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APPROVED MINUTES

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
 CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
 MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 04, 2015

SEBASTOPOL CITY HALL
 CONFERENCE ROOM
 7120 BODEGA AVENUE
 4:00 P.M.

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD:

The City Clerk posted the notice of the meeting on October 29, 2015.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Luthin called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL: Present: Ted Luthin, Chair
 Lynn Deedler, Vice Chair
 Cary Bush, Board Member
 Christine Level, Board Member
 Alexis Persinger, Board Member (departed at 4:34 P.M.)
 Bill Shortridge, Board Member

Absent: None

Staff: Jonathan Atkinson, Assistant Planner
 Nicole Billups, Interim Administrative Assistant

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 7, 2015

Vice Chair Deedler and Board Member Shortridge made amendments to the minutes.

Board Member Persinger made a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

Board Member Bush seconded the motion.

AYES: Ted Luthin, Chair
 Lynn Deedler, Vice Chair
 Cary Bush, Board Member
 Alexis Persinger, Board Member
 Bill Shortridge, Board Member

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: Christine Level, Board Member

4. PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATES:

Assistant Planner Atkinson provided the following updates:

- The City will host an open house as part of the General Plan Update on Thursday, November 19, 2015 at the Sebastopol Center for the Arts (282 South High Street) at 6:00 P.M. The draft policies will be on display for public review and comments. City staff and the General Plan Update consultants will be available for questions.
- The next General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, December 9, 2015 at the Sebastopol Youth Annex (425 Morris Street) at 6:00 P.M. The GPAC will conduct a Policy Review of the draft General Plan.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA: (None)

6. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: (None)

7. CONSENT CALENDER: (None)

8. REGULAR AGENDA:

A. MINOR SIGN REVIEW – Whole Body (Project 2015-103) - Whole Body (Project 2015-103) - This is an application, submitted by Ad Art, requesting approval for a sign that was installed without a Sign Permit for Whole Body at 6960 McKinley Street

Assistant Planner Atkinson presented the staff report.

The Board did not ask questions of staff.

David Esajian of Ad Art attended the meeting on behalf of Whole Body and provided the Board with a presentation.

The Board asked questions of Mr. Esajian.

Mr. Esajian answered.

Board Member Persinger made the following comments:

- Torn.
- The sign is attractive itself and fits the location.
- Not excited about the idea of a standardized corporate logo and the internal illumination issue.
- Cannot say that he is solidly in any direction right now.

Board Member Level made the following comments:

- Right around the corner at the Berkshire Hathaway (Home Services) location, we denied internal illumination and a corporate sign.
- Does not see how we can allow such a sign at this location when we denied internal illumination at Berkshire Hathaway.
- They are both basically under the exact same circumstances.

- Berkshire Hathaway was adamant about having a corporate logo so we allowed the sign but denied internal illumination because it is in the Downtown Core.

Board Member Shortridge commented that he is in agreement with Board Members Persinger and Level.

Board Member Bush made the following comments:

- Likes the sign itself.
- Viewed the sign the other day and it fits the space.
- The illumination requirements are what they are.
- Shares similar sentiments as other Board members.

Vice Chair Deedler made the following comments:

- Does not see external illumination as a requirement and it is not a requirement.
- Internal illumination is not bad.
- You should look at what is attractive and what is not attractive.
- It depends on the sign, and not whether it is internally illuminated or not.
- Does not believe that there is any justification for being adamantly against internal illumination.
- There are signs with internal illumination around town.
- The size of the sign is appropriate and fits in with other signs on the building.
- Sees latitude here.
- What is troubling about the sign is that it reads hard and does not find that to be attractive.
- You cannot tell if it is one word or two words.
- Awkward signs are not desirable.
- The spacing between the letters is so wide that you do not know if it is letters or words.
- It should read clearly with signs such as this.
- Would argue the point further but it is a corporate logo and does not want Sebastopol to change all of Whole Food Market's standard logos.
- Comfortable with the internal illumination.

Chair Luthin made the following comments:

- Believes the Board has established a pretty strong standard that internal illumination is something that we do not support.
- Internal illumination has a character that does not belong Downtown, especially internally lit channel letters.
- Has a special problem with channel letters stuck on a raceway.
- You have a box with letters on it that are stuck to a building.
- Feels that type is the lowest form of signage, and reminiscent of Subway.
- Quite surprised that Whole Body, which is part of Whole Foods Market, would install commercial grade signage on their building.
- Understands that the building currently has low commercial grade and internally lit 70s-style signs but is shocked that this type of sign was installed.
- If anyone could bring this building up, it would be a tenant.
- 100 percent against the sign.
- It should be externally lit and not consist of letters on a raceway.
- The letters could be mounted on the surface of the building or a panel so they are not mounted to a box.

