

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Astoria City Hall

July 10, 2018

CALL TO ORDER:

President Rickenbach called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

ROLL CALL – ITEM 2:

Commissioners Present: President Jared Rickenbach, Vice President LJ Gunderson, Leanne Hensley, Sarah Jane Bardy and Hilarie Phelps.

Staff Present: City Manager Brett Estes and City Attorney Blair Henningsgaard. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – ITEM 3:

City Manager Estes confirmed that the minutes of the June 25, 2018 meeting were not yet available.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

ITEM 4(a):

DR18-01 Design Review DR18-01 by Craig Riegelnegg, Carleton Hart Architecture for Hollander Hospitality to construct an approximate 29,782 square foot, four story hotel, adjacent to historic structures, at 1 2nd Street (Map T8N R9W Section 7DA, Tax Lots 11800 and 11900; Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, Block 1, McClure; and Map T8N R9W Section 7DB, Tax Lots 1300, 1400, 1501, 1700; Unplatted lots fronting on Block 1, Hinman's Astoria) in the C-3 Zone (General Commercial), Bridge Vista Overlay Zone (BVO), Flood Hazard Overlay (FHO), and CRESO Zone. (Adopting Findings of Fact from continuation with tentative denial from the June 25, 2018 meeting.)

City Manager Estes reminded that the public hearing had been closed at the last meeting. He presented the revised Findings of Fact, which were based on the DRC's direction to Staff and vote to tentatively deny the request.

Vice President Gunderson said after reviewing the revisions to the Staff report, she did not have any changes or additions.

President Rickenbach confirmed that Page 15 of the Staff report included the DRC's direction to change the scale of the Ship Inn building and its roofline. City Manager Estes added that the Staff also included concerns that the exterior materials on the Ship Inn were considered a slip cover.

President Rickenbach believed the Staff report did not reflect the discussion about the Ship Inn's impact on the overall massing of the project as an existing non-conforming building. Removing the building could open up the view corridor and reduce the massing of the new construction.

Commissioner Phelps said she had indicated she wanted the building removed.

City Manager Estes confirmed that language would be added to the bottom of Page 7, where the existing building and view corridor were referenced.

President Rickenbach clarified that he did not have an issue with the massing or the size of the building, but the view corridor would be nonexistent. He believed the size and elevations would be acceptable without the Ship Inn building.

Commissioner Bardy believed the building was too tall, even though it would be under the height restriction, and that the Applicants were making use of a loophole to avoid counting the square footage of the Ship Inn.

City Manager Estes stated that the Ship Inn's square footage was included. If the Ship Inn were demolished, additional square footage could be added elsewhere. He asked for direction on how to tie demolition to a criterion.

President Rickenbach said the criterion was the overall massing and the view corridor. It would be better for the four-story building to be 10 feet longer rather than losing 35 feet of view corridor to a sprawling building. There were a lot of public comments about views and the City established the view corridor so that people could retain their views.

City Manager Estes referenced Page 11, which indicated buildings should retain significant original features, scale, massing, and building materials along the street facades. Staff had argued that criteria applied to new construction.

President Rickenbach reminded that the DRC had argued the criteria applied to the existing building because it was tied into the new construction.

City Manager Estes noted that the findings expressed concerns about the design of the new construction, which did not tie into maintaining the characteristics of the site, providing for an appropriate transition between the new and existing structures. He would add language reflecting that inclusion of the Ship Inn combined with the massing of the proposed new hotel building resulted in a long unbroken expanse of structure along the waterfront, and did not meet the intent of the Code to provide a view corridor along the right-of-way.

President Rickenbach believed the square footage not counted towards the height restriction should be minimized. City Manager Estes confirmed that language had been added to the Staff report.

Commissioner Bardy asked Staff to include comments on scale to Page 6, where the Staff Report mentions the height limit of 45 feet. Public comments seemed to indicate four stories was not appropriate. The only other four-story building within a relative distance is the Holiday Inn. City Manager Estes explained that language has been included on Page 12 and stated that the DRC determined the scale, massing, and material designs were not appropriate for the site. While the height was permitted in that zone, the scale and box-shaped massing was not appropriate.

Commissioner Bardy said she wanted emphasis on the scale. The Columbia House, which is right next door over the water, is four stories tall. But basic laws of perspective say it is at a farther distance, so it looks shorter. She suggested the word "scale" be underlined and typed in bold font in the Staff report.

Commissioner Phelps moved the Astoria Design Review Committee adopt the Findings of Fact and deny Design Review DR18-01 by Craig Riegelnegg, with the changes to the Staff Report as discussed (Page 12, Section H, [a] and [b]; add language of proposed changes and to emphasize scale to maintain a 70-foot view corridor by removing a portion of Ships Inn, or all of Ships Inn in a new design); seconded by Vice President Gunderson. Motion passed unanimously. Ayes: President Rickenbach, Vice President Gunderson, Commissioners Phelps, Barty, and Hensley. Nays: None.

City Manager Estes confirmed he would make the noted changes to the revised Staff Report and Findings of Fact dated July 5, 2018.

President Rickenbach read the rules of appeal into the record.

Vice President Gunderson asked if the City had any way of getting the Applicant to clean up Stephanie's Cabin. City Manager Estes replied Staff would speak with property owners about Code enforcement issues.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS – ITEM 5:

There were none.

STAFF UPDATES/STATUS REPORTS – ITEM 6:

There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – ITEM 7:

George Hague, 1 3rd Street, Astoria, said he attended City Council's work session on urban planning. It sounded like only the Planning Commission and City Council would be involved in creating the document. Much of the testimony on the proposed hotel about the scale, height, and view corridors would be part of the plan. He believed it would be appropriate for the DRC to be involved in the hearings and give official input. He hoped everyone in the audience would let the City know that they want to be notified of upcoming public input sessions. He confirmed he was speaking about the Urban Core Area of the Riverfront Vision Plan, which extends from 2nd Street to 16th Street. The present plan is to have very narrow corridors to see the river. He also wanted the DRC to provide input on roof-mounted equipment. He did not believe equipment should be installed at the edge of a building roof and the Code should stress that equipment should be installed towards the center. Garbage enclosures should also have a side entrance that allows access without opening the large doors for the trucks. The large doors get left open. The DRC should also be involved in parking requirements. The mass of the building determines the number of parking spaces required. The DRC needs to make sure that hotels and restaurants provide employee parking, especially in the Urban Core. This needs to be written into the Code. The Astoria Downtown Historic District Association (ADHDA) is regulating parking for their area and their requirements are not a citywide code. Developers have to be responsible for the shape and look of their sites.

City Manager Estes confirmed that the Planning Commission would begin working on Code amendments for the Urban Core Area of the Riverfront Vision Plan within the next month or two. He explained that the Development Code directs the Planning Commission and City Council to write and adopt code. The first meeting dates would be announced within the next few weeks.

President Rickenbach noted that Administrative Assistant Taylor did a good job notifying the DRC of meetings and distributing materials and agendas.

City Manager Estes confirmed all of the meetings would be public. Meetings would include work sessions, a community forum and a town hall meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:28 pm.

APPROVED:



Community Development Director