

Design Review Board  
Minutes of Meeting

November 2, 2005

Present: Cheryl McGuire, Tim Hart, Jim Goldsmith, Bob Turgeon, Joann Baierlein, Judy Hamilton, Paddy Mudd  
Absent: Tim Berres  
Town Staff: Carol Rollins and Gayle Curry

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Cheryl McGuire, chair.

**Sleep Inn, 6860 Crain Highway**

The attached master sign plan needs to be adopted prior to the approval of the proposed detached and attached signage.

The applicant has submitted a revised drawing of the proposed detached sign which shows a wider brick base as requested. The proposed detached sign will be 98 sq. ft. and 18 feet in height. (100 sq. ft., 20 ft. maximum allowed)

The applicant is requesting approval of one 74 sq. ft. attached sign for the south building elevation. (75 sq. ft. maximum allowed).

The proposed signage is code compliant and meets the requirements of the proposed master sign plan.

Sonny Patel was present at this meeting.

Mr. Turgeon wanted to know if there were any questions from the last meeting regarding the Master Sign Plan? He also stated that he appreciated the changes that were made.

**Mr. Patel thanked the Board and told them that he appreciated the Board making him come back and make the changes. It looks much better.**

Mr. Hart wanted him to fill in the corners (gaps) with brick or something.

Motion was made to approve the Master Sign Plan by Mr. Turgeon and it was seconded by Mr. Goldsmith, all approved.

Motion was made to approve the attached and detached sign as proposed with one condition that the corner areas are filled in. Mr. Turgeon made the motion to approved and Mr. Goldsmith seconded the motion, all were in favor, motion approved.

**La Tolteca Mexican Restaurant, 6625 Crain Highway**

The owner is requesting approval of a revised master sign plan. The revision would allow the tenants in the center portion of the building to use the existing backlit signage panels.

The revised master sign plan must be approved by the Design Review Board prior to approving the La Tolteca signage.

La Tolteca, the tenant, is requesting one 62 sq. ft. building sign (maximum allowed is 75 sq. ft.). The proposed signage is code compliant.

Mr. Turgeon stated that Paragraph IV needs to be changed if they approve Master Sign Plan. He wants to know where the changes have been made. If they approved the use of the current sign, they need to change paragraph V as well.

Mrs. Maguire was concerned that when Outback was approved that this had to be one or the other. The colors all have to be the same as well as the lettering. Will he replace them all so that they will be the same color red.

Mr. Mote stated that there were 4 tenants and that the signs are in the stucco and looks very nice the way that they are done. He thinks it will look very nice and they will all be the same red. The haircutters sign will get moved and replaced. It will look very uniform, neat and organized. He did not ask that they change the Master Sign Plan just to add a sentence that utilizes the existing sign panel within stucco façade and will comply with everything else as specified with the channel lettering.

Mrs. Maguire wanted to know how to get rid of the line between the name and the bottom panel.

It was stated that it's just a panel and it would not be hard to remove.

Mr. Turgeon asked if the red color is the standard 2415? The board will like to know the exact number of the red color. Mrs. Maguire stated that the 2415 was Outback's color.

Mrs. Maguire asked if they brought any pictures with them to show the board what it is going to look like.

Mrs. Maguire stated that Paragraph V needs to be changed to eliminate yellow and blue.

Mr. Mote states that he has three primary colors are red yellow and blue.

Mrs. Rollins made a recommendation that they use the sentence from paragraph IV pertaining to the colors.

Mr. Turgeon asked if they were talking about re-wording Paragraph 5 of the Master Sign Plan, wanted to know where the change is going to be.

Mr. Turgeon suggested that they need to come back with the Master Sign Plan rewritten and come back with changes and pictures as well before the Board will approve.

Mr. Hart suggested that the Board approves it with changes and conditions.

It was unanimous that La Tolteca comes back for the next meeting with the proper changes and pictures.

### **Dunkin Donuts/Basking Robbins at La Plata Plaza, 22 Shining Willow Way**

The site is a 0.607 acre portion of Outlot "B", situated adjacent to the existing Chevy Chase Bank, within the La Plata Plaza shopping center.

Interior parking lot landscaping is provided at 5% of the parking lot total square footage. See applicant's Guideline analysis for detail.

The signage as show on the building appears to be Code compliant. Sign details and permits will be required to verify that the signage meets the master sign plan for La Plata Plaza.

Exterior lighting on the building has been described in the Guideline analysis, and shown on the building elevations, but a detail of the fixtures is needed on the plans.

Applicant will need to show handicap ramps and crosswalks on the site plan. Staff recommends that stamped concrete to match others in the shopping center should be provided at the drive-thru entrance. White striped crosswalk should be provided from the site towards Blockbuster and towards Chevy Chase Bank.