- Would not be opposed to halo lighting in terms of internal illumination.
- Explained the concept of halo lighting for some Board members, and cited Safeway as an example of such lighting.
- Feels disconnect between a lifestyle business and a commercial sign.
- Understands the need for attention but it could be achieved in other ways.
- Thinks that the tenant and landlord can step it up a bit with the sign.

Board Member Level commented further that the Board better have a compelling reason for approving this sign with internal illumination if we denied one just around the corner.

Chair Luthin commented further that 7 Eleven, Wells Fargo, and Goodwill all installed externally illuminated signs and they are national brands. He further commented that it is not too much to ask for in terms of illumination.

Board Member Bush asked staff if the sign is consistent with the Sign Ordinance in terms of allowable square footage, aside from internal illumination.

Assistant Planner Atkinson answered that the sign is below the allowable total sign area but that it is subject to Board review because it is illuminated.

The Board asked clarifying questions of staff in terms of the process of reviewing illuminated signs.

Assistant Planner Atkinson indicated that all new signs that are illuminated require Board review.

Vice Chair Deedler asked the Board if they wished to take a straw poll?

Chair Luthin responded that he would like to see the application continued for redesign with external illumination and the raceway removed.

Mr. Esajian requested an opportunity to make additional comments. He commented that he wanted to come before the Board and work out a solution, and volunteered to simply turn off the sign's illumination.

Len Oaks, a member of the public, cited a section of the Sign Ordinance, regarding the intensity of illumination. He asked for clarification, and noted that the Sign Ordinance does not restrict internal illumination.

Chair Luthin commented further that the Sign Ordinance does not allow illuminated signs that cause a glare or create perception issues for neighboring signs.

Board Member Persinger cited the code section of the Sign Ordinance that discourages internal illumination.

Mr. Esajian commented further:

- Wants to come to a consensus and make concessions, if necessary.
- If the type of lighting is an issue, then we can simply turn off the sign.
- Halo lighting is an issue because of the type of building.
- It would not look good because the rim behind the letter would cause light to deflect.
- The landlord might not allow him to attach fixtures to the fascia for external illumination because of the threat of water damage.

- Light fixtures would not work if they were required for looks because of the visibility of the tenant space.
- The question of where to mount the fixtures and how to achieve subtlety are challenges.
- Flood lights on the building or light fixtures on the roof are also something to consider.

Chair Luthin commented further:

- Does not believe there is a desire to see the light fixtures whether they are ornamental or decorative.
- You are penetrating the surface whether the fixtures are installed on the roof or projecting upward.
- Holes are drilled in the surface to install the sign.
- Asked for Board preference in terms of light fixtures.
- Really up to the applicant as to the visibility of the light fixture.

Mr. Esajian asked if external illumination could just be a condition?

Chair Luthin indicated that the Board prefers to see the light fixtures before approval. He further discussed types of light fixtures with Mr. Esajian, noting that micro LEDs could work.

Board Member Persinger departed at 4:34 P.M. due to a prescheduled arrangement but commented that he supports a continuance.

Board Member Level commented further:

- Agrees with Board Member Persinger.
- We have many dated utilitarian buildings in the Downtown.
- Signage presents an opportunity to dress up the buildings a bit.
- Only way we are going to see overall improvement is one building at a time.
- Downtown buildings are not passed their lifetime.
- Would like to see the application again.

Chair Luthin made a motion to continue the application with the direction that the design return with external illumination or no illumination, and would like to see a design without a raceway box.

Vice Chair Deedler seconded the motion.

AYES: Ted Luthin, Chair
Cary Bush, Board Member
Christine Level, Board Member
Bill Shortridge, Board Member

NOES: Lynn Deedler, Vice Chair

ABSTAIN: None

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS: (None)

10. REPORTS FROM THE BOARD/STAFF: (None)

11.ADJOURNMENT: Chair Luthin adjourned the meeting of the Design Review Board at 4:38 P.M. to the next Design Review Board meeting to be held November 18, 2015 at 4:00 P.M., at the Sebastopol City Hall, 7120 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol, CA.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Jonathan Atkinson
Assistant Planner