miller, Amy Salay, and Warren Fishman. City representatives present were: Claudia Husak, Vince Papsidero, Phil Hartmann, Logan Stang, Nichole Martin, Mayor Greg Peterson, and Laurie Wright.

Administrative Business

Victoria Newell, The Chair, introduced Mayor Greg Peterson to swear in Mr. Warren Fishman as he was appointed by City Council. Mayor Peterson performed the Oath of Office for Mr. Fishman.

Ms. Newell congratulated Cathy De Rosa for being elected to City Council, starting in January.

Motion and Vote

Mr. Stidhem moved, Ms. Salay seconded, to accept the documents into the record. The vote was as follows: Ms. De Rosa, yes; Mr. Miller, yes; Ms. Mitchell, yes; Mr. Fishman, yes; Ms. Newell, yes; Ms. Salay, yes; and Mr. Stidhem, yes. (Approved 7 - 0)

Motion and Vote

Mr. Stidhem moved, Ms. Mitchell seconded, to approve the revised 2018/2019 proposed meeting dates. The vote was as follows: Mr. Fishman, yes; Ms. Newell, yes; Ms. Salay, yes; Ms. De Rosa, yes; Mr. Miller, yes; Ms. Mitchell, yes; and Mr. Stidhem, yes. (Approved 7 - 0)

The Chair explained the rules and procedures of the Planning and Zoning Commission. She stated all three cases are eligible for the Consent Agenda and may be approved by consent. The Chair determined that all cases be pulled from the Consent Agenda to be heard in their entirety in the order they were published.



**1. PCD Tuttle Crossing West Corridor – Motel 6 5550 & 5570 Tuttle Crossing Boulevard
17-072FDP Final Development Plan**

The Chair, Victoria Newell, said the following application is a proposal for a three-story, 42,000-square-foot hotel with 100 guest rooms for an approximately 2.8-acre parcel in the Tuttle Crossing West Corridor Planned Commerce District. She said the site is north of Tuttle Crossing Boulevard, approximately 1,500 feet west of the intersection with Emerald Parkway. She said this request is for a review and approval of a Final Development Plan under the provisions of Zoning Code Section 153.050.

The Chair swore in anyone intending to address the Commission on this case.

Logan Stang reported this case was first reviewed at the August 24th PZC meeting and again at the September 21st PZC meeting. During the meetings, he said, the Commission expressed concerns regarding the proposed building materials, overall architectural character, and a number of conditional approval items. He stated the Commission had recommended the applicant look at alternative site layouts with the building shifted to the east and that they refine the architecture to correspond to the existing character established by the properties to the east.

An aerial view of the site was presented as well as the proposed site plan. Mr. Stang said the applicant has kept the site layout as reviewed previously with the building located on the western edge and parking oriented towards the center of the site. He said the proposal is consistent with the requirements of the development text and provides sufficient landscaping to buffer the perimeter of the site.

To provide some context, Mr. Stang presented some photos of the existing development character for Extended Stay America and the Holiday Inn Express to provide examples of how these regulations have been met with other proposals.

Mr. Stang presented the proposed elevations from the meeting on September 21, 2017, to show the architecture included stone on the ground story with gable features to separate the masses of the building. A 'Mahogany' fiber cement siding was shown in brown, he noted, with the remainder of the building clad in a tan fiber cement siding.

Mr. Stang indicated the applicant refined the architecture to extend stone from the ground story to the upper stories and has replaced the 'Mahogany' fiber cement siding with brick accents. He said details have been provided for the architectural features and a sample board of the exterior materials is available for review.

The applicant has provided a ground sign design, which Mr. Stang presented for the entry feature; however, he stated the proposal does not meet the requirements of the development text as the character is not in keeping with the existing development. He reported staff has added a condition of approval that the applicant revise the sign to meet the requirements of the development text and revise the design to create a more consistent character with the development to the east, subject to staff approval.

Based on the Final Development criteria, he reported, staff is recommending approval with two conditions:

- 1) That the applicant pay a tree replacement fee for outstanding caliper inches prior to filing for building permits; and
- 2) That the applicant revise the ground sign to meet the requirements of the development text and provide a design that is in keeping with the character established by the existing adjacent developments, subject to staff approval, prior to filing for sign permits.

Mr. Stang reported that staff held a public meeting the night before with the residents of the Tuttle Crossing Corridor to discuss the development character of that area. He said discussions revolved around existing zoning and development applications, such as this case, along with the Community Plan recommendations for the area. That concluded his presentation and he stated he was available for questions.

