

**CITY OF MILWAUKIE
DESIGN AND LANDMARKS COMMITTEE
NOTES
Milwaukie City Hall
10722 SE Main St
MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2014
6:30 PM**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Sherry Grau, Chair
Val Ballestrem Vice Chair
Adam Argo
James Fossen
Scott Jones

STAFF PRESENT

Denny Egner, Planning Director
Vera Kolias, Associate Planner

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

1.0 Call to Order – Procedural Matters

Chair Grau called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and read the conduct of meeting format into the record.

****Note:** The information presented constitutes summarized minutes only. The meeting audio is available from the Planning Department upon request.*

2.0 Design and Landmarks Committee Minutes

Three sets of meeting minutes were approved by the same motion.

- 2.1 July 7, 2014
- 2.2 October 6, 2014
- 2.3 November 3, 2014

DLC Member Ballestrem moved to approve the July 7, 2014, meeting minutes as presented. There was no second. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3.0 Information Items

Denny Egner, Planning Director, noted that an open house for the Monroe Street Neighborhood Greenway was being held on December 3 at 6:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.

4.0 Audience Participation –This is an opportunity for the public to comment on any item not on the agenda. There was none.

5.0 Public Meetings

- 5.1 Summary: Reliable Credit Parking Lot
Applicant/Owner: Tom Sisul, Sisul Engineering/L & B Holzman, LLC
Address: 10605 SE Main St
File: DR-14-07
Staff Person: Vera Kolias, Associate Planner

Chair Grau called the meeting to order and read the conduct of design review meeting format into the record.

Vera Kolias, Associate Planner, provided an overview of the application and staff recommendation via PowerPoint presentation.

- The applicant proposed to construct a new surface parking lot on the site of a commercial building.
- Because the development was located within the Downtown Commercial zone, it was subject to Type III Downtown Design Review, which required a recommendation from the DLC to the Planning Commission.
- The applicants had proposed utilitarian light fixtures, rather than the ornamental style recommended by the Downtown Design Guidelines, and the usage of landscaping to define the street edge.
- The applicant had provided a revised proposal at the meeting, which had been distributed to the Committee. This proposal included a low seat wall along Main St. and turned the corner along Scott St.
- Staff felt that landscaping did not sufficiently address the pedestrian environment, and recommended a condition of approval requiring the provision of a structural storefront facade or seat wall along the Main St frontage in order to meet the pedestrian emphasis guidelines.
- Staff recommended approval with recommended findings and conditions of approval.

The Committee asked questions about the application.

- "Substantial" was an interpretation for the Committee to make, but staff's recommendations were that a wall along Main St would provide the street edge. The wall had not been designed and the design of the wall would need to return to the Committee for review.

Chair Grau called for applicant testimony.

Lee Holzman, Reliable Credit, 10690 SE McLoughlin Blvd, Milwaukie, provided an overview of the reason for the request.

- Reliable Credit had moved to its current location at 10633 SE Main St in 2001. Parking had been a concern, and he had bought the commercial building at 10605 SE Main St in 2010 in the event that additional employee parking was needed.
- In the past year, an employee had been hit by a car while crossing Harrison St to the City parking lot. This had motivated him to review Reliable Credit's parking situation.
- There was also concern about losing employee parking spaces at the City Hall parking lot when or if the Texaco Site redeveloped. He was trying to be proactive and address the parking situation now.

Tom Sisul, Sisul Engineering, 375 Portland Ave, Gladstone, provided additional information about the parking lot design.

- The staff report had indicated that the lot was 15,000 sf, but that number included both the Reliable Credit lot and the commercial building lot.
- The proposed parking lot was 15 stalls rather than the 13 stated in the staff report. 13 is the net number of new parking spaces.
- The applicant did not have significant opposition to the recommended conditions of approval. Staff preferred the use of ornamental lights rather than "shoe box" lights, and the applicant did not have any significant opposition to that request.
- He reviewed the revised proposal that had been provided to the Committee, which included 4 ornamental ("acorn") lights and a short wall of seating height along Main St and wrap around to Scott St. The seat wall was preferable to a fake building facade, because the seat wall provided visibility to and from the proposed parking lot. There had been some questions about the large tree on the site, which was expected to remain.

DLC Member Jones asked which materials would be used for the seat wall. **Mr. Sisul** noted that the wall would be constructed of brick or block in a light gray color, which was chosen because it was neutral.

Mr. Ballestrem asked how the parking lot enhanced the sense of place in downtown Milwaukie. **Mr. Sisul** noted that the parking facility wouldn't have the same character as the existing building. It was an allowed use in the zone, and the application was being submitted at this time to ensure that Mr. Holzman had the opportunity. The lot was proposed to provide convenience and safety for the employees. It would be landscaped and bring greenery to the corner, where there was currently none. The low wall would bring a structural element and the proposed acorn street lights would provide some sense of place.

