

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
December 12, 2011**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Great Falls Design Review Board was called to order by Ms. Jean Price at 3:00 p.m. in the Rainbow Conference Room of the Civic Center.

**ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE**

Design Review Board Members present:

Ms. Jean Price, Chair  
Mr. Bruce Forde  
Ms. Mary Klette  
Mr. Jule Stuver

Design Review Board Members absent:

Mr. Todd Humble

City Staff Members present:

Mr. Charlie Sheets, Development Review Coordinator  
Mr. Brant Birkeland, Comprehensive Planner II  
Mr. Dave Dobbs, City Engineer  
Ms. Patty Cadwell, Neighborhood & Youth Council Coordinator  
Ms. Phyllis Tryon, Administrative Assistant

Others present:

Mr. Steve Turner, Wadsworth Builders  
Mr. Art Vender, member of public  
Mr. Scott Karaffa, Great Falls Community Food Bank  
Mr. Jim Delaney, Great Falls Community Food Bank  
Mr. Tony Houtz, A.I.A., CTA, Inc.  
Ms. Gayle Gifford, Executive Director Great Falls Community Food Bank  
Mr. Kevin Hager, Executive Director Great Falls Housing Authority  
Mr. Scott Floerchinger, Project Manager Great Falls Housing Authority  
Mr. Del Trost, Hessler Architects  
Mr. Jason Holden, Faure Holden Law Office  
Ms. Jean Faure, Faure Holden Law Office

## **MINUTES**

Ms. Price asked if there were any comments on the minutes of the November 14, 2011 meeting. Mr. Stuver moved to approve the minutes as stated. Mr. Forde seconded. All being in favor, the minutes were approved.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Price explained that the public comment period will be moved on the meeting agenda to follow the Petitioner's presentation. Board discussion will follow public comment.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Great Falls Community Food Bank 1618 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North**

Mr. Sheets, Development Review Coordinator for the City, reviewed the City Staff report on the proposed renovation of the main entry of the Great Falls Community Food Bank, along with some interior renovations. Mr. Sheets stated he was entering the Staff report into the record. The facility is 13,300 square feet, and a 1,000 square foot addition is proposed as the main entry. Outside of the main entry addition, the site plan remains virtually the same, with a few minor changes to the parking plan. The area is industrial in nature, with the U.S. Forest Service on the west, Pacific Steel & Recycling salvage yard on the east, and the City Park and Recreation complex is across the street. The proposed entry renovation is a single-story addition with a continuation of the existing vertical steel panels. The proposed entry is in a contrasting dark brown color. Windows and doors of the new addition will be framed in a dark brown or black, and there will be a wood soffit canopy over the main entrance. A short masonry skirt will be installed on the entry and continue north, providing a planting area.

Two of the four existing garage doors will be framed in and covered in steel panels to match the existing building. The project meets the standards required by Title 17. Staff concludes that the proposed renovation will allow the Great Falls Community Food Bank to operate more efficiently in service to the public. The proposed renovation provides a focal point entrance that has been lacking at the facility. Mr. Sheets concluded his review of the Staff report and offered to answer any questions from the Board.

## **Petitioner's Presentation**

Mr. Houtz of CTA, Inc. explained that currently there are three doors to enter this facility.

He said the proposed renovation clarifies the entry for the public as well as reducing congestion on the south end of the building while maximizing the use of space. Currently, there is no landscaping, and no change is required.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Board Discussion and Action**

Mr. Dobbs inquired if there was a way to change the straight in, straight out parking so people aren't backing into the street. Ms. Gifford explained the depth of the parking area is two car lengths, so there are no vehicles backing out into the street. There was no further discussion.

