

City of Excelsior
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, June 4, 2013

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Craig called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Craig, Wallace, Busch, Wright, Wilson, Duyvejonck, and Hannah

Others Present: Richards and Braaten

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(a) Planning Commission Meeting of May 7, 2013

Commissioner Busch moved, Wilson seconded, to approve the May 7th, 2013 minutes as presented. Motion carried 7/0.

4. PENDING ISSUES/PROJECTS

(a) Appoint Liaison to City Council (June 17, 2013)

Duyvejonck volunteered to be the City Council liaison for the June 17th, 2013 meeting.

Commissioner Wilson moved, Busch seconded to move Agenda Item 8(a) up on the agenda to accommodate the applicant. Motion carried 7/0.

8. NEW BUSINESS

(a) Consider Revisions to Design Standards Approval for the New Library at 337 Water Street – Hennepin County

Richards introduced the agenda item informing the Commission that Hennepin County has submitted an application for a revision to their original Design Standards approval for the new library. Richards stated that the original design may be over budget so the applicant was looking for opinions on similar, least costly, alternatives. Richards informed the Commission that the project was currently out for bid and it was still the preference of Hennepin County to construct what was originally approved, but they were looking for options in case they need to reduce costs to stay on budget. The revisions had been reviewed by the Heritage Preservation Commission on May 21st and they found all of the proposed options to be acceptable, but they required a final design to be submitted for their final review and approval. Richards stated that it was the intent of Hennepin County to have the Planning Commission make a determination and not have to come back to the Planning Commission for final approval.

Linda Kane, Hennepin County Project Manager, stated that the project was currently out for bid and the bidding process had been extended until June 13th. Based on their calculations they are anticipating budget overruns with the original design, so they have been looking at various options.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- (a) Consider Revisions to Design Standards Approval for the New Library at 337 Water Street – Hennepin County – (Continued)

Mark Wentzell, 292 Design, Project Architect, informed the Commission that a few minimal design changes had been made to the original design based on cost and function of the building. The following items were changed on the original design: 1) the building was reduced in height by 3 ft. 4 inches, 2) the plaques on the side of the front entrance were removed, 3) the number of windows on the rear half of the trailside of the building were reduced from 3 to 2, 4) a window was added on the rear side of the building, 5) the metal roof awning on the rear side of the building was expanded to cover the location of the book drop.

Wilson asked if the reduction in building height would affect the interior ceiling height of the building. Wentzell replied that the building height change would not affect the interior ceiling height. Wentzell also informed the Commission that the proposed skylights were no longer in the proposed design. Wentzell stated they had also been removed from the design in an attempt to cut costs.

Hannah commented that there had been no financial information in the material presented and it was tough to make choices without said information. Mark Wentzell stated in round numbers the original budget for the building was 2.5 million and with the original proposal they are projecting an estimated cost of 3.0 million. Hannah asked for the overall budget, not just the building budget. Wentzell stated that 3 million was the overall budget. Linda Kane commented that the 3 million dollar budget included some soil remediation, the building, and the proposed site improvements. Wilson asked if the proposed changes/options were due to cost overrun estimates. Wentzell responded in the affirmative.

Stuart MacDonald, architect with MacDonald & Mack, consulting historic architect for Hennepin County, explained the possible options to keep the project costs down including: 1) a change to the parapet cresting, 2) a lower rear parapet, 3) stucco on the back half of the building, 4) entry recessed **arch to be stucco instead of brick**, 5) **simplification of the front façade** detailing which includes the loss of the brick corbeling and the installation of a green cornice as an architectural detail. Mr. MacDonald stated that all options would meet the City guidelines, but their intention was still to build the original design if they could keep it within budget.

Discussion followed regarding brick corbeling and the possible addition of the green cornice feature.

