

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
March 12, 2012**

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Great Falls Design Review Board was called to order by Chair Jean Price at 3:03 p.m. in the Rainbow Room of the Civic Center.

ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE

Design Review Board Members present:

Ms. Jean Price, Chair
Mr. Jule Stuver
Mr. Bruce Forde
Mr. Todd Humble

Design Review Board Members absent:

Ms. Mary Klette

City Staff Members present:

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

Others present:

Mr. Jim Voegele, Voegele's Inc.
Mr. Ryan Smith, L'Heureux Page Werner
Mr. Steve L'Heureux, L'Heureux Page Werner
Ms. Dani Cloutier, L'Heureux Page Werner
Mr. Pat Kons, Pacific Steel & Recycling
Mr. Dave Richards, Pacific Steel & Recycling
Mr. Ed Venetz, Pacific Steel & Recycling
Ms. Jo Dee Black, Great Falls Tribune

MINUTES

Ms. Price asked if there were any comments on the minutes of the February 13, 2012 meeting. Mr. Stuver moved to approve the minutes as stated. Mr. Humble seconded. All being in favor, the minutes were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Voegele's Inc. 206, 210 & 212 5th Street South

Mr. Brant Birkeland, Comprehensive Planner II for the City, reviewed the City staff report on the proposed exterior renovation for Voegele's Inc. Mr. Voegele noted the address is 206 5th Street South and 420 2nd Avenue South. Mr. Birkeland stated he was entering the staff report into the record.

Mr. Birkeland stated that the proposed project is an exterior renovation of the west façade of the building to improve insulation and enhance visual aesthetics. The project includes adding foam insulation and covering the foam with two-tone metal siding. The building currently features a metal and shingle canopy on the north and east sides of the building, as well as brick columns and large windows on the north façade. The building is built right up to the property line on the west side and so cannot be extended on that side. The east and south facing walls of the building consist of tan stucco material, so this renovation would not be consistent with that design. The applicant has contracted to have the east façade painted this spring to match the two-tone metal siding. The owner has stated that due to costs and conditions of the building façade, this proposed design is the most feasible for the project.

Petitioner's Presentation

Mr. Voegele stated he is trying to improve the appearance of the building. Other design options were two to three times more expensive. In addition, the Great Falls Rescue Mission has purchased the abutting property and may construct a building adjoining his, a factor he is taking into consideration with this project. He has been told that a stucco refinish would show every imperfection and not improve the look of the building, nor would it give the added insulation.

Discussion followed about any changes to the windows. Mr. Voegele explained there would be no changes to the windows except to wrap them with metal. There is a portion of stucco underneath the windows that will remain. On the east side, door entryways will be a darker color and the rest will be a lighter color. The shingle canopy will remain the same.

Mr. Stuver inquired about gutter drainage, and whether it can be routed to the end of the building if the Rescue Mission builds on the property line next to them. Mr. Voegele explained the plan is to handle it by grade with gravel and road mix to drain to the alley. There was further discussion about methods of addressing drainage. Mr. Sheets explained that the property owners will need to work together to resolve any future issues with drainage. Mr. Haynes also noted that it is uncertain whether the owners of the neighboring property will actually build to the property line.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Board Discussion and Action

MOTION: That the Design Review Board approve the Design Review application of Voegele Inc. located at 206 5th Street South as shown in the conceptual development plans contained within this report and provided 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: Mr. Humble
Seconded: Mr. Forde

VOTE: The motion passed with all in favor.

Mr. Sheets advised the applicant on the next procedural steps.

Pacific Steel & Recycling #5 River Drive South

Mr. Brant Birkeland, Comprehensive Planner II for the City, reviewed the City staff report on the proposed commercial expansion and exterior renovation of the original Heisey Wholesale Grocery warehouse building and Yaw Kinney building at #5 River Drive South. Mr. Birkeland stated he was entering the Staff report into the record.

The proposed project is a redevelopment of the property from its current use as a truck terminal and office to a professional office and corporate headquarters for Pacific Steel & Recycling (PS&R). The project also includes the conversion of the Yaw Kinney building to an employee training center for PS&R. The applicant is proposing a number of structural and design modifications to ensure the building is structurally sound and fully functional as a professional office, including a new floor and roof diaphragm and geothermal cooling and radiant heating system. The floor plan has been guided by the original window locations with the intention of lowering current sill dimensions to allow more daylight into the building. The applicant proposes to preserve as much of the exterior shell as possible to keep the historical character, as the buildings are located in the Railroad Historic District.

The applicant has proposed 57,047 square feet of landscaped area, including 44 new trees, retaining 10-14 on-site trees and 245 shrubs. City code requires 290 shrubs, but given that the applicant is constructing a new segment of the River's Edge Trail through the site, staff is encouraging the applicant to submit a design waiver for the additional shrubs.

Per code the project requires 108 parking spaces; the applicant proposes to provide 89 spaces. However, there is more than sufficient parking for the daily operations of the facilities. A shortage of spaces will occur during occasional training events, but those will be held on weekends and off-peak months when the Mitchell Pool will not be in use. The City will allow the applicant to utilize the City-owned "Mitchell Pool" parking lot to the north of the site on occasions when the applicant hosts employee training events.