**MOTION:** That the Design Review Board approve the Design Review application of Great Falls Community Food Bank, addressed as 1618 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, as shown in the conceptual development plans contained within the Staff report and provided within this meeting by the project applicant and representative, subject to the following conditions:

1. The proposed project shall be developed consistent with the conditions in this Staff report, all codes and ordinances of the City of Great Falls, the State of Montana, and all other applicable regulatory agencies.
2. If after the approval of the concept development plan as amended by this Board, the owner proposes to expand or modify the conceptual development plans, the Director of the Planning and Community Development Department shall determine in writing if such proposed change would alter the concept for one or more review criteria. If such proposed change would alter the plan, the proposal shall be resubmitted for review as a new application.

Made by: Ms. Klette  
Seconded: Mr. Forde

**VOTE:** Mr. Stuver recused himself from the vote. All others being in favor, the motion carried 3-0.

Mr. Sheets advised the applicant that as building plans are finalized, they are to be submitted to the Planning and Community Development office for a building permit.

## **Great Falls Housing Authority 1500 Chowen Springs Loop**

Mr. Sheets reviewed the City Staff report on the proposed multi-phase renovation of the existing 156-unit residential complex for the Great Falls Housing Authority (GFHA) located at 1500 Chowen Springs Loop. He stated he was entering the Staff report into the record. There are seven types of buildings with multiple units in each building. The project is being funded through various sources. The footprints of the buildings will remain the same as they are currently, with renovation to include energy efficiency, utility and aesthetic updates. The site is in compliance with Title 17 of the municipal code. Mr. Sheets concluded his review of the Staff report.

### **Petitioner's Presentation**

Mr. Del Trost of Hessler Architects presented information on the project. Mr. Trost stated that the goal at this meeting is to have all the building renovations approved so that the applicant does not need to come back to the Design Review Board as the individual buildings open up for renovation. Mr. Trost stated these buildings are not historically recognized because they have been renovated in the past. The exterior renovations are to be fairly extensive. With the amount of funding currently available, they are hoping to begin renovation on three of the buildings, and then as funding becomes available and buildings become vacant, they can renovate the next set of buildings.

Mr. Trost stated that there will be an extensive amount of infrastructure work on the project to include all utilities. Landscaping will be preserved as is; if anything is destroyed or removed due to construction, it will be replaced, but there will not be any additional landscaping added to the project. The historical evaluation indicated that the landscaping was one of the few items remaining on site that has historical significance.

Mr. Trost explained the details of the proposed project materials. Windows will be a white Anderson brand, and shingles will be a 50-year Malarkey brand in "natural wood" color. The project is being modeled after the GFHA Sand Hills project. All the current siding will be replaced. Mr. Trost said they are considering varying the color of siding with complimentary colors further along in the project so that the entire site is not a monolithic color.

Mr. Stuver inquired about any modifications to exterior lighting. Mr. Floerchinger explained that there will be entry lights on the porches as well as new site lighting. He said the Housing Authority is unique in that the site is Federal property and all the infrastructure is owned by the GFHA.

## **Public Comment**

Ms. Price opened the meeting to public comment. Mr. Vender inquired about the situation at the intersection of Chowen Springs Loop and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. Mr. Floerchinger said they were going to address that aspect of the project during the infrastructure phase by creating a square on square intersection. He said there is no storm drain infrastructure for Parkdale, and existing elevations need to be maintained in order for storm water to flow to the catch areas. Mr. Vender asked if there would be any extra parking provided at the southeast corner. Mr. Floerchinger said he is hoping to gain about five more parking spots, and noted it is a very tight area and it is difficult to accommodate more parking. Mr. Vender said there is constant illegal parking in that area, of which the GFHA is aware, which makes it difficult for other neighboring residents. Mr. Floerchinger said they have informed their police officers about the situation.

Ms. Cadwell inquired about the illegal parking. Mr. Vender said the area along the curve on Chowen Springs Loop is posted as “no parking,” but people constantly park there to load and unload, including delivery vehicles for GFHA and GFHA maintenance workers. He also said the no parking zone is used by people for handicap access, and vehicles will remain parked for a half-hour.

There was no further public comment.