Victoria Newell inquired about the ground sign. She asked how staff anticipates it will be modified to meet the requirements of the text. Mr. Stang answered the height needs to be lowered and both of the logos proposed for the design exceed what is permitted by Code so those cabinets would need to be decreased in addition to reworking the overall design.

The Chair invited the applicant to come forward.

Greg Briya, Moody Nolan, 300 Spruce Street, Columbus, Ohio, 43215, presented the development standards and highlighted several to explain the changes they have made to meet those standards. He presented an exhibit to show building movement and rotation and shape of building. He explained the existing hotels and their properties are quite large, which dictates the L-shape of those buildings. He said the position of the hotel is important because when they go to a front service lot, it serves as a safety feature by keeping the lot nice and open. He pointed out there is almost 50 feet of buffer space provided by vegetation. He reported they met with the Fire Marshal and he is comfortable with the fire apparatus maneuverability.

Mr. Briya presented a colored landscape plan that shows a lot of trees, perennials, annuals, and ornamental shrubs. A photometric plan was presented to show the light levels on the site and he noted the zero foot candles on the residential side and how the light overall was contained within the site.

Before and after elevations were presented to show the amount of work the applicant has put in toward changes to make everyone happy. Mr. Briya said they considered the L-shaped plan and flipping the building but did not gain any value. He highlighted the final elevation and noted the amount of brick elements and a decorative truss that replaced the flat canopy. He said they had some black out windows previously and changed those to vision glass. He indicated they are definitely willing to work with staff on the sign as this was the first draft.

Bob Miller complimented Mr. Briya on an outstanding presentation. He said one of the problems the Commission had was that the building looked like an aircraft carrier. He said the visuals for the hotels next door were very helpful but the massing of the building continues to be a problem as well as the location. He asked why the west positioning of the building is so important. Mr. Briya answered they have the detention going in the corner so when the building is flipped, it causes challenges to the parking lot layout and drainage. He said they also tried to bump the building over as much as possible but then it was outside the property line. He said they were facing constraints for what Washington Township Fire needed for drive aisles and maneuverability.

Mr. Briya said there were renderings to demonstrate how the hotel does not appear as a battleship like it may have originally. He explained that was achieved by bumping facades out and changing materiality, which made a big difference to relief. He concluded, they thought that was the way to attack it while maintaining the same site plan.

Cathy De Rosa asked for confirmation that when they moved the building they were short parking spaces. Mr. Briya stated they would be 10 parking spaces short of the requirements, overall.

Ms. De Rosa asked for an explanation for why the L-shape was not an option. Mr. Briya restated that if they were to break the shape of the building down to an L-shape the parking lot layout would be a problem for fire access. He reiterated that an L-shape would not provide any value. Ms. De Rosa

indicated she did not understand why Washington Township would be fine with the L-shape for the other two hotels and not this one. Mr. Briya restated the other two buildings are on lots larger in size and they still had to deal with the stream behind so that was the only place for a detention pond. He summarized, with an L-shape they could only get three of the four pieces to work together.

Ms. Newell asked if the detention area was all above grade. Mr. Briya answered the detention area is proposed to be below grade. She suggested stormwater could also be managed under the pavement. She confirmed that the applicant is using part of the green space for detention above grade as opposed to expanding detention below grade, to which Mr. Briya agreed was the plan.

Ms. De Rosa went back to the first comment about flipping the building to the other side. Mr. Briya restated they would be at least ten parking spaces short.

Steve Stidhem asked if shifting the building to the other side would increase the light pollution to the west, which Mr. Briya answered affirmatively.

The Chair called for public comment.

Linda Childs, 5382 Crossing Lane, indicated the applicant is using the document not linked to the City's website and the document is still in effect from 1995 before most of the homes adjacent to the property were built. She said the applicant may have upped their plan from the requirements 25 years ago but they do not mesh with the Southwest Area Plan. She said these properties were meant to provide for the transition from regional nature to local, and a Motel 6 is not local; it is a legal use of that property but it is not serving local uses. She indicated that in order to maintain real estate values, the quality and type of development should be controlled with standards and be as restrictive as possible.

Ms. Childs noted the wall facing the west is only going to be 15 feet from the existing residential home next door. She said if this hotel is filled to capacity, there will be 300 – 400 people staying with 100 cars for 100 rooms. She said she disagrees with the assessment that lighting is better for the west.

Ms. Childs said she did not hear the word "impossible" when alternative layouts were suggested, she just heard "no".

Ms. Childs said this property is in Dublin and serves as an entrance to Dublin; the nail salon and tire place are in Columbus, where there is more crime. On a personal level, she said, she is concerned about traffic as well. She said she would prefer to see more low-impact businesses go in there. She concluded if they are permitted to build this Motel 6 and it is going to look as proposed, it needs to be moved over. She added that she has noted the Commission's request for changes and hopes that they stick by those.

