

Design and Landmarks Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, July 22, 2009

Members Present

Becky Ives, Chair
Greg Hemer
Patty Wisner

Members Absent

Siri Bernard, Vice Chair
Sarah Knaup

Staff Present

Brett Kelper, Associate Planner (DLC Liaison)
Li Alligood, Assistant Planner
Katie Mangle, Planning Director

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Becky Ives called the Design and Landmarks Committee (DLC) meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

2. MEETING MINUTES

a. June 24, 2009

DLC member Patty Wisner moved to accept the June 24, 2009, meeting minutes as presented. DLC member Greg Hemer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. INFORMATION ITEMS

Information items were taken out of order. They are listed below in order of discussion.

b. Group photo for *Pilot* article in August

Brett Kelper, Associate Planner, took a photo of the three DLC members present for the August issue of the Milwaukie *Pilot* publication. The DLC will be featured in that issue.

a. Joint meeting with City Council (8/18)

Mr. Kelper noted that DLC members should arrive at City Hall at 5:30 p.m. on August 18 for the joint meeting with City Council. This meeting will be an opportunity for the DLC to share their work plan for 2009-2010 with the City Council, as well as to share their enthusiasm for and interest in their work.

Mr. Hemer suggested that the DLC set the agenda for the joint meeting so they are able to contribute fully and are sure to present all of the information they would like.

Mr. Kelper handed out copies of the 2009-2010 DLC work plan, which will be sent to the City Council with the staff report prior to the joint meeting. He invited DLC members to contact him with any corrections or comments regarding the content of the work plan or the staff report.

Mr. Hemer suggested that the names of the DLC committee members be included in the staff report to the City Council.

Ms. Wisner suggested adding a more detailed list of DLC projects to the staff report, including:

- Historic properties slide show.
- New images/photos for existing Downtown Design Guidelines (“Design Guidelines”).
- Historic reference document including images of preferred design features, to be given to developers in downtown Milwaukee.

Mr. Kever agreed that it was appropriate for the DLC to discuss specific projects in order to flesh out the work plan, but indicated that the work plan itself was not intended to be overly specific.

Further discussion points on the DLC projects were as follows:

- The historic properties slideshow is underway; each DLC member is responsible for submitting photos to Ms. Wisner for inclusion in the slideshow. This project has been under way for a couple of years.
- The DLC is collecting images to replace the current images in the Design Guidelines, which do not necessarily reflect local desires. Many of the photos are from Portland or other larger cities that do not share Milwaukee’s character. This project is currently under way.
- Recent development in Milwaukee has not addressed the City’s unique character. The DLC hopes to address this by creating an historic reference document that shares the history of Milwaukee and provides a context for preferred design features and guidelines. This document would be auxiliary to the adopted Design Guidelines and could also be useful for new residents of the City. This project will begin in the near future.

Katie Mangle, Planning Director, reminded the DLC that any work plan adopted by City Council needed to be balanced with the limited City resources and staff time available to support the DLC’s work.

She suggested the committee set goals for the year ahead as well as aspirations for the future.

Mr. Hemer stated that the DLC should be proactive in preparing for the City Council meeting in order to show that they are a cohesive and passionate group. The DLC has a lot of new members and is working very well together.

Ms. Mangle agreed that preparing content for the meeting would be useful and allow for a discussion about the projects the DLC is focused on.

- The entire meeting should not be scripted, in order to allow time for questions from the City Council.
- It would be useful for members of the DLC to talk about their work on the committee and what projects they are excited about.

Ms. Wisner pointed out that the historic slide show, Design Guideline photos, and historic reference document were designed to utilize the unique skill sets of the DLC members, but a researcher/writer for the historic reference document was still needed.

Mr. Hemer volunteered to research the history of Milwaukee for the historic reference document.

Chair Ives suggested that the DLC meet after the City Council meeting to continue the urban design discussion and take care of any business at hand.

Ms. Wisner requested that each member submit the photos for the historic slideshow project to her at the August 18, 2009, DLC meeting.

The DLC proceeded to item 4.a before item 3.c.

4. WORKSESSION ITEM

a. General discussion on urban design

Mr. Kelper asked the DLC members to bring images of design components and infill developments that they found appealing and appropriate for Milwaukie. The discussion was designed to create a shared vision of the committee and to inform the historic reference document to be created in the future.