Andy Mueller, BL Company and Bruce Zibic, of Zibic Architects were present for this meeting.

Mrs. Maguire asked if they had brought any examples of the lights so that the Board could see? She also wanted to know if it was just a piece of metal?

Mr. Turgeon asked what is the material of the awning?

It was stated that it was of vinyl coated canvass material.

Mrs. Maguire noted that they moved the trash.

Mrs. Maguire wanted to know about the bollards around the speaker tower, and the menu board, that's all going to be the same color as the window trim?

Mr. Mueller stated that it would be.

Mrs. Maguire wanted to know if the propane tank has an enclosure around it? It was stated that it was a 3 sided closure.

Mrs. Maguire wanted to know if there was a reason for that?

It was stated that there will be gates on the trash but not on the propane.

Mrs. Maguire asked if there was any landscaping or anything around the propane tank?

Mr. Zibic stated that there is minimal shrubbery.

Mr. Hart asked about the parapets about the building, stating that it looks good from the front but when you walk around the building, it doesn't have any depth.

Mrs. Maguire asked about the striping on the building. Wanted to know if it was a bit much?

Mrs. Baierline asked about the EIFS on top, it looks like a funnel! Could they change it to something more gradual.

Mr. Turgeon made a statement that this design is still a little busy and a little stripy, for the size of the building it needs to be a little more simplified.

Mrs. Baierline asked if the lighter color brick match anything else on the building. She stated that if they had something a little more red it wouldn't stand out so much. She asked if there was any way they could step that back some.

Mrs. Maguire wanted to know if they were going to discuss the sign colors at this meeting?

Councilwoman Mudd seems to like the colors. She took a ride down to the Leonardtown branch and thought that the colors look really nice.

Mrs. Baierline wants the color of the lights to match either window frame or EIFS. Also, the roof line, stepping it would help it out by taking the "funnel" off.

Mrs. Maguire asked if there was a problem with enclosing the propane tank area since it is out in the open? She is very concerned about it being where it is.

Mrs. Maguire also stated that they could come back with a plan B and C.

Mr. Hart wanted to know if they were going to do away with the striping on the back wall there?

Mrs. Maguire stated that they will be coming back to the Board with change of lights, top work, a Sign Package, 2 brick color solution, detached signs, change smoke stacks (remove), landscape designs should be incorporated with the changes as well.

### **Wilhelm Building, 807 Charles Street**

The applicant has provided a revised site plan. Please bring your copy of previously submitted building elevations, and the written response to the design guidelines.

The site plan is code compliant per zoning review.

The applicant has been asked to bring material samples to the meeting.

Signage will be addressed at a future date.

Jonathan Kuhn, Dickerson Construction, Steve Scott, Chapman Bowling & Scott

Councilwoman Paddy Mudd is recussing herself from this portion of the meeting.

Mrs. Maguire asked Jonathan to go through his answers to the questions according to the guidelines.

Mrs. Maguire asked if they had any visual presentation of what CIVISTA's going to look lik with them?

Mr. Kuhn did in fact have something for the Board to look at and visualize.

Mr. Kuhn states that as far as site planning is concerned and buildings along the street that this building maximizes the amount of frontage along the public right of way.

Mr. Goldsmith mentioned that the sidewalk drops down, will there be any filling - is it going to be even with the first level.

Mr. Kuhn stated that it will be leveled from the sidewalk to the building.

Mr. Kuhn stated that the transparency of building elements provides a sense of security by way of visual activity. It is the Clients intent, as a "master plan", to develop their property to the Eastern side of Somerset Street as a multi-residential structure in support of the growing needs of the Town of La Plata.

Mrs. Maguire stated that this is not to be considered because it's not zoned for that, it's residential - R8.

It was stated that under building materials change "stair towers of terra cotta" to "precast concrete".

Mrs. Maquire asked about the roof top terrace marked by a screening trellis. She did not see it on the plans and asked where it was.

Mr. Kuhn stated that the trellis is really a horizontal plane support by columns.

Mr. Goldsmith wanted to know if there were going to be trees and wanted to know who would go to the top?

Mr. Kuhn stated that it would strictly be used by tenants that work or live in the building.

Mr. Goldsmith states that as he is looking at the building there is no entrance from Charles Street, nothing takes you from the sidewalk taking you into the building.

Mr. Kuhn states that if you are standing on Charles Street there is a sidewalk taking you into the building as well as on Somerset Street.

Under the Amenities for Public there were no questions or comments.

Mrs. Baierline has a concern about the parking, she sees only one way in and one way out, wanted to know if there is ample parking space under the building to maneuver under there? That's a code concern as well as a building concern.