Dianne Kennedy, 5854 Lochbury Lane in the Villages of Tuttle Crossing, said Motel 6 is not only a joke for those in Dublin but it is also nationwide. She said the neighbors have said they do not want Motel 6 there. She said companies are not looking for the cheapest place to stay for their employees. She said even though the applicant has made changes, they are still trying to put a Motel 6 in Dublin. She indicated Worthington, New Albany, and everybody else will start laughing about it.

Ms. Kennedy thanked Claudia Husak and Logan Stang for the presentation they gave the day before for her area.

Kate Bremer, 5361 Crossing Lane, said her concern is with the placement of the building and there being less lighting in the back because as a mom, she is afraid things will happen where areas are not well lit because the building is obscured by a lot of trees. She concluded Motel 6 is not the most reputable hotel chain.

Sam Stille, 5590 Tuttle Crossing Boulevard, said he is the neighbor directly next door to the proposed hotel. He indicated he wished Dublin would consider what is in the plan because this does not fit. He asked the Commission to consider future use of his property to the west as well as this property. He stated the lighting from the existing hotel shines right into their bedroom window now and this proposal will be considerably closer. He suggested the lighting be shadowed, covered somewhat, and aimed directly at its target. He said he would prefer to see offices for doctors and lawyers in the back that would have rear entries. He indicated there will be a significant amount of traffic with this but hopes the roundabout planned for Wilcox will at least slow down the traffic.

Mr. Stille said he has been a resident of Dublin for 30 years and asked how long the Commissioners have been residents of Dublin. In that time, he noted, they must have seen a lot of changes. He said he was told he would never see a building in Dublin over three stories high. He brought up noise pollution and how this development will not quiet the area. He said there are trees and hedges but not sure they will do a whole lot to diminish noise.

Mr. Briya said the Juniper hedge is 10 – 12 feet high.

Mr. Stille added there is an increase in the number of pets. He asked what is being done towards personal protection for existing residents and new alike. He concluded by thanking the Commission for their time.

The Chair called for more public comments [Hearing none.] She closed the public portion of the meeting.

Bob Miller indicated he is still struggling with the position of the building. For the residents that are here tonight, he emphasized the Commission cannot be prejudicial towards the brand or the company. He said there are rights the property owner has, there is certain zoning in place, and the Commissioners, who are representative of the community have to be very cognizant of that. He said he has had trouble with this structure from the very beginning in that it is too close to the western property line and would like to see some sheltering for the property to the west. He said the building's massing is still a big box. He sees that the applicant has added some ornamental elements on it but the architecture is still not there. He thought an L-shape would break up the mass of the building and be more pleasing to the residents and fit better into the overall theme of the area directly adjacent to the east.

Mr. Miller restated how well done the presentation was from the applicant and how it put the size of the building in perspective compared to the other hotels but he sees too much building in too small of an area. He suggested turning the building, repositioning it, or changing the shape might be helpful for him.

Cathy De Rosa said her comments echo Mr. Miller's. She indicated she did not hear the word "impossible" either when the L-shape was suggested. She asked staff if there were other alternatives presented to them and discussed. She said she would still like to see what other possibilities there are on that property and the Commission did not get that this evening; they got the same one back again. She said she does not know what the Commission has to do to be able to see what the variations would look like and what challenges would come from them. For example, she noted site layout, stormwater management, and fire safety.

Mr. Briya explained, for an L-shape building, corridor efficiency is lost and the footprint of the building would essentially get longer to add back in rooms. He said this is a very compact plan, making the building as small as possible. He recalled they started with a four-story building before ever getting to the PZC.

Ms. De Rosa asked if the applicant could bring that plan back because if the building is a little longer and bigger but it has a change in shape, and laid appropriately on the property, she could then see the trade-offs.

Mr. Briya emphasized keeping the buffer on the back end for those residents. He said he did not want to create dead space back there by having parking back there like the other hotels. He said more people could loiter there, which seems to also be a concern of the residents.

Warren Fishman noted the stucco/stone, stucco/brick. He said the vertical siding does not even age as well as the fake brick and stucco, which looks better to him. He suggested earth tone colored gutters and trim would provide a much more sophisticated look. He said the other two hotels look better than this proposal. He said he agreed with his fellow Commissioners that the building would be more interesting if the shape was changed. He said the colors used for the proposed sign is obnoxious where other colors were used for different cities. He encouraged the applicant to make the sign meet Code and be more sophisticated in appearance.