## **Board Discussion and Action**

Mr. Floerchinger submitted parking and landscape plans, which had not been previously submitted. He stated that parking areas in front of the buildings will all be completely renovated, including modern curb, pavement, lighting, and markings. He also noted for Mr. Vender that the parking issues at Chowen Spring Loop were at the top of his list of parking issues to address. There are 114 off-street parking spaces in this area of the Parkdale project. When the facility was designed in 1940, few people had cars, and the number of allotted parking spaces reflects that period. However, about 30 percent of the clients in that area do not own vehicles. There is additional on-street parking available, and on occasion, GFHA vehicles violate parking regulations to accommodate work vehicles. There are about 160 parking spaces if legal on-street parking is included. They hope to gain about four parking spaces on-site during the renovations.

Ms. Price asked if the requirement within Condition Three for Approval in the Staff report was fulfilled with the submittal of the parking and landscape plans. Mr. Floerchinger said it should, but if more detailed plans were needed, he would have the engineer prepare those. He explained that the GFHA has to comply with pathways for accessibility standards. He said that would affect parking, and they are not yet clear on the location of the handicap units.

Mr. Sheets explained that the submitted project design should not need to come back to the Design Review Board. Mr. Stuver clarified that once the applicant has finalized the egress, they should submit to the City for a final review. Mr. Floerchinger agreed, adding that they are also working with the Public Works Department on the infrastructure upgrades. Mr. Hager said that the philosophy of GFHA is to build quality housing anyone would be happy to live in.

Ms. Klette inquired about the color of window trim. Mr. Trost clarified that window trim, gutters and downspouts, as well as band around the buildings would all be a complimentary, darker color. Mr. Stuver inquired about the stone accents on the ends of buildings versus the entrance side. Mr. Trost explained that stone accent will be placed for the most effective overall visual effect. Mr. Stuver asked about the construction of the privacy screens. Mr. Trost said they will be two-by-framing with siding to match the buildings. Mr. Forde suggested temporary fencing for trees along the drip line to keep construction equipment from damaging both trees and root systems. He also suggested cutting deciduous shrubs to the ground during construction, and then protecting the tops from construction equipment. He said the shrubs will grow back.

There was no further discussion.

MOTION: That the Design Review Board approve the Design Review Application of the Great Falls Housing Authority, addressed as 1500 Chowen Springs Loop, as shown in the conceptual development plans contained within this report and provided within this meeting by the project applicant and representative, subject to the following condition:

1. The proposed project shall be developed consistent with the conditions in this Staff report, all codes and ordinances of the City of Great Falls, the State of Montana, and all other applicable regulatory agencies.
2. If after the approval of the concept development plan as amended by this Board, the owner proposes to expand or modify the conceptual development plans, the Director of the Planning and Community Development Department shall determine in writing if such proposed change would alter the concept for one or more review criteria. If such proposed change would alter the plan, the proposal shall be resubmitted for review as a new application.
3. The applicant will submit the final parking plan to the City for review.

Made by: Mr. Stuver  
Seconded: Ms. Klette

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion carried.

Mr. Sheets advised the applicant that he will send them a letter outlining the conditions of this approval. Building plans are to be submitted to the City in order to obtain building permits.

**Faure Holden Law Office, Errata LLC  
1314 Central Avenue**

Mr. Birkeland, Comprehensive Planner for the City, reviewed the Staff report on the proposed exterior renovation of the building located at 1314 Central Avenue. Mr. Birkeland stated he was entering the Staff report into the record. He said this building is changing use from a restaurant to a law office in a C-5 zoning district. A variety of design elements, architectural features and colors, plus quality materials, will create a building of visual interest. Mechanical equipment will be screened, and although existing lighting is sufficient, the project will add accent lighting to the exterior facade. Parking conforms to the standards of Title 17. The surrounding neighborhood is commercial or institutional uses with a variety of design features.

