

PIQUA DOWNTOWN DISTRICT DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
Meeting Minutes - Tuesday, February 24, 2009 - 6:00 P.M.
Board Room - Piqua Area Chamber of Commerce

Members Present: Jim Oda, Brad Bubp, Ann DeBrosse Comer & Ruth Koon.

Staff Member: Lorna Swisher

Guests: Chris Schmiesing, City of Piqua Planning Department
Doug Francony, Unity National Bank

Mr. Oda called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

ITEM NO. 1: MEETING MINUTES

It was moved by Mrs. Ruth Koon to accept the January 13, 2009 Regular Meeting minutes and the February 3, 2009 Work Session Minutes as presented. Mr. Brad Bubp seconded the motion. With all members present in favor, the motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

ITEM NO. 2: RESOLUTION DRB 14-08

A resolution requesting a certificate of appropriateness for the demolition of 204 N. Main Street and replacing it with parking, green space and a public area.

Mr. Oda reminded everybody that a work session had been held earlier in the month to give Unity National Bank some input on the Board's expectations for the lot should the building demolition be approved. Mr. Francony reported that Unity National Bank had looked at the suggestions offered by the Board and priced out the various options.

Unity National Bank is proposing two black aluminum fences. The posts will be 6' and in-between the fence will be 4' 6" fencing. There will be two sets of these fences - one on either side of the entrance from the parking lot to the Main Street side of the lot. The posts themselves would be faux Unilock type brick. The revised drawing showed a back-up area for the cars that would be located on the Main Street end of the parking lot with an area of bumped out landscaping in that area. There will be two trees planted on those bump-outs (proposed to be an Autumn Blaze Maple Tree.) The presented plan also called for a row of plantings on the North side of the lot closest to the Unity Bank administration building. There will also be bump-outs on the West side of the new lot (at the Unity Bank end) with some plantings. In front of the proposed ornamental fence there would be some lower plantings including dwarf fountain grass, boxwoods and myrtle ground cover.

Mr. Francony was asked if they had looked at actual brick columns between the aluminum fence and he said they had but it more than doubled the price of the columns. He further said that Unity was committed to bringing this plan to fruition if the board approved it.

It was noted that the lot will be used during the daytime by employees of Unity National Bank and made available to the downtown and the Fort Piqua Plaza during evening hours. Mr. Francony stated the plan that is being proposed will cost about \$12-15,000 and that they had already invested almost \$150,000 in the lot. The final bill will be around \$300,000 with the additional demolition, the paving, landscaping and engineering costs

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included.

Mr. Schmiesing noted that there are no lights in the proposed plan and that by code they would be required to provide an average of 2 - and a minimum of 0.5 foot candles of light at the parking lot surface. Mr. Francony said that Choice One Engineering will be doing the actual parking lot layout and that they will add light standards to the plan at a later time if they become necessary. Mr. Schmiesing noted that the final plan for the parking lot would end up being approved by the City of Piqua Development Department and that the applicant will be required to show items such as lighting calculations to verify that minimum code requirements are being satisfied.

The Board asked if they ran into additional expenses with the demolition would it affect the plan. Mr. Francony stated Unity Bank was committed to bringing this plan to fruition. He also said they were willing to look at investigating the preservation of the historic elements but that the Bank does not have it in the budget to incorporate those elements into the landscaping plan.

Board members asked if the pavers in the passageway between the lot and the public sidewalk would match the columns between the ornamental fence or the streetscaping on Main Street. Mr. Francony stated they would match the streetscaping bricks. There will also be a barrier curb around the lot and the grass will not abut the asphalt.

It was noted that the trees on the city lot to the south would be remain and be protected by the demolition contractor. The demolition of the building will be scheduled as soon as the demolition request has been approved. The demolition will take 30 - 45 days but an additional asbestos survey needs to be completed before that work can begin.

Board members expressed concern about the planting choices. They felt that during the planning meeting they expressed to Unity Bank that there should be large plantings on the south side of the new proposed lot and that the presented plan had no plantings at all in that area. It was stated that large plantings are more appropriate in an urban environment and that the presented plans were more residential in nature. Mr. Bubb noted the strip of plantings right next to the building (north side of the lot) should be on the south side of the lot and much larger in scale. The area next to the building could be crushed rock. The board members suggested viburnum would be a good plant for the south side of the lot as it would provide more screening. The Board members emphasized that the landscape plan was to mitigate the loss of a historic building and should attempt to accomplish that with larger plants that will bring the large blank wall down to scale for pedestrians and motorists on Water and Main Streets.

Mr. Francony noted there are additional EPA tests to be done on the site for asbestos and other hazardous materials in the building. Once the building has been cleared by the EPA he will file for a demolition permit and once that is approved they will begin demolition. Once the demolition is complete they intend to have the site completely finished in 60-days.

The board members discussed the proposed plan and made the following suggestions as conditions for the approval of the certificate of appropriateness:

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- Move the plantings from the north side of the lot to the south side
- Use taller, more vertical elements rather than low plants and ground coverings
- Simplify the planting plan - use fewer plants and eliminate the maiden grass and use fewer varieties of plants

Mrs. Ruth Koon moved to approve Resolution 14-08 for the demolition of 204 N. Main Street and the redevelopment of this space with the conditions discussed pertaining to the redevelopment plan presented to the Board. Mr. Jim Oda seconded the motion. Role Call AYE: Mr. Brad Bulp, Mrs. Ann DeBrosse Comer, Mr. Jim Oda and Mrs. Ruth Koon.

ITEM NO. 3: RESOLUTION DRB 02-09

A resolution requesting a certificate of appropriateness to install a sign at 225 N. Main Street.

Lorna Swisher gave the staff report. This request calls for a new metal sign on the Main Street façade of the building at 225 N. Main Street. The sign would be placed on the wall immediately to the south of the Main Entrance. There will also be vinyl lettering placed on the door. The sign is 24" x 24" and is the standard Edward Jones colors.

Mr. Oda stated the building is a 1930's building that was remodeled in the 1970's and again in the early 1980's. There is little historic value to the first floor façade of this particular structure. It was noted that it would be nice to remove the sign bracket above the second floor from the previous tenant of 225 N. Main. Mr. Schmiesing said he would make that request of the property owner.

Mrs. Ann DeBrosse Comer moved to approve Resolution 02-09 and the motion was seconded by Mr. Brad Bulp. Role Call AYE: Mr. Brad Bulp, Mrs. Ann DeBrosse Comer, Mr. Jim Oda and Mrs. Ruth Koon.

OTHER BUSINESS

OUTSTANDING CODE VIOLATIONS

Mrs. Lorna Swisher indicated that she was not aware of any code violations in the downtown area.

James Oda, Chairman

Brad Bulp, Vice-Chairman