Deborah Mitchell said she would echo many of the comments already made about the shape. She said she wanted to see other options for drainage so the building could be closer to the east side. She indicated the most important component of the brand logo is the number "6" so it would be really easy to modify the sign to have a script "6", like Holiday Inn Express did. She said the sign does not have to be an exact replica of the logo. She encouraged reviewing the design and the size. She said she understands how the people in the corporate world are very protective of their logos but they also understand with a slight modification, it can become much more attractive given the surroundings.

Amy Salay said she feels the same way as the other Commissioners. She recognized this is an improvement and that the presentation brought up some good points she had not considered but she is still not convinced. She emphasized the Commission cannot be prejudicial but they have an obligation to look out for the community. She said this design does not really fit and appears like the hotel does not know exactly what it really wants to be but rather to save money. She stated the vertical board and batten does not weather very well, which requires constant upkeep or it is not going to look good.

Ms. Salay said all of the neighbors are saying this is not what they want. She said she is irritated because the Commission got the same building back when they had asked for something different at the last meeting. She said she does not understand needing three hotels in such a close proximity to each other and they are not the gems of the community. She restated that she is concerned with extended-stay hotels that they become de facto apartments. Therefore, not only does fire apparatus need maneuverability but a school bus needs to get in and out. She said the sign appears to be 100% logo and it is not acceptable. She concluded she could not be supportive of this proposal and it is not what she was hoping for.

Mr. Stidhem said he scoured the Master Plan from 1995 for a specific reason why there cannot be another hotel right here and he could not find anything. He indicated he is torn on the placement of the building because he sees this placement not allowing the light to leak into the west neighbor's house and a parking lot on the west side would be a detriment. He said he is also frustrated that the applicant did not provide any kind of other design or layout options. He said the building looks better than before but it is not appropriate for that location as it does not seem to work. He said he would like to see the Commission address this area as an entry to the west. He concluded that not being an architect, he cannot speak to the specifics of the materials proposed.

Ms. Newell said she went through the review criteria and the proposal fails #1 for consistency with the development text. In the text under architecture, she said it lists specifically 5 components and the one she always gets stuck on is #3 – consider overall, the architecture shows quality in keeping with the surrounding multi-family, office, commercial and single-family development. She said the site plan is meeting the setback but it is not providing additional or sufficient screening for the residential property right next door. In terms of testimony, she pointed out the guests this evening made comments about the existing hotels' lights coming through the windows on their property under the current conditions. She said we do not regulate trespass of the light into those windows so the closer the building is set up

to the residential property there needs to be more of a buffer. She said she compared the improvements of the architecture and the building materials to the other two hotels and this does not have the depth in façade or better massing she was looking for. She suggested the entry be more prominent and more care given. She noted in the applicant's testimony, some of the issues they are struggling with is the number of units and she said the Commission is struggling with this application because the applicant is fully maxing out the site, every bit they can use and this is not allowing for proper screening. She suggested if the applicant proposed less units, less parking spaces would be needed, and the building would be smaller to better fit the site. She said this fails other development standards such as "the development preserves the sensitivity to natural characteristics while complying with the applicable regulations".

The Chair asked the applicant how they would like to proceed and they responded they would take a vote.

Motion and Vote

Mr. Stidhem moved, Ms. Mitchell seconded, to approve the Final Development Plan with two conditions:

- 1) That the applicant pay a tree replacement fee for outstanding caliper inches prior to filing for building permits; and
- 2) That the applicant revise the ground sign to meet the requirements of the development text and provide a design that is in keeping with the character established by the existing adjacent developments, subject to staff approval, prior to filing for sign permits.

The Chair asked the Commissioners that if they provide a no vote, to please state how the review criteria does not meet the regulations.

The vote was as follows: Ms. Salay, no, based on the proposed signs and architecture, landscape buffering, and not being sensitive to adjacent properties; Mr. Miller, no, because it fails to meet criteria numbers 1, 4, & 6; Ms. Newell, no, because it fails to meet criteria #1 for the proposal not being consistent with the approved Preliminary Development Plan; fails #4 that the development does not preserve and is not sensitive to the natural characteristics of the site complying with applicable requirements; fails #6 for the signs; and fails #7 because the development does not have appropriate landscaping; Ms. De Rosa, no, because it fails to meet criteria numbers 4, 6, and 7; Mr. Fishman, no, based on criteria numbers 1, 4, and 7; Ms. Mitchell, no, per it failing to meet criteria numbers 1, 4, 6, and 7; and Mr. Stidhem, no, per criteria numbers 1, 4, 6, and 7. (Disapproved 7 – 0)

2. BSD SCN - Infiniti 17-085CU

3890 Tuller Road Conditional Use

The Chair, Victoria Newell, said the following application is for a 1,000-square-foot expansion of an existing auto-oriented use in the Bridge Street District - Sawmill Center Neighborhood. She said the site is north of Tuller Road, approximately 750 feet north of the intersection with Dublin Center Drive. She said this is a request for a review and approval of a Conditional Use under the provisions of Zoning Code Sections 153.066 and 153.236. She said the Commission has final authority on this case and witnesses will have to be sworn-in.

