

**CITY OF SONOMA
DESIGN REVIEW AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
February 16, 2016
Community Meeting Room, 177 First Street West, Sonoma, CA
MINUTES**

Chair Randolph called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Chair Randolph, Comms. Barnett, Tippell, Johnson, Essert

Absent:

Others Present: Associate Planner Atkins, Planning Director Goodison, Administrative Assistant Morris

Chair Randolph stated that no new items would be heard after 10:30 p.m. unless the Design Review and Historic Preservation Commission so decides. Any decisions made tonight can be appealed within 15 days to the City Council. She reminded everyone to turn off cell phones and pagers.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Comm. Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of January 20, 2015, February 17, 2015, March 17, 2015 and January 19, 2016 with changes noted. Comm. Essert seconded. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

CHANGES TO AGENDA: Comm. Barnett made a motion to move Item 2 after Item 4. Comm. Johnson seconded. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

CORRESPONDENCE: Late mail was received on Items #2 from Cathy and Gene Sperry and Bill Wisialowski.

Item #1 – Consent Calendar

Comm. Barnett made a motion to approve the consent calendