

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN COMMISSION

MEETING OF

JUNE 13, 2024

Members Present

Peyton Keesee
John Ranson
Courtney Nicholas
Adam Jones
George Davis
Andrew Hessler

Members Absent

R. J. Lackey

Staff

Cynthia Lester
Ryan Dodson
Shanika Williams

ITEMS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

- 1. Certificate of Appropriateness application PZ24-00264 filed by William Elam to replace awning at 113 North Market Street.*

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Elam stated. I am the owner of Palace Barber Shop on Market Street. I'm here to replace the awning.

Mr. Davis stated. You are going to replace it with a metal awning.

Mr. Elam stated. Yes, a metal awning.

Ms. Nicholas stated. Will the awning be very similar to Adams next door.

Mr. Elam stated. Yes.

Mr. Jones stated. What color will the awning be?

Mr. Elam stated. Kinda reddish.

Ms. Nicholas stated. Will they still be separated awning or one extending across.

Mr. Elam stated. It will be separated, with same designs instead of canvas it will be metal.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing.

**Mr. Jones made a motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness PZ24-00264.
Ms. Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.**

2. Certificate of Appropriateness application PZ24-00275 filed by Belk Architecture to reface wall signs at 109 Bridge Street (Parcel 26837).

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Shull stated. I am here from Belk Architecture, representing Dr. Herman he would like to update the existing signage on two elevations of the River District Tower, the existing signs are the pin-mounted individual letters, and he wants to update the signage to align with the current graphic design and branding of the facility there would also be pin-mounted letters and pin-mounted waves. It will take up approximately the same area as existing sign.

Mr. Davis stated. Do we have any concern about the size of the signs?

Mr. Jones stated. No.

Ms. Nicholas stated. What are the plans for the current mounted letters.

Mr. Shull stated. They will be saved. I don't think they are original to the building.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing

Ms. Nicholas made a motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness PZ24-000275. Mr. Hessler seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote.

3. Certificate of Appropriateness application PZ24-00278 filed by Shelton Street LLC to replace windows and paint the exterior building at 553 Lynn Street (Parcel 21670).

Mr. Davis opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Shifflett stated. I'm here to answer any questions.

Mr. Davis stated. Mr. Jones, he painted the building white.

Mr. Jones stated. Thank you.

Mr. Shifflett stated. Those photos are a replica of the material we will be using for the windows we are proposing, storefront type material. The infield that is currently there will come out and the existing opening, none of the walls will be moved other than what's in the existing opening to add these windows.

Ms. Nicholas stated. The current window will be completely taken out.

Mr. Shifflett stated. Yes.

Ms. Nicholas stated. Then you are looking to expand the curve footage of the windows.

Mr. Shifflett stated. Yes, if you are inside the building the window opening is actually the full height, so you have a small window and infield below that. And we are going to take the infield below and existing window out and put the windows back in that opening, it an original opening to the building it was backfield at some point and the ribbon window were put in, I don't know if the ribbon windows are original

or not. Below the window there is a curve, the curve area to the top of the windows that is all one opening on the end in other word the structure of the building was infield at some point.

Ms. Nicholas stated. So, these were very large window at some point.

Mr. Shifflett stated. I not sure. I don't know if those were put in potentially they make an opening for large window and decided to go with smaller windows. I'm not sure but the original window opening covers that entire space.

Mr. Ranson stated. Are those windows all the way to the floor.

Mr. Shifflett stated. No, they stop about 18 – 24" above the floor but they go all the way to the ceiling.

Mr. Ranson stated. What the building being used for.

Mr. Shifflett stated. Storage.

Mr. Ranson stated. So, you going to keep the lights bright.

Mr. Shifflett stated. No, this is going to be 21 apartments. It is currently storage for our construction and various items that we have. The inside has columns with mushroom capital remanence of the White Mill. Once the windows are in and the exterior painted will look like a miniature version of the White Mill.

Mr. Ranson stated. Are you planning on any exterior other alteration except painting.

Mr. Shifflett stated. We are going to fix the concrete, rebar showing all that will be taken care of, put some mesh in and rebar with some bonding agent. All the ugliness will be fixed.

Mr. Davis stated. Another cool thing inside except for the mushroom column is that you can look up at the ceiling and see the grain of the wood it is a neat building.

Mr. Jones stated. Do you plan to go back with grills between glass as far as grids or it going to be a one pane window.

Mr. Shifflett stated. It is going to be insulated but not have grids. It a large window the top is one pane the bottom is two panes they slide, the reason they are at the bottom is they are operatable it looks better and if they were at the top, you could reach them, not divided light.

Ms. Nicholas stated. One of the problems we are running into is that the recommendation is in order to keep it as similar to existing window would be to keep some kind of grid pattern to the windows.

Mr. Shifflett stated. Okay.

Ms. Nicholas stated. So, from our point of view that where the questions are coming from, it not an issue trying to keep the character of the building while making it more functional going forward.

Mr. Shifflett stated. Personally, I think that would be so busy you have an opening with all this stuff going on, I don't think it would look right to have an opening with all those grids in it that is my opinion. I just think it would be too busy and it wouldn't look right. Think of the White Mill with no arches, think of the bottom layer with no windows, those are totally different types of windows it just the feel dark windows with the white building.

Mr. Ranson stated. These are aluminum.

Mr. Shifflett stated. Yes

Mr. Jones stated. Backfield in the current situation is divided light with full concrete underneath it, double slide will be at that level.

Mr. Shifflett stated. Yes, it will be at the level the bay doors the curb above it is about 18-24" above the finish floor on the second floor, the bottom of the first floor is even with the windows on the first floor, they are not going to come to the floor, but they will go to the ceiling.