The Chair swore in anyone intending to address the Commission on this case.

Nichole Martin asked if a full presentation was being requested. Bob Miller said he just needs to see the building addition. Steve Stidhem said he wanted to see where the dumpster was relocated to. Cathy De Rosa said she was interested in traffic flow.

Ms. Martin clarified that the Conditional Use is for review this evening and the Minor Project Review component was previously approved by the ART on November 2, 2017. She noted that all of the site

improvements occur on the northwest portion of the site, which she highlighted on the aerial view of the parcel. She said the modifications include the addition of three service bays, a car wash, and relocated dumpster enclosure, which is proposed to move to the east side of that addition.

Ms. Martin reported what was included in the Minor Project Review approved by the ART:

- 1,075-square-foot building addition (4.6% expansion of existing 23,285 square feet)
- Architecture
 - Modular brick veneer and brick course to match the existing structure
 - Metal guard garage doors to match existing
 - Brick dumpster enclosure with decorative gates
- Parking
 - Comprehensive Parking Plan required
- Landscaping
 - Net increase of 34 square feet of landscaping

Ms. Martin presented the north elevation with three service bays that face I-270 but is not visible due to the significant landscape buffer. The car wash on the south elevation was presented as well as the west elevation. She presented the east elevation and noted the decorative metal gates for the relocated dumpster enclosure.

Ms. Martin outlined what the Conditional Use is for:

- 1,075-square-foot expansion of existing auto-oriented use
 - 3 new service bays
 - Drive-thru carwash
 - Dumpster enclosure relocation
- Carwash will only be for vehicles being serviced
 - Will not be used by general public
 - Will only operate during dealership's typical hours of operation

Ms. Martin reported that the ART reviewed this application and found all the criteria to be met. Due to the minimal nature of the expansion of this use existing already on the site, approval is recommended as there are no additional impacts to the site.

Mr. Miller said he does not remember in the two years he has been a Commission member that they were not shown the building in a Conditional Use case. He said it would be helpful to have the visuals so when he is visiting the site, he has some clues to how the Conditional Use fits with that structure, which is typically already there.

Ms. De Rosa asked staff to address the traffic flow. Ms. Martin said no modifications are proposed to any of the ingress or egress access points on Tuller Road. She said there are three access points existing today: one on the eastern portion of the site predominantly geared toward the smaller of the two structures along Sawmill Road; one centrally located; and one located on the western portion of the site. She confirmed the site plan is not proposed to change with this addition and the expansion of the use does not warrant a rezoning so there is no traffic study required. Operations on the site, she said, would continue to operate in a similar manner as to today with the exception of parking being prohibited along the fire lane.

Mr. Stidhem inquired again about the trash receptacle. Ms. Martin said it would stay roughly in the same location. She said it is currently located on the terminus of the drive aisle and relocated to just east of the building addition.

- Signs Types
 - PED Art Sign
 - Canopy Edge Sign
- Lighting
- General Regulations Matrix
- MSP Administration

With respect to overall design of signs, Ms. Martin said, as staff and the landlord have administered this sign plan, it is actually layered on top of the BSD Sign Code so in many cases, tenants are subjected to not only the Code requirements for colors, logo size, secondary image, or secondary copy size for all of the ancillary items included on signs, but also layered on top of regulations are the MSP, specifically the general regulations matrix, which sometimes results in sign designs that are maybe not as creative as we would have desired or are overly cumbersome for the applicant to meet all the conditions, which are at odds with each other.

Ms. Martin said a new sign type is proposed, which is the PED Art sign. She explained the intent behind this sign type is not simply to permit larger projecting signs but really to permit highly creative sign designs at a pedestrian scale. She said a definition and additional sign image examples are provided in the sign plan. She said the Ped Art sign type would be administratively designated by the Planning Director and the sign location would be finalized at building permitting.

Ms. Martin noted that additional clarity is provided for the Canopy Edge sign to allow the sign to be mounted on top of the canopy, on the face of the canopy, and beneath the canopy. She presented graphics of each and noted the underneath mount was the only one not previously permitted.

