

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
March 10, 2014**

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Great Falls Design Review Board was called to order by Chair Mary Klette at 3:01 p.m. in the Rainbow Room of the Civic Center.

ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE

Design Review Board Members present:

Ms. Mary Klette, Chair
Mr. David Grosse, Vice Chair
Mr. Bruce Forde
Mr. Todd Humble
Mr. Jule Stuver

Design Review Board Members absent:

None

City Staff Members present:

Mr. Craig Raymond, CBO, Director P&CD
Mr. Charlie Sheets, CFM, Development Review Coordinator
Gregg Benson, Planner I
Dave Dobbs, City Engineer

Others present:

John Ranieri
Damon Carroll, Carroll Construction
Preston Burrow, Carroll Construction
Ron Gessaman
Chris Ward
Jen Rowell, Great Falls Tribune

MINUTES

Ms. Klette asked if there were any comments on the minutes of the January 27, 2014 meeting. Mr. Humble moved to approve the minutes as stated. Mr. Stuver seconded, and all being in favor, the minutes were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS
DRB2014-7 Skyline Heights Apartments, along 36th Ave NE

Mr. Sheets reviewed the staff report for the application by Damon Carroll for the Skyline Heights Apartments. Mr. Sheets entered the staff report into the record. The proposed project is for a new 24-unit multi-family residential apartment complex located along 36th Avenue Northeast between 14th Street Northeast and the City water tower, which will be constructed in two phases and consist of two 12-unit buildings. Mr. Sheets reviewed other details of the proposed project as stated in the staff report. Total height of the proposed buildings will be approximately 34 feet, with each building being two stories plus a finished basement level. The applicant will install a 15-foot landscape buffer and a 6-foot screening fence between the south parking stalls and the single-family residence located in Water Tower Park Addition. The applicant has reviewed the detention pond and the driveway approaches with the City Engineer's Office. Improvements to 36th Avenue Northeast will be completed at a later date in conjunction with the City project to improve that road. Improvements within the boulevard are the responsibility of the applicant but will be completed with the street project.

The City Forester is recommending changing out the proposed Aspen trees in the boulevard with another variety due to problems with that type of tree.

PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION and BOARD DISCUSSION

Damon Carroll reviewed details of the proposed projects. He said there will be stone on the front and he is looking at a hardy siding instead of steel. He said he prefers not to use color bands on the building, and he reviewed parking and landscaping plans.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ron Gessaman, 1006 36th Avenue Northeast, said some of the neighbors asked him to say that the project has changed quite a bit since it was at the Planning Advisory Board. He said neighbors think that two buildings will actually look better than one building. He asked if there was going to be fencing around the retention pond, which could be up to 8 feet deep. He also asked about an airlock on the north entry. He said neighbors have expressed concerns for night sky friendly lighting and using LED lights. He said there is a rumor that 36th Avenue Northeast is going to be lowered, and they don't think that is a good idea.

There was further discussion about details of the exterior of the building. Mr. Carroll said fire hydrants and fire vehicle access is being addressed with the City Public Works Department.

Brett Doney, Great Falls Development Authority, 300 Central Avenue, said GFDA is excited to see the project underway and they like the site plan. He said they wished the project would not have had to be downsized from the original proposed project, but it is a good design.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Mr. Stuver asked about which set of plans was most current. Mr. Sheets said the site plan in the board packet was most current. Mr. Carroll said he liked the idea of an entrance canopy and the board recommended it. Mr. Carroll asked the Board's recommendations on utilizing color and

said he preferred not to use color bands. There was discussion about use of stone on the building front and ephus on the corners, as well as other details of the building.

Mr. Forde asked if it was true that 36th Avenue Northeast would be lowered. Mr. Dobbs, City Engineer, said that due to drainage considerations, it may need to be lowered. There was discussion about drainage in the area. The dumpster enclosure will consist of decorative slats and be gated.

Mr. Forde suggested placing plantings in beds rather than just in the lawn both for ease of maintenance and appearance. Ms. Klette asked about lighting in terms of what City code requires and what the neighbors concerns are. Mr. Stuver said there are lots of options for light shields and down lights. Mr. Damon said it is important to have the parking lots well lit for security reasons.

MOTION: That the Design Review Board approve the Design Review Application for the Skyline Heights Apartments located at 1420-1424 36th Avenue Northeast, as shown in the conceptual development plans contained within the staff report and provided by the applicant, subject to the following conditions:

Conditions of Approval:

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. Final plans shall include a lighting plan and meet the requirements of 17.40 Outdoor Lighting for illumination of pedestrian paths, primary building entrances and parking areas.
4. The applicant shall substitute another variety of tree in place of the short-lived Quaking Aspens indicated in the landscaping plan, group the landscaping more tightly so that bushes are not in the lawn, and place some trees in grass areas to balance the building.
5. The Board recommends adding a canopy to the front building entrance, using stone on the front elevation for a more cohesive appearance, and considering the use of plastic curbing.
6. The Board recommends using light shields to address neighbor concerns of light pollution.

Made by: Mr. Stuver
Second: Mr. Grosse

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Klette recognized Mr. Stuver and Mr. Forde for their service on the Design Review Board, as their terms expire on March 31.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Klette adjourned the meeting at 3:46 p.m.