Discussion points regarding urban design in Milwaukie were as follows:

- Because the DLC has gained several new members this year, the group has not yet had a discussion about shared design goals.
- The DLC could be more effective if developers know beforehand that the committee has expectations beyond the requirements of the Design Guidelines, rather than being surprised that the DLC has specific concerns. Overall, the DLC should be consistent and fair in dealings with developers, so the developers know what to expect.
- Infill development in Sellwood and Lake Oswego is appealing to the members of the DLC and they would like to see similar development in Milwaukie.
- The City's zoning ordinance is too general regarding allowed colors, landscaping, etc. and allows poorly designed buildings to be constructed.
- However, if the Design Guidelines are too prescriptive and reflect the DLC members' preferences too much, they will have to be revised each time a new member joins the DLC.
- The goal of the downtown Design Guidelines is not to create uniformity, but rather to encourage a respect for the past and future of the community.
- There will be a great deal of downtown development with the arrival of the light rail, and the DLC should be prepared to take a stance on what they would like to see downtown.
- Updating or amending the Design Guidelines will be a Comprehensive Map Amendment process and is quite a large process. The historic reference document could be a stand-alone document that augments the Design Guidelines; it can be approved by City Council if the DLC desires more formal recognition of the document. There are no immediate plans to update the Design Guidelines in the future, though the Transportation Growth Management (TGM) grant the City received from the State could lead to updates in the future.

At this point in the discussion, the DLC briefly proceeded to item 3.c (see below). They returned to item 4.a at the end of the meeting. That discussion is concluded here for topical continuity.

Mr. Kelper showed slides provided by DLC members. The slides showed examples of positive and negative design features in other communities, such as Bend and Jacksonville (OR) and Steamboat Springs and Fort Collins (CO).

Ms. Mangle pointed out that highlighted communities, such as Fort Collins, took a long time and a lot of work to become successful.

Ms. Wisner noted that Fort Collins appeared to have a strong sense of identity, which may have been helpful in their positive development.

3. INFORMATION ITEMS (continued)

c. Interim Code update pages

Mr. Kelper distributed Interim Code updates for Milwaukie Municipal Code (MMC) Titles 19 Zoning Ordinance and Title 14 Sign Ordinance.

The Title 19 updates include MMC Section 19.312 Downtown Zones and MMC 19.323 Historic Preservation Overlay HP. These ordinances were adopted by Ord. 2003 on June 16, 2009, and became effective July 16, 2009.

The Title 14 updates include MMC Section 14.08 Administration and Enforcement and Section 14.16 Sign Districts. These code updates were adopted by Ord. 2001 on June 16, 2009, and became effective July 16, 2009.

5. APPLICATION REVIEW ITEMS—None

6. OTHER BUSINESS

Other Business items were taken out of order. They are listed below in order of discussion.

b. Code Assessment project

Ms. Mangle discussed the Transportation Growth Management (TGM) grant that the City received from the State for the purpose of code assessment. Angelo Planning Group (APG) conducted the assessment, which focused on four areas: Residential design standards, downtown standards, administrative provisions, and the Manufacturing Zone M.

The assessments were designed to explore whether standards needed to be improved or if existing standards were too prescriptive to allow the City to reach its goals.

- The City has minimal residential design standards and no design standards at all for multifamily housing. Although much of the single-family residential development we see is appropriate, the City's Zoning Ordinance allows for many inappropriate types of single-family residential structures.
- The downtown standards are designed to encourage a high-quality, attractive, and vital downtown retail district. However, the standards are very strict and do not allow many uses on Main Street that staff feels would be appropriate.
- If the City receives a grant to complete Phase 2 of the assessment, the implementation phase, she will request the DLC's assistance with that project.
- The Planning Commission priority is the residential design standards. Currently, single-family design guidelines are a staff decision and are reviewed through the building permit process.

a. Update on Jackson Street Bus Shelter project

Ms. Mangle stated that the Jackson Street bus shelter recommended by the DLC at the June 24, 2009, meeting can be customized with green roofs; however, each customization adds to the cost. She noted that the base cost has increased from the amount originally quoted.

DLC members were encouraged to attend the Jackson Street Open House on July 30, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at City Hall. There will be information, landscaping plans, and more discussion about the proposed plans and shelters.

7. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.



Becky Ives, Chair