Ms. Martin added the lighting is also further clarified in the MSP to align with the BSD Sign Design Guidelines, which were adopted by City Council. She said the MSP does not clearly permit or prohibit exposed neon or neon-like signs and there has been a lot of desire to have this sign type in the BSD specifically, the Bridge Park Development. She said staff believes exposed neon or neon-like signs are appropriate given the number of example images that were approved by the Commission and Council.

Ms. Martin presented the General Regulations Matrix Modifications:

- Projecting Sign: Must be within Level 1 and less than or equal to 12 square feet.
- PED Art Sign: Less than or equal to 50 square feet. Must have 50 feet of frontage on a public right-of-way.
- Canopy Edge Sign: Permitted underneath the canopy.
- Sandwich Board Signs: Must be located in front of the tenant space it relates to as well as a minimum of 6 feet of distance between the sidewalk and the curb.

Ms. Martin said if the tenant modifies a building façade to create an additional leasing area, signs can be added, provided they conform to all applicable guidelines.

Ms. Martin explained the modifications have been weighed against the BSD Sign Design Guidelines and the guidelines have been met. The modifications were also reviewed against the Code, which provides intent statements with respect to the MSP and the ART found all of these proposed modifications were to enhance the district, create opportunities to get more vibrant signs, allow additional flexibility, and does not simply permit larger, more visible signs.

Ms. Martin said approval is recommended for the Master Sign Plan with the following condition:

- 1) That the applicant provide an approved MSP containing all approved amendments to Planning, prior to sign permitting.

Cathy De Rosa referred back to the sign with the big sunglasses. She asked how many signs have come to staff that have been rejected in terms of creativity. She indicated her frustration is that this document could be changed all day long but the City is not seeing creativity.

Ms. Martin said there have been a lot of creative proposals that do not meet the MSP and Cap City Diner is an example of a sign that in no way meets the MSP; therefore, a sign permit has not been obtained because the MSP does not allow for it and it does not meet the requirements for a projecting sign because it is too large.

Ms. De Rosa said she thought those signs would have been brought to the PZC so they could talk about them and they would have passed.

Ms. Martin said the guidelines are not the problem, it is the zoning. She indicated it is everyone's goal to get more creative signs. Ideally, she said, we had hoped that tenants would plan ahead and come to Planning early and often and ask staff about what they believe is a great sign design. But in reality, everyone cannot get their businesses open soon enough or their signs up fast enough. Tenants are actually putting up signs before they have an opportunity to obtain sign permits, to work with staff, or an opportunity to come back to this Commission. She said some of this is to address issues staff is witnessing in the field and some of this is just to allow a mechanism to get more creative signs so the City does not have to turn-down creativity. She said the signs that are being declined just do not fit in the box the City has created.

Deborah Mitchell said the City team is great in many situations offering a consulting-like voice to help people in navigating through challenges and how to meet Code or meet the zoning requirements. In her experience, she said, when it comes to branding and signage in particular, a lot of folks on the development side do not have expertise in that area. In particular, if they are in a hurry, she said, they just want to get their business open as Ms. Martin had just said. She indicated that "creative" is not in their working vocabulary when it comes to things like signs. She asked if anyone in the City has the graphic design background or commercial design background, to at least position the City to say "Hey, we have expertise, we will help you with branding/signage" and have more of a dialogue around it. She suggested that the City is not going to get what we are looking for if we are just waiting for it to come to us.

Vince Papsidero said the City uses a consulting firm, Guide Studio, to review designs and provide feedback but we have to have a clear wall between the City as an administrator of the Code and the private sector who proposes signs for approval. He explained the City cannot provide them guidance to help them create a brand or create a sign that we feel meets our intent. He added we can review and provide feedback and then the proposal could be resubmitted. He emphasized there is a fine line as to what our role has to be. In truth, he said, we have had very few, if any, creative signs of this nature submitted; Cap City Diner has been it. He said tenants have not chosen to do that and frankly that is their right; we can only encourage them to think more creatively but we cannot demand three-dimensional signs. He said size can be defined but design is more subjective and therein lies the challenge.

Ms. Mitchell said she hoped she was not sounding critical to staff as that was not her intent. She indicated she has run up against this in her own work. She said people that are in design are gifted as not everyone can think that way. She said she understands we have to have that line that Mr. Papsidero was referring to but asked what can be done so we can direct people to where they can connect with the right kind of people. She clarified she would like to help them expand their horizons without getting into their business, literally and figuratively.

Mr. Papsidero said it starts with the landlord, not with the City.

Ms. De Rosa said she questions when reading the MSP modifications on the first page, how this document is going to get us creativity.