Mr. Birkeland explained that the applicant is proposing to use dark-tinted windows along the front face of the building. Code guidelines suggest clear glass on the first floor, but given the nature of a private law office, Staff suggests clear glass only in the reception area. Staff also recommends extending the front façade material onto the east wall of the building to the first window.

**Petitioner's Presentation**

Mr. Holden explained that they would prefer tinted windows along the full front of the building, even the reception area, due to the private nature of their business. He also said a number of buildings along Central Avenue have tinted windows, and he did not think clear glass would be as aesthetically pleasing with the other windows being tinted on this building. He said they were willing to look at a bronze or other color tint.

Mr. Holden said the proposed renovation will use historic brick. Across the street are buildings of light sandstone color. This project will make some reference to that color but also vary it with other brick color. The plan is to paint the east side of the building to match the brick, or to use ephus or concrete material and paint it a solid color.

Mr. Turner explained that the building is right on the property line, so there is not much room to add material onto the building. Their intent is to clean up the building and make it look good. There was a window planned in the east wall, but fire regulations prohibit the window due to firewall standards since the wall is on the property line.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Board Discussion and Action**

Ms. Price suggested the front façade materials wrap around to the approximate distance of where the window had been planned on the east wall. Mr. Stuver inquired

about the materials beneath the current front building façade. Mr. Turner said it was block, and discussion followed about whether the new façade will intrude on the property line along the east wall if the façade wraps around the building. Mr. Turner said they will be using a thin brick so that they should be within a quarter or half an inch of the current building surface. Mr. Stuver suggested a pilaster effect on the sides of the building so the façade will not need to wrap around as far. The current fence between properties will be removed and replaced with something more appealing.

It was noted there is plenty of parking for customers in the back of the building. Mr. Dobbs inquired about the proposed ramp for the front of the building. Mr. Turner explained that there is an elevation difference along the front. Mr. Dobbs said he thought a straight entrance would be easier. Discussion followed on the rationale for the ramp design. Mr. Dobbs requested details of clarification from the architect before approval of that portion of the design, since this involves the public-right-of-way and the boulevard.

Lawn area is proposed in the front, with proper drainage for sprinklers. There will be lighting underneath the canopy. Ms. Klette said she agreed that tinted glass along the front façade without any clear glass offered more continuity, but she suggested a tint color that was not completely dark. Mr. Forde inquired about whether current landscaping code requirements were triggered with this renovation, and Mr. Birkeland confirmed they are not triggered. He reviewed that portion of code for clarification.

Mr. Stuver inquired about the height and depth of the parapet. He suggested it be extended back to give more depth, using a pilaster. Window tint was discussed again, and Ms. Faure suggested a bronze tint may be used.

There was no further discussion.

**MOTION:** That the Design Review Board approve the Design Review Application of Errata LLC for the Faure Holden Law Office located at 1314 Central avenue as shown in the conceptual development plans contained within this report and provided within this meeting by the project applicant and representative, subject to the following conditions:

1. The proposed project shall be developed consistent with the conditions in this staff report, all codes and ordinances of the City of Great Falls, the State of Montana, and all other applicable regulatory agencies.
2. If after the approval of the concept development plan as amended by this Board, the owner proposes to expand or modify the conceptual development plans, the Director of the Planning and Community Development Department shall determine in writing if such proposed change would alter the concept for one or more review criteria. If such proposed change would alter the plan, the proposal shall be resubmitted for review as a new application.



3. That tinted glass be used on the front façade which is a bronze color or color that is not completely dark, and that the tint be consistent across the front.
4. That the wrap-around of architectural features would be more like a pilaster, and that the same depth be given to the parapet on the east and west sides.
5. The Board encourages that the front of the building be softened with plantings.
6. That details of the entry elevations for the front of the building and the proposed ramp be submitted to the City Engineer.

Made by: Ms. Klette  
Seconded: Mr. Stuver

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion carried.

### **OTHER BOARD BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 p.m.