In lieu of entering into a cross-access or shared-use parking agreement with the City, the applicant has agreed to construct a new segment of the River's Edge Trail through the property and complete off-site connections to the trail to improve user safety.

Mr. Birkeland presented a letter from the City-County Historic Preservation Officer (HPO). Mr. Birkeland said that while there are no current historic guidelines in place with which to evaluate these buildings, the HPO feels the proposed development impacts the integrity of the buildings from an historic preservation perspective.

Petitioner's Presentation

Mr. Ryan Smith, project architect with L'Heureux Page Werner, stated the company had much enthusiasm for this project, especially after having participated in the Downtown Master Plan process. The company is pleased to be part of a project that preserves and repurposes two existing buildings and keeps the historical value of the area, as well as bringing a new employer to Downtown.

Mr. Smith explained that the design of the project was developed in light of the River's Edge Trail. He said the project will proceed in two phases. Phase I will involve the

Heisey Warehouse building and the site area. No renovation plans for the Yaw Kinney building have yet been developed.

Mr. Smith said that the area between the two buildings will be developed as an outdoor area for employees. He explained bringing the trail through the site will help improve safety factors for the trail crossing River Drive.

Mr. Humble inquired about fencing and the possibility of vandalism to the site. Mr. Smith explained that emergency vehicles will need room around the perimeter of the building and fencing would prohibit that movement. Mr. Forde stated that for landscaping purposes, if three perennials are considered equal to a shrub, the site is short about 100+ plants. He suggested there was ample room on-site to add plants. He also asked if there was a swale between the buildings. Mr. Smith said there would be piped drainage. He said there are three mature trees they want to maintain, yet there will be some excavating nearby and was concerned about stabilizing the trees. Mr. Forde suggested checking the health status of the trees to determine if they are worth saving.

Mr. Smith described the dumpster screening design, which will incorporate brick from a small garage that is being salvaged from the site. Mechanical units will be screened. Mr. Humble asked if there needed to be a variance for the parking. Mr. Haynes explained the city had agreed to provide flexibility with regard to parking requirements in return for construction of the River's Edge Trail through the property. He said it was also the intention to provide flexibility with landscaping given that construction of the trail would limit the area that could accommodate landscaping, but it is up to the Design Review Board to make a recommendation. Mr. Birkeland noted that a design waiver for landscaping is included in the suggested recommendations in the Staff report.

There was further discussion about where additional landscaping might be included on the site. Mr. Humble stated he was in agreement with the current landscaping plans. Suggestions followed about adding additional space and plants to one of the landscape beds, and adding plantings along the trail or in grassy areas and along walls.

Ms. Dani Cloutier of L'Heureux Page Werner explained that the warehouse building has been mostly cold storage and the outer envelope is uninsulated brick and will need to be supplemented for reuse. She stated that design concepts are driven by the River's Edge Trail. Low head heights in the existing building will require redesign for office space and will be opened up to allow more daylight. The existing dock area will be designed as patio space for employees and will retain its look. Any brick removed in construction will be reused as much as possible.

The large white-and-blue painted sign on the building will be removed but the historic wheat sign will be sealed and will remain. Mr. Smith noted that windows on the south side will have sill heights lowered. Mr. L'Heureux stated the design purposefully marries the historic with modern to give expression to the work of Pacific Steel & Recycling. Mr.

Stuver inquired about the condition of the parapet caps. Mr. Smith said the intent is to preserve the original profile of the parapet.

Mr. Stuver inquired about the width of columns. The representatives discussed their desire to use steel materials and double channels.

Mr. Dave Dobbs, City Engineer, asked about the turning radius for fire trucks at the southwest corner, and Mr. Smith said he had cleared the radius with the Fire Marshal. Mr. Dobbs then asked if the storm drain plan had been submitted to Jim Young, and Mr. Smith said it would be submitted next week.

Referring to the plant species list, Mr. Forde said that Princess Kay Plum trees were very high maintenance and Fall Gold Ash trees have mostly been killed off by insects. He suggested Honey Locust, Skyline or Imperial species in place of the Fall Gold Ash, and a Pink Crabapple with a persistent fruit to replace the plum.

There was no further discussion.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Board Discussion and Action

MOTION: That the Design Review Board approve the Design Review Application of Pacific Steel and Recycling located at 5 Park Drive South as shown in the conceptual development plans contained in the Staff report 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. The applicant request a design waiver, signed by the Director of Planning and Community development from Land Development Code landscape standards attributable to the unique character of this site and the adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

4. That areas of the landscape be softened by additional plantings; that a Pink Crabapple or similar plant be substituted for Princess Kay Plum, and that Honey Locust, Skyline or Imperial species be substituted for Fall Gold Ash; that the three trees along the building be reviewed for health; and finally, if the trees are healthy, that the drain area be piped between the two buildings and the soil filled in to benefit the trees.

Made by: Mr. Stuver
Seconded: Mr. Forde

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

OTHER BOARD BUSINESS

There was no other business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:11 p.m.