Amy Salay said it is really disappointing to see all the cool signs we do not have. She indicated it would be really nice if the landlord could say we really want some cool signage, show the images, and encourage the applicant. She said the signs would come at a cost but if people were impressed they could grow their business by attracting more people, possibly, versus these ho-hum wall signs. She said she did not know how to legislate this unless the landlord said...“the business shall have a cool PED Art sign if wanting to be in Bridge Park...”.

Warren Fishman said he did not think changing this document was going to do that. He suggested we make this really simple and then if someone comes forward with a really cool sign and it does not meet Code, they can come before the PZC and they will not turn it down.

Claudia Husak said one of the problems are that the City does not have a process in the Code for people to come to the Commission with a one-off sign, when there is a Master Sign Plan in place.

Ms. Martin indicated that the fear of staff would be they will continue to get uncreative and uninspired signs because people do not want to come to the PZC and spend \$890 to see the Commission. Mr. Fishman asked if the City could waive the cost. Ms. Salay said we cannot define ‘a really cool sign’. She added she is comfortable with the Planning Director approving those signs. She asked the developer what the City might be doing wrong.

Matt Starr, Crawford Hoying Development Partners, 6640 Riverside Drive, Suite 500, thanked Claudia, Vince, and Nicki because they have been meeting with them a lot on this and have been very helpful, working together. He said they have been working on processes and procedures to try and get this to work the right way. He cited Pins as an example as they are under construction and will be open in a few weeks and they have an unbelievably cool sign they want to install on the Riverside Drive façade, which is a Place making Art sign. He described it as seven pinball flippers – one side spells out “pinball” and the other side spells out “duck pin”. He said it was very expensive and at the time, we could not figure out how to make it work structurally where it must be located. He agreed, some people are not as creative. He said they have a tenant right now under construction with a brand and a logo and that is what we will get. He said it can be applied differently whether it is on the wall or projected but it is dictated by the type of businesses we have. He said it might come down to the type of tenant we have and that will continue to evolve. He indicated there is about a dozen tenants under construction that have not come forward with signs and there is another 8 – 10 in the design phase. He said they encourage creative signs because they want to see those really cool signs that are found in other places. The thing about administering this MSP, he said, is they take that document and attach it as an amendment to the lease, making it part of that document but no one has read a page of it. He said it is their own fault, where he meets with them and discusses this. He said one thing that has been difficult to administer with that plan is the locations and size issues.

Ms. Mitchell asked if there is a document that is the brand platform for Bridge Park, and what it means to be a tenant in Bridge Park. She said people that are entrepreneurs or not part of a big chain are going to be very sensitive to cost. She suggested they emphasize to the tenants that if they spend more on their branding and the signage, this is how it is going to pay off.

Mr. Starr reported that early on, they did a branding exercise with Kolar, who the City has worked with as well for Bridge Park but that document probably has to be updated at this point. He stated the tenants meet with them at their office in Bridge Park and when they come there, they know what Crawford Hoying is about and they also know that they are not the cheapest game in town, either; there are certainly other places they can go. A lot of times, he indicated, he is not sure if money is the factor either, but it is about continuing to challenge the tenants to do better. He said that falls on Crawford

Hoying and he said he would take responsibility for that because he sits in all those meetings and he hopes more of those creative Art Placement signs will come forward.

Ms. De Rosa asked if it is possible to say “we expect” or “we require” a piece of art to go along with the sign package. She cited the sign that looks like glasses as an example. She suggested that tenant would probably also want the name of the business on their door or wall, too. She asked if there are ways for the City to make it a requirement if we want this done.

Mr. Starr said that it might not be impossible but it is hard because they have tenants of all different sizes all different budgets and they want to see more independent merchants and creative merchants that might not have the budget to afford that sign.

Ms. De Rosa again questioned how the City should do this because she is not certain changing the language on this document is going to meet the objective.

Mr. Papsidero stated this modification will permit smaller art signs in the Master Sign Plan that were not permitted before so that is a positive step. He suggested encouraging key tenants because we would not want every single tenant to have art placement signs or they would all compete with each other. But maybe a marquee tenant makes more sense or one that fits their product. He said Ram and the silo really work well as an example. He said some cities provide a grant to encourage this sort of thing but he is not sure Dublin would want to get in that business but cities do this when they want to create an incentive.

Ms. Martin indicated this predicament is a result of when the City and Crawford Hoying devised this MSP in 2015 as they had no precedent elsewhere in the City to use as a model for the plan. She said she knew the values of Dublin and as a staff member tried to encourage and incorporate those conservative values. She said looking back, maybe for this development, it was too conservative.

Mr. Stidhem said what we are trying to do now is address that, to which she confirmed.