Busch asked if the applicant had indicated that there would be skylights in their original design standards submittal. Wentzell stated that they may have commented on them as a possible design feature, but had not committed to it. Busch commented that the skylights were a significant design feature and she felt that the public reaction to their removal from the final design would not be very positive. MacDonald explained that the proposed windows would provide more than enough natural light into the

8. NEW BUSINESS

- (a) Consider Revisions to Design Standards Approval for the New Library at 337 Water Street – Hennepin County – (Continued)

building. Duyvejonck stated that the skylights were a feature she was originally excited about and was very disappointed that they had been removed from the design. Richards reminded the Commission that the installation of skylights was not within the scope of the Planning Commission design standard review.

Craig commented that she was still concerned with the proposed green cornice feature. She stated that it seemed to be a floating green band on the **front façade**. Discussion followed regarding the color of the proposed cornice. Wentzell replied that the architectural design was done so that all the metal improvements would be the proposed green color, all of the brick would be brick, and all of the stone would match and they felt that they needed to stick with the design for the integrity of the building design.

Discussion followed regarding the cornice, color, stucco and examples in the community.

Linda Kane asked if the Commission could approve the proposed changes to the original design and then look at the rest as potential alternative details.

Discussion followed regarding project bids, brick corbeling, and rear entry gutters.

Commissioner Duyvejonck moved, Hannah seconded to recommend approval of the proposed design changes to the original design. Motion carried 7/0.

The Commission commented that they were very concerned with the removal of the skylights from the design of the building.

Discussion followed regarding Option #2 presented by the applicant, specifically the reduction in height of the rear parapet and site lines.

Commissioner Duyvejonck moved, Wallace seconded, to recommend approval of the options presented in Option #2 with the ability to mix and match as needed to bring the project within budget. Motion carried 7/0.

Craig commented that she still had concerns with the proposed green cornice **as a front façade detail**. **Stuart MacDonald** stated that he had done the modeling and if the cornice were done in another color matching the building it tended to disappear.

Duyvejonck opined that she much preferred the front façade to have the brick corbeling, but the proposed green cornice alternative was still historically appropriate.

Commissioner Duyvejonck moved, Wilson seconded, to recommend approval of the proposed design options presented in Option #3 if needed to bring the project within budget with the understanding that this option would be the Commission's third option. Motion carried 6/1 with Commissioner Hannah voting "nay."

8. NEW BUSINESS

- (a) Consider Revisions to Design Standards Approval for the New Library at 337 Water Street – Hennepin County – (Continued)

Hannah commented that he voted against Option #3 because he felt the proposed cornice was not an acceptable replacement to the brick corbeling.

Commissioner Duyvejonck moved, Wright seconded, to recommend approval of the proposed changes to the landscape and site plan.

Craig asked if the change in the landscaping included removal of trees or just the relocation of trees. Wentzell replied that the revised landscaping plan included the removal of 7 trees from the original design.

Motion carried 7/0.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS – (Continued)

None

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- (a) Goals and Objectives for 2013

Braaten introduced the agenda item. Braaten stated that he had included the 2012 Planning Commission Goals and Objectives along with the goals and objectives presented in the Joint Meeting with the City Council.

Richards stated the Commission may want to add residential design standards to the list of goals. Richards informed the Commission that the City Council had reviewed the residential design standards and asked that the Planning Commission hold another public hearing for the proposed ordinance amendment since it had been such a long time since the original consideration. Richards stated that the Commission may also want to consider taking a look at the residential mass and scale issue as a goal.

Duyvejonck asked if there had been any discussion on prioritization of the goals and objectives. Craig commented that no discussion of prioritization had been discussed at the joint meeting with the City Council. Discussion followed regarding the prioritization of goals and objectives.

Wallace stated that the HPC should be involved in the first stage of the PUD process and asked how to move forward with this goal. Richards commented that the most appropriate way would be to hold a joint work session with the HPC to discuss the issue. Discussion followed regarding the PUD process, possible ordinance revisions, and the possibility of a joint meeting with the HPC on July 2nd.