Mr. Fossen asked how the current parking lot was used. **Mr. Holzman** stated that the current parking lot was used during the Farmers Market. When the Texaco Site property was developed, he would consider allowing the Farmers Market to locate on the existing and proposed parking lots.

Chair Grau asked how many employees and parking spaces Reliable Credit currently had. **Mr. Holzman** stated that there were currently 50 employees and 21 parking spaces. **Chair Grau** asked if there might be a diminished need for parking with the downtown light rail station. **Mr. Holzman** thought that the light rail would help but would not fully address the problem.

DLC Member Argo asked if Mr. Holzman had a sense of how his employees traveled to work, or if they had done any type of study of how people traveled to work. **Mr. Holzman** stated that the employee that had been struck by a car was walking to his car after work when he was hit while crossing Harrison St. He did not know how many people drove as opposed to riding a bike to work. He offered to find that information.

Mr. Ballestrem asked for further clarification about a statement that Reliable Credit would not be able to building a surface parking lot in the future. **Mr. Sisul** explained that the City was currently reviewing code revisions for downtown Milwaukie and he assumed that a version of the changes would be adopted. He understood that while surface parking lots were currently allowed along Main St north of Harrison St, the proposed regulations would prohibit surface parking lots along Main Street north of Harrison St. Mr. Holzman wished to preserve the right to build a surface parking lot on the site, and this was the only action he could control.

Mr. Jones asked whether a best use analysis or needs assessment had been conducted for the site. **Mr. Sisul** stated that no other options had been discussed. The building was currently occupied by several small businesses and the proposal was to remove the building and install a parking lot.

Chair Grau called for testimony in support of the application. There was none.

Chair Grau called for neutral testimony.

Denise Baker, 10606 SE Main St, Milwaukie: She supported the concept of a street wall similar to the New Market Theater in Portland rather than a street wall. She agreed that the pedestrian value and historic value would be changed with the removal of the building.

Charles Maes, 10605 SE Main St, Milwaukie: Owner of Casa de Tamales and tenant of the building. He respected Mr. Holzman and what he wanted to do with his property. He asked the Committee to help Mr. Holzman find another location for parking. He did not feel that demolishing the building would help downtown. He asked for assistance with saving the building.

Geoffrey Janke, 1237 SE River Forest Ln, Oak Grove: Spends quite a bit of time in downtown Milwaukie. Questions whether a parking lot is the best use of the space. Would like to see additional discussion about best use of the street and whether the proposal would actually increase the safety of the employees.

Chair Grau called for testimony in opposition to the application.

Christie Schaffer, 10606 SE Main St, Milwaukie: Has lived in Milwaukie since the early '70s. Doesn't want another parking lot on Main St. The owner should know the situation of employees before putting in a parking lot. Would like to keep it as a part of Main St. Asked the City to work with the applicant to find another way.

Ceci Denovo, 2615 SE Willard St, Milwaukie: Has lived in Milwaukie since 2005. Very opposed to the project, feels that it is against the goals of the city. Rather than building business it destroys sense of place and eliminates businesses that provide jobs and bring people in. It is extremely unjust that business owners are losing income and employees as well. It is also very inconvenient for Milwaukie residents who are patronizing these businesses. The recommendation is to mimic storefronts, but we should keep a real storefront with businesses behind them. It does not seem that the applicant is clear about what the employee parking needs are.

Alicia Hamilton, 11921 SE 19th Ave, Milwaukie: One of the organizers of First Friday event, and has put a lot of volunteer time and effort into making city better. Respects and understands the needs of Mr. Holzman and Reliable Credit. It is devastating to lose 5 businesses for a parking lot. Implored the City and property owner as well as future builders and developers to work together to find solutions to parking so that a businesses don't have to build them on their own. She understood that a surface parking lot was allowed by code, and asked the Committee to consider several things: mimicking storefronts does create a sense of place; would look at lighting, acorn style is consistent but if living across the street might prefer downward lighting; consider providing a mural on the back wall and Mr. Holzman might consider donating to the Milwaukie mural program.

Val Hubbard, 10669 SE 21st Ave, Milwaukie: Loves walking downtown. The small businesses downtown really enhance her life in Milwaukie. It saddens her to think that this could become a parking lot. Concerned about person getting hit by the car, but he could have been hit going to lunch rather than to his car. Hope that they care about Milwaukie as much as she cares about

Milwaukie. We are on cusp of making the downtown a great place, but the proposed design is not architecturally interesting. If the project moves forward would like it to beautify the City.

Chair Grau called for additional questions from the Committee.