Mr. Starr said as the landlord, they are trying to have these conversations with tenants earlier because tenants do not think about this initially. He said instead they are focusing first on the space, getting their floor plan, and then the architecture. When construction is ready to begin, he said they are ready to talk about signs and that might be 90 days out and they plan to open in 90 to 120 days. He said if they get into a process where a sign is not approved or the applicant has to come back, which pushes the timeline back further, the tenant risks the chance of not having that sign when they open, which is a legitimate concern for them.

Ms. Mitchell said that was her point - the landlord and tenants need to have these conversations during the very first meeting where brand, look, and feel is discussed; otherwise, it is always at the end and rushed. She emphasized that brand should be at the front, not the end.

Mr. Starr said they do talk about that at the beginning when they are negotiating because the tenant wants to know how many signs they can have and how large they can be. He said the design is thought about later. Ms. Mitchell clarified that ‘signs’ are not ‘brand’ but rather signs are a reflection of the brand. She said Mr. Starr can do tenants a huge service by having formalized and structured conversations about the signs and their business.

Mr. Stidhem said it is a challenge to try to codify “interesting and creative”; he said, this is a great step towards making it easier and less cumbersome. He said what caught him by surprise was the allowance of neon.

Ms. Mitchell recalled an applicant that brought art in even before the City asked for it because they knew they wanted to be cool so it is not like that scenario has never happened.

Mr. Fishman indicated he thought they were “throwing out the baby with the bath water”. He noted it takes 3 months or 6 months to build a space and if we come at the side with the signs it puts staff at the firing line and the Commission should be at the firing line. He asked Ms. Salay that if the Commission does not approve of a sign, if the applicant can appeal to City Council.

Mr. Papsidero said if the applicant has a MSP, they would be starting over. He indicated that no matter what staff tries to do or Mr. Starr tries to do, there is still a window of opportunity in the process. He reported the City has had businesses open with signs without permits. Mr. Starr added it would mean he would have to be in front of the Commission a lot more often.

Ms. De Rosa said it seems these modifications remove some of the restrictions but does not get us where we want to go.

Mr. Papsidero stated these changes will improve the situation, which will enable the opportunity for more creative signs. He suggested if the City, as a policy, wanted to put money where its mouth is, to make a statement that would apply here as well as historic Dublin as the City’s broader downtown to encourage those sorts of creative, artisan designs, even hand-assembled signs as an outcome they need to create a grant program to do that.

Mr. Starr said the tenant finds the spot that may work for them but every building has different architecture so certain signs do not work very well in certain locations so that is a challenge, also.

Ms. Newell said she had remained silent because this is like regulating architecture in a form based code; it is so difficult to do that in a fair way. She said in both instances, it makes it really complicated and it should not be. She said holding up a business that needs to come and get a sign, should be a simple process but it has gotten even more complicated. She said while we are trying to simplify it, we are also opening ourselves up for risk. She said at some point, we have to think how we are going about it. Just like Preliminary Reviews that were introduced to the process so the applicant could come in and do a quick review to see if they were headed in the right direction. She said it would have been nice to see the creative signs that did not meet Code, even if it was staff that brought them forward as a presentation to get feedback from the Commission rather than shutting them down right away.

Ms. Salay said this is Planning’s idea to make things better and increase the chance that the City will get really cool signs to which Mr. Papsidero affirmed. She said she is considering taking that risk; there has been so much discussion over the years (at least two and a half years) talking about this and exchanging photos, looking at images, we should do what staff is suggesting and give that a chance. We know what we are doing now is not working. Absent any other idea, this would be the way she would go, she said.

Ms. De Rosa said she wanted to make sure she was understanding what is being requested before she voted. She confirmed the only changes are the items highlighted in yellow on the MSP.

Motion and Vote

Ms. Salay moved, Ms. Mitchell seconded, to approve Amendments to the Master Sign Plan with the following condition:

- 1) That the applicant provide an approved Master Sign Plan to Planning containing all approved amendments, prior to sign permitting.

Ms. Martin said everything that is in there is a “requirement” and nothing is a “guideline”.

The vote was as follows: Mr. Stidhem, yes; Mr. Miller, yes; Mr. Fishman, yes; Ms. Newell, yes; Ms. De Rosa, yes; Ms. Salay, yes; and Ms. Mitchell, yes. (Approved 7 – 0)

Communications

Claudia Husak said staff has received a request from Verizon’s representative to not have their St. John application on the agenda this evening and that is a legal requirement they have to go through to not be subject to the timelines in place. She stated staff is continuing to work with Verizon to explore alternative locations.

The Chair asked if there were any additional comments. [Hearing none.] She adjourned the meeting at 8:56 pm.

As approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission on January 4, 2018.