Bob Bolles, current Heritage Preservation Commissioner, was in attendance and commented that it would be beneficial to have the HPC review PUDs at a concept plan level. Richards asked if a joint meeting would be helpful. Bob Bolles stated that he thought it would be appropriate.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(a) Goals and Objectives for 2013 – (Continued)

Commissioner Wallace moved, Hannah seconded, to invite the HPC to the July 2nd meeting to discuss possible ordinance revisions to the PUD process. Motion carried 7/0.

Discussion followed regarding goals and objectives language and prioritization.

Commissioner Busch moved, Hannah seconded, to direct staff to revise the Goals and Objectives to reflect the proposed changes and prioritization discussed. Motion carried 7/0.

(b) Formula Business Regulations (Franchises)

Richards introduced the topic providing a list of existing potential formula businesses in the community along with a draft purpose and intent. Richards stated that the Port Townsend definition for formula businesses was the most extensive, so he included it as a definition of formula business to start the discussion. Richards stated that staff was looking for direction from the Commission on if the language is headed in the right direction.

Discussion followed regarding exemptions and franchise businesses.

Busch was looking for clarification on whether the Commission was concerned with just the exterior of formula businesses or the formula business itself. Busch stated that she was concerned with more than just the exterior appearance of formula businesses within the community. Wilson stated that he thought the regulation of formula businesses should make them keep with the character of the community but not hinder free trade. Wallace, as an example, asked if the Commission wanted to eliminate Subway from coming to Excelsior or is it the look of Subway that is not wanted. Craig replied that she wanted local and independent businesses and did not see Excelsior as a community where she expected to see a Subway in town.

Discussion followed regarding limiting formula businesses in the community or regulating the look of them.

Duyvejonck questioned how many locations would warrant being considered a formula business.

Craig stated it was her thought that the City would protect the smaller individually owned independent businesses in the community. Protecting community character of small independent businesses would help add to the community identity where franchise businesses would not. Busch agreed that a community identity was very important and regulation of franchise businesses in the community could help facilitate that.

Discussion followed regarding signage, the number of locations required to be considered a franchise business, and our current design standards language.

Richards stated that he would continue to work on possible ordinance language and design standards language and bring the proposed language back to the Planning Commission to further the discussion.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(b) Formula Business Regulations (Franchises) – (Continued)

The Commission, by consensus, decided to continue this agenda item to the July meeting for further discussion.

Chair Craig called a 5 minute break at 8:59 PM.

Chair Craig reconvened the meeting at 9:04 PM.

(c) Parking Update – Implementation

Braaten commented that parking count information would be provided at the July 2nd meeting.

i. Parking Options for Water Street/Design Standards for 50-foot Setback Requirement on Water Street

Richards stated that this item would be revisited at the July 2nd meeting.

ii. Parking Map

Richards stated that the old Excelsior Chamber of Commerce parking map was well done, but required some updating. Chair Craig was going to review the existing map and see if it could be updated.

iii. Parking Management

Richards stated that he was checking on the projected number of pay stations and costs. He had not heard back from the parking pay station representative yet.

Wallace asked about the new school parking lot which was recently developed behind the proposed library site and if that could be used for public parking. Richards informed the Commission that City Manager Kristi Luger was working with the school district on an agreement regarding this issue.

8. NEW BUSINESS

(a) Consider Revisions to Design Standards Approval for the New Library at 337 Water Street – Hennepin County

This agenda item was heard by the Planning Commission earlier in the meeting.

(b) Dates for Additional Work Session(s)

None.

9. COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS

(a) Next Planning Commission Meeting – Tuesday, July 2, 2013

10. MISCELLANEOUS

(a) Recent City Council Actions

Richards informed the Commission of recent City Council actions.

Commissioner Busch moved, Wallace seconded, directing staff to re-notice the Residential Design Standards Ordinance Amendment and hold a public hearing for the proposed amendment at the July 2, 2013 meeting. Motion carried 7/0.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wallace moved, Hannah seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m. Motion carried 7/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Lane L. Braaten
City Planner