Ms. Nicholas stated. This is going to be a less concrete building and a more glass building.

Mr. Hessler stated. This has already been approved for tax credit.

Mr. Shifflett stated. No, we are not doing tax credit on this one.

Mr. Davis stated. In your opinion most of the concrete wasn't there with the original windows.

Mr. Shifflett stated. I don't know this could be original but feel like they had something larger in there, when you are inside the building it all concrete, but the infield is 12x12 Pyrex it looks like block, it is infield, and it is parched. It was definitely built one opening and added to in the windows. I don't know if someone added it later or changed their mind and decided to add small windows.

Mr. Hessler stated. It reminds me of the Ford dealership, similar structures but large section on the ground.

Ms. Nicholas stated. Has inspection been by to give their review and given their final say on this.

Mr. Shifflett stated. No, we are working on plans we just wanted to get this part going, the plans are being worked on.

Ms. Nicholas stated. we do have to know if you make any alterations you will have to come back in front of us again.

Mr. Shifflett stated. I don't anticipate that I think this is straightforward.

Mr. Davis stated. This is Danville nothing is straightforward.

Mr. Shifflett stated. They are a little bit more straightforward than the City of Richmond.

Mr. Davis closed the Public Hearing

Mr. Davis stated. Is there some skepticism motion contingent on inspection.

Ms. Nicholas stated. I have no problem with repairing concrete and block just taking staff recommendation of altering the window pattern to include a grid patten to simulate the existing windows. I agree having that many grids going all the way down would be way to busy.

Mr. Davis stated. Are you ok with the size of the windows being increased.

Ms. Nicholas stated. Yes, I am.

Ms. Williams stated. Keep in mind these will be residential so the windows will have to open.

Mr. Shifflette stated. The windows don't have to open we would like for them to open, it not a fire code issue or exit or sprinkler issue.

Mr. Jones stated. Mr. Chairman is this a building that was in your family?

Mr. Davis stated. Yes.

Mr. Jones stated. Exactly how old is this building.

Mr. Davis stated. I don't know but we had the building across the street, and we were looking at what they were doing back in the 60s and I don't know of any other design than what it was then. The building is going to stand out anyway because it is all concrete.

Ms. Nicholas stated. Are the changes to 2 or 3 sizes of the building.

Mr. Shifflett stated. 3 sizes, the front is SRI the back side is going to faces the creek.

Mr. Jones stated. Trying to adhere to the guidelines keeping most of the grids in between most of these windows including the White Mill. The magnitude and the size of the building I feel it is very modern to that building, it may change the landscape of the look that the River District have going on. Based on staff recommendations that is my personal opinion, is the grids.

Mr. Ranson stated. The building really doesn't have much style, it a contemporary build but it is an old building.

Ms. Nicholas stated. Does Planning have a particular size grid that they want.

Ms. Williams stated. Ideally according to the design guidelines, it should match what's there. Again, that's recommendation never set in stone.

Mr. Ranson stated. Match what's there, there is no top on the building.

Mr. Davis stated. Like Ms. Burton stated we would be looking at the design guidelines maybe to do a refresh.

Ms. Williams stated. Yes.

Mr. Davis stated. Is he going to have to come back to us any way after he get approval from the Planning Commission about this.

Ms. Williams stated. If for whatever reason when he goes for permitting and they require a change, he will have to present those changes back to if that involves the windows you guy if it not in accordance with what you guys decide today.

Ms. Nicholas stated. We have approved things in the past specifically with the contingent the two sides have to figure things out.

Mr. Davis stated. Would it be better if this commission recommended to them what our thoughts were instead of saying you all work it out and then come back to us.

Ms. Nicholas stated. I'm saying not come back to us, we have done it in the pass where we said this is conditionally approved once planning and the applicant find something they can agree on.

Mr. Ranson stated. I think we should approve it no matter what.

Mr. Shifflett stated. I like this design I think grids would be too busy, we want an operatable window something that's different. And easy for the tenants to use. We want it to stand out a little bit, this is an industrial style building we did talk about grids, and it just looked a mess. In the pass if you have an opening and you change the windows, they wanted something different than what was there. If you had a 60 over 60 and you are replacing it, you put a 1over 1. If you change the window, they want something different, so they know it is a change window and not something you trying to replicate.

Ms. Nicholas stated. That part of function of this board is that you keep the current aesthetics of the district. So, you are arguing that you should not do that.

Mr. Shifflett stated. Yes.

Mr. Jones stated. Are the windows that are going to slide at the bottom the operatable piece that whole row is in grids from afar.

Mr. Hessler stated. I agree the current building is a lot of flat opening stance which the upper portion keep open and the current upper will now become lower gives more of a grid. I feel the building had a flat expansion session and busy session it was not all busy.

Mr. Jones stated. Replace the windows with some type of grid whether top or bottom, looks like bottom would be the best at this point to keep the flow of the landscape.

Ms. Nicholas made a motion to deny the Certificate of Appropriateness for PZ24-00278 it does not meet the guidelines as presented. Mr. Ranson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote. Ms. Nicholas made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for PZ24-00278 to paint the exterior of the building, repair concrete and block exterior of the building and replace existing windows with fixed paint and sliding windows with additional of a grid pattern within the windows, grid pattern specific to the sliders. Mr. Jones seconded. The motion was approved by a 5-1 vote.

Mr. Davis stated. So, you want Mr. Shifflett to get with the Planning Division to figure out which is more appropriate grid pattern to be used.

Ms. Nicholas stated. Yes, to get with Planning Division to come to an agreement with which grid pattern on the sliding section.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The May 9, 2024, minutes were approved by a unanimous vote. With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

Approved By: s/Cynthia Lester