Chair Grau asked if Reliable Credit had parking incentives for the use of transit. **Mr. Holzman** stated that there was no transit incentive. He addressed comments about how he did not know the employee need for parking. He had asked how many employees purchased parking from the City at the Texaco site. Reliable Credit employees purchase more than the net 13 spaces that would be provided in the new parking lot.

Chair Grau asked if members of the audience could ask questions of the Committee or the applicant. **Mr. Egner** stated that it was the Committee's choice, and any statements should be directed to the Chair.

Mr. Maes noted that Mr. Holzman could buy transit passes for 50 employees and it would cost less than building a parking lot or paying for 50% of the parking passes for employees.

Mr. Egner noted that he was not sure it was proper to restart the hearing by allowing additional comments and testimony.

Chair Grau noted that the issue at hand was not the removal of the building, but whether the parking lot design met the Downtown Design Guidelines.

Ms. Baker asked whether the City had considered working with Mr. Holzman on construction of a two-story building that could accommodate commercial spaces and parking, and whether the City had followed up on urban renewal funds that could help with that type of project.

Unknown female in the audience noted that the applicant had stated that the parking lot would not be permitted in the future due to proposed zoning updates. She asked if there was a possibility that the parking lot permission could be "grandfathered in" so that the applicant could build a parking lot in the future.

Mr. Egner responded to the questions.

- The Community Development Director had met with Mr. Holzman several times and the City was still talking with them.
- The City did not currently have an urban renewal district, though it was part of the Moving Forward Milwaukie discussion.
- If approval is given for the parking lot the applicant has two years to do so and can also offer an extension to the approval, and they are under no obligation to construct the parking lot right away.

Tim McMenamin, 13063 SE Capistrano Ct, Milwaukie, 97222: Asked if there were plans for development of the City parking lot across from Reliable Credit (the Texaco Site). **Mr. Egner** noted that the site had been identified as an opportunity site through the Moving Forward Milwaukie project, and the City was looking at joint development opportunities. The City had worked with Metro several years ago to develop the site but the economy had collapsed and the project did not move forward. The City also needed to revisit a downtown parking plan in the event that property developed. **Mr. McMenamin** proposed an alternative option for the site which would be to create a covered Farmers Market and add a second level parking structure.

Mr. Janke asked if the project would include ADA spaces or promote alternative transportation methods.

Chair Grau called for applicant rebuttal.

Mr. Sisul addressed the testimony and comments.

- The proposed parking lot would be on the same lot, so no one would need to cross the street. It would also be closer than other parking lots.
- Agreed that down facing street lights would protect adjacent residences from light glare.
- The building to the rear of the parking lot is not owned by Mr. Holzman, so the owner of the building would need to install a mural.
- The site was too small for a two story facility including parking due to ramps. Would not work well for parking or as a retail area.
- The City's lot is large enough to construct a two story parking facility with street-level storefronts.
- Sometimes the rules change and you aren't able to get an extension to the approval because the rules could change. They should exercise caution and not assume that an extension would be granted.
- An extra ADA stall would be added in front of the main entry to meet ADA requirements triggered by the parking expansion.

Mr. Holzman noted that he had put a lot of money into making the Reliable Credit building look nice. The parking lot was not a financial venture – he was comfortable spending the money to make it to look nice.

Chair Grau closed public testimony portion of the meeting.

The Committee discussed the proposal.

- Agreed that the site should be visually interesting.
- Agreed that a hybridized approach to the site lighting was appropriate: shoe box lighting was appropriate along the western edge of the parking lot, and acorn lighting was appropriate along the Main St edge.
- Supported the low wall concept, but a storefront façade would better meet the Downtown Design Guidelines.
- Felt that the lighting along Main St should be shielded from the residences across the street in some manner.
- Determined that, as conditioned and with modified conditions of approval, the application met the approval criteria.

Mr. Ballestrem moved to recommend approval of the application with modified findings allowing shoe box lighting along the western edge of the parking lot and requesting a façade rather than a seat wall along Main St. **Mr. Argo** requested that the motion be amended to require two or three alternative concepts for DLC approval. **Mr. Ballestrem** modified the motion to include at least two storefront designs be submitted to the DLC for review. **Mr. Fossen** seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

6.0 Worksession Items

There were none.

7.0 Other Business/Updates

There were none.

8.0 Design and Landmarks Committee Discussion Items

There were none.

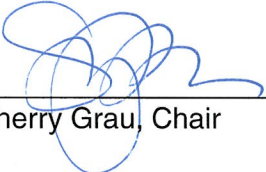
9.0 Forecast for Future Meetings:

January 5, 2014	1. Cancelled
February 2, 2014	1. TBD

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Li Alligood, Senior Planner



Sherry Grau, Chair