



Downtown Development Review Board (DDRB)
Meeting
Hybrid Virtual In-Person Meeting
Thursday, February 9, 2023 2:00 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Board Members (BMs) Present: M. Brockelman (Chair); L. Ott (Vice Chair); G. Monahan (Secretary, virtual); C. Davisson; T. Lee; J. Loretta; F. Jones; and B. Schilling

Board Members Excused: C. Harden

DIA Staff Present: Guy Parola, Operations Manager; Susan Kelly, Redevelopment Coordinator; Ina Mezini, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator; and Jovial Harper, Administrative Assistant

Office of General Counsel: Carla Lopera, Esq.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Brockelman called the meeting to order at **2:00 p.m.**

II. ACTION ITEMS

A. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 12, 2023 DDRB REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Brockelman opened the floor for comment. Seeing none, Chairman Brockelman called for a motion.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY BOARD MEMBER LEE, SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER DAVISSON APPROVING THE JANUARY 12, 2023 MEETING MINUTES.

THE MOTION PASSED 8-0-0.

B. DDRB 2023-004: WELLS FARGO SPECIAL SIGN EXCEPTION

DIA's Susan Kelly reported that the applicant is seeking a special sign exception for a replacement building identification wall sign for the Wells Fargo building. Ms. Kelly stated that the current sign received final approval from DDRB in August 2011, and the applicant is proposing replacing the two (2) signs to be the same but with the letter color changed from yellow to red. DDRB Staff recommends approval of the modification. Ms. Kelly also included an update from the DDRB Special Committee on Sign Code Revisions, explaining that the Committee is currently looking at building identification wall signs.

The applicant, Mr. Greaves from Southeastern Lighting Solutions, presented the application and stated that he was available for any questions.

Chairman Brockelman called for public comment.

Mr. Tracey Arpen expressed his opinion regarding the size of signs Downtown, in general, and that sign code exceptions should be an unusual exception. He feels that the current application is unique because it is a replacement of something that is already existing but that it points out a problem with excessive granting of sign exceptions in the past.

Chairman Brockelman moved on to Board comments. BM Loretta received clarification from the applicant regarding the fabrication of the sign and the intent for illumination. BM Ott commented that the existing color scheme for signage in Downtown is on the cool side of the color wheel – with blues and greens and grays, rather than warm tones such as reds and yellows. She suggested that color theme be a factor that the DDRB special committee include in their discussion. Chairman Brockelman stated that there are about three (3) primary things that the special committee is discussing – color; brightness/intensity of illumination; and total square footage. He added that he would be voted against the application because the special committee is literally in the middle of working on revisions for this topic.

In the absence of further comment, the Chair called for a vote.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY BOARD MEMBER LEE AND SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER MONAHAN RECOMMENDING APPROVAL.

THE MOTION PASSED 6-2-0 (BROCKELMAN AND OTT).

C. DDRB 2023-005: JACKSONVILLE CHILDREN’S CHORUS DEVIATION

Ms. Kelly reported that the applicant, Jacksonville Children’s Chorus (JCC), is seeking a deviation from the transparency requirements because they would like to install window art features that would result in the transparency being deficient of the requirement. DDRB Staff found that allowing for the deviation from the transparency requirements results in the window art installation, which in turn provides interest, color, and movement at the street level. DDRB Staff recommended approval with two conditions: video vinyl screens must be turned off or removed if not fully operational as designed and none of the window installations shall be used for signage.

Darren Daily with the JCC provided the applicant presentation.

Chairman Brockelman called for any questions from the Board. BMs Ott and Monahan received clarification from Mr. Daily regarding the clear glass transparency for panels not fitted with window art, the relationship of the windows to the interior spaces, and the replacement plan for the art panels over time.

Chairman Brockelman, seeing no more questions from the Board, moved on to public comment.

Nancy Powell requested clarification about the project, specifically with respect to the video vinyl panels. Mr. Daily clarified that the video panels will be located on the far left and far right sides of the storefront along Main Street. Ms. Powell stressed that the transparency of windows is very important Downtown and expressed her concern that allowing this feature might snowball.

Tracey Arpen urged that the Board not approve the video vinyl screens until after the Special Committee has finished its work.

Chairman Brockelman asked Staff about the rationale for their recommendation with regards to the video vinyl screens. Mr. Parola with DIA described Staff's reasoning with the discernment of art versus signage.

The Chair asked for Board comments. Several clarifying questions were asked of the applicant, and CM Ferraro commented on the role of Traffic Engineering in reviewing the ultimate installation. Mr. Parola stated that the final request would be routed through Traffic Engineering to ensure that they have no concerns.

BM Ott proposed an additional condition that if the tenant occupancy should change at any point in time, the wall art shall be removed upon vacancy. BM Schilling proposed adding to the second condition that the intent of the installation is for artistic purposes. The Board approved the amendments.

Chairman Brockelman called for a vote on the application.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY BOARD MEMBER JONES AND SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER MONAHAN RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF DDRB APPLICATION 2023-005, WITH THREE (3) CONDITIONS AS AMENDED.

THE MOTION PASSED 8-0-0.

D. ORDINANCE 2023-007: SOUTHBANK MIXED-USE PUD REZONING

Chairman Brockelman opened the public hearing for the item. Ms. Lopera with the Office of General Counsel provided an introduction of DDRB's role and the process of hearing a rezoning application.

Ms. Kelly provided the staff report for Ordinance 2023-007, a request to rezone the property from Commercial Central Business District (CCBD) to Planned Unit Development (PUD). DDRB Staff recommended denial of the rezoning.

Board members declared ex-parte communications.

Steve Diebenow, with Driver, McAfee, Hawthorne and Diebenow (DMHD), introduced the developer of the proposed project, Boyd Simpson. Mr. Simpson and Mr. Diebenow provided

information about the project, along with Michael Saylor who provided an affidavit to the Board in support of the proposed rezoning.

Chairman Brockelman opened the floor to public comment.

Several speakers spoke in opposition to the proposed PUD. Speakers were primarily residents and business owners of the Southbank and San Marco neighborhoods. Reasons for their opposition included: the PUD zoning district and the proposed personal property self-storage use as being incompatible with the Southbank District of the Downtown Overlay; traffic concerns for the intersection of Hendricks Avenue and Prudential Drive; the lack of street activation stemming from the self-storage use; and the lack of trip origins and destinations for pedestrians and cyclists. Aside from members of the development team, no members of the public spoke in support of the proposed PUD rezoning.

Seeing no more public comment, the Chair asked for comments from the Board. After much discussion, Board Member Lee made a motion to approve the rezoning with conditions, and BM Monahan seconded the motion. The Board discussed conditions and arrived at the following:

1. The ground level retail space shall not be less than 16,000 square feet.
2. Except for the self-storage office, no personal property self-storage uses shall be located at the ground level.
3. The ground level self-storage office space shall have frontage on Home Street and not on Prudential Drive or Hendricks Avenue.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY BOARD MEMBER LEE AND SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER MONAHAN RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2023-007, WITH THREE (3) CONDITIONS AS AMENDED.

THE MOTION PASSED 6-2-0 (BROCKELMAN AND OTT).

III. OLD BUSINESS

None.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

None

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Brockelman adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:52 p.m.

The written minutes for this meeting are only an overview of what was discussed. For verbatim comments for this meeting, a recording or transcript is available upon request. Please contact Susan Kelly at 904-255-5307 or ksusan@coj.net.