Mr. Kuhn states that there will be enough room for vehicles to move about.

Mrs. Baierline asks if the glass was reflective glass? How are they going to cover up those spaces?

Mr. Kuhn says it is going to be shadow box

Mrs. Baierline asks how are you going to screen the structure from being able to see it through the glass?

Mr. Kuhn states the edge of the structure will be covered in dry wall and you will see a band in different instances.

Mr. Goldsmith was concerned about the parking area, wondering if it is open and asks if they think that enhances the capability of the pedestrians seeing the building.

Mr. Kuhn states that it does and it's the clarity of the site. It will be on uniform type of glass.

Mrs. Maguire stated that they will only see cars on Charles street instead not the entrance to the building.

Mr. Goldsmith states that they will still be looking at the cars and that's not what we want, you are exposing the cars to pedestrians.

Mr. Goldsmith states that going through his presentation, he states that he doesn't see where this compliments. He asked about the rendering of the Hospital presentation that he showed he wanted to know how large is the glass? Mr. Goldsmith state that his intentions were great but out of place for the Town of La Plata. He thinks it detracts having the open ground garage area so that you can see the cars and he thought that you would want the structure of the building to go down to the ground. You have great intentions, but I think it's totally out of place for La Plata.

Mrs. Maguire asked the Town Staff if Chief Shahan has seen this?

Mrs. Flerlage stated that No he has not.

Mrs. Hamilton agrees about the visibility of the parking and it not being good for the town.

Mr. Kuhn says that they would be willing to screen the parking.

Mr. Turgeon stated that he has concerns about the overall impact of a GLASS BLOCK on stilts. That's a concern he has had before. It is not compatible with it's immediate neighbors. The vision plan does not go along with the "Architectural Harmony of a small town". No gradual tapering off of the roof line. The guidelines also talk of offices and businesses are to be on the first/ground floor to invite the pedestrians to come in. It's a nice building in the wrong setting. No conformity East of Charles Street. Present building is set back and well hidden where as new building has a "shock effect".

Mr. Hart stated that to create a shared vision future, respects local character, this does not meet his LITMAS TEST.

As a result of the Town's Vision Plan we collectively learned the secrets of successful communities, which are..."Create a shared vision for the future; identify key natural, cultural, scenic and economic assets; build local plans around the preservation and enhancement of key assets; pick and choose among development proposals; and pay attention to community appearance as well as economics and ecology."

New buildings can either complement the character of our town, or they can turn the community into "Anyplace USA." The challenge facing the LaPlata Design Review Board (DRB), and its petitioners, is to provide every generation with structures that link them with their past, fill them with pride, and reinforce their sense of belonging, not create a landscape of commercial buildings designed to be nothing more than functional boxes.

One key test of the Vision Plan is the "RESPECT LOCAL CHARACTER" test. To identify this local character one needs to drive through the town and it becomes evident that structures such as the Carrico Building; Mudd, Mudd, and Fitzgerald; Steffens Company; Bank of Southern Maryland; Nations Bank; Library; Dr. Aarons office; The Maples apartments; most businesses on LaGrange Avenue; Sycamore Accents; LaPlata Professional Center; the new buildings on St. Mary's Avenue; Social Services; Heritage Place; The Baldus building; Martin's; and the list includes many others that reflect our local character.

On the other hand, current structures in the LaPlata Central Business District that complement the proposed Wilhelm project include the Dash In and Civista addition. Both of these did not come before the DRB for review.

Mrs. Baierline states the building materials make it NOT compliant. It's mostly residential and this just does not fit in. They need to address the building materials

Mr. Scott stated to the Board that his client would like for the Board to make a motion on the project today.

Mrs. Maguire asked if there was a motion to approve the project as presented. There was no motion to approve.

A motion was made to deny for reasons set forth in a written decision to be approved by the Board at a future date.

Mrs. Baierline seconded the motion, all in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Scott asked when they will be receiving a formal written notice.

Mrs. Maguire stated according to code Section 16-21B, the Board has 75 days.

Mrs. Maguire state that there was some housekeeping issues that the Board needed to get to the Mayor and Council regarding the Faison Annexation.

As far as pavers vs. striping or sidewalk.

Mr. Hart asks that if they are doing all this nice stuff at the North end, why not get them to do it at the South end of town.

Mrs. Maguire asked Patti Bembe if she wants the Board to put it in writing to the Mayor and Council.

No sidewalk on both sides of Rosewick, where there will be Senior Housing. There needs to be sidewalks on both sides of Rosewick. Possibly even a pedestrian overpass.

Sign Colors need to be addressed make it strictly two colors.

Mr. Goldsmith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Baierline seconded the motion.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.