

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
March 11, 2013**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Great Falls Design Review Board was called to order by Mr. Jule Stuver at 3:05 p.m. in the Planning and Community Development Conference Room of the Civic Center.

**ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE**

Design Review Board Members present:

Mr. Jule Stuver  
Mr. Bruce Forde  
Mr. Todd Humble  
Mr. David Grosse

Design Review Board Members absent:

Ms. Mary Klette

City Staff Members present:

Ms. Wendy Thomas, Deputy Director of Planning Community Development  
Ms. Jana Cooper, Planner II  
Mr. Todd Seymanski, City Forester

Others present:

Del Trost, Hessler Architects

**MINUTES**

Mr. Stuver asked if there were any comments on the minutes of the February 25, 2013 meeting. Mr. Humble moved to approve the minutes as stated. Mr. Forde seconded, and all being in favor, the minutes were approved.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**NEW BUSINESS**  
**DRB2013-4 Comfort Inn**  
**1120 9<sup>th</sup> Street South**

Ms. Wendy Thomas, Deputy Director, Planning & Community Development, reviewed the staff report on the proposed construction of a new addition and modifications to the façade of the existing Comfort Inn Hotel located west of 9<sup>th</sup> Street South and addressed as 1120 9<sup>th</sup> Street South. The hotel was originally constructed in 1992 and given a variance for parking and has an approved shared parking agreement. The addition is for a new 825 square foot breakfast area. The façade enhancements include the addition of a stone veneer wainscoting, pilasters, paint and re-roofing the entire building. The architectural elements proposed will be a huge enhancement to the building and the upgrade will be consistent with the City Land Development Code.

The landscaping is required to meet the requirements of the Land Development Code due to the size of the building. The existing landscaping has not been maintained and is missing various elements from the approved plans. Upgrades required by Code include landscape islands in the parking areas, but due to the small site and the existing variance for parking, staff recommends a Design Waiver for the required landscaping in the parking lot area. Staff recommends the landscaping that was on the originally approved plans be reinstalled and maintained by the property owner. Staff does not know if there is additional mechanical equipment as a part of the proposal. Additionally, Staff would like to take the opportunity to inform the applicant and owner that their existing pole sign is currently a legal nonconforming sign, and all nonconforming signs must be brought into conformance by December 15, 2015.

Mr. Del Trost, applicant representative, asked about whether the approved existing landscaping plan met the requirements of the Land Development Code. Ms. Thomas explained that it does not, which is why the Design Waiver was suggested.

Mr. Forde asked if the approved plan reflected the same building shape as the existing building. A discussion amongst the Board, Staff and the applicant's representative ensued. It was determined the existing plan was likely a spec building plan that does not reflect exactly what is built.

Mr. Trost explained the architectural elements of the project, showing the Board the color scheme for the project. He explained the addition is on the south end and an existing berm will need to be re-graded. He noted there will not be any additional mechanical units being installed.

Mr. Trost answered questions from the Board about drainage, elevation changes, and downspout changes. Mr. Stuver asked about the possibility of changing the direction of drainage away from the loading area, and there was discussion about property easements. Mr. Trost said he will ask the property owners about how the current drainage situation is working.

Mr. Forde said he would like to see species on the landscaping plans. He asked if the hotel entrance has been moved in the past, but Mr. Trost thought it was originally built the way it is now. There was extensive discussion about landscaping details, replacing some trees, using perennials and avoiding evergreens along the air conditioning units. Mr. Forde suggested the trees line up with the parking lot so automobile bumpers do not hit them.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **BOARD ACTION**

**MOTION:** That the Design Review Board approve the Design Review Application of the Comfort Inn exterior renovation and 875 square foot addition to the existing hotel located at 1120 9<sup>th</sup> Street South, as shown in the conceptual development plans contained within the staff report and provided by the Applicant, subject to the following conditions:

- A. 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.
- B. 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.
- C. The applicant shall install the missing landscaping throughout the site, per the approved landscape plans, per Title 17.44.1030 (B). The Board suggested that the replacement landscaping should focus the noteworthy pieces at the entrance and ends of the building, and for the remainder of the site, supply a quantity that is consistent with what was originally approved. It was suggested that deciduous shrubs and dwarf evergreens be used, and that the City Forester review the landscape plans. Trees in the parking area should align with parking lines to prevent any impact from automobiles.
- D. The Design Review Board recommends the applicant apply for a Design Waiver, per Title 17.16.20.010, to request the vehicular use areas landscaping requirements per Title 17.44.3.030 (A) and (B) not be required to be installed if they exceed the requirements of the previously approved landscape plan for the site.
- E. The drainage in to the parking lot should be adjusted so as to keep water out of the loading area.

Made by: Mr. Humble  
Seconded: Mr. Forde

**VOTE:** All being in favor, the motion passed.

## **OTHER BOARD BUSINESS**

Ms. Thomas said that Ms. Klette's term is up in April, and she is eligible for reappointment. Staff will follow up with her on that subject.

The Board and staff welcomed Mr. Grosse as a new Board member.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Humble moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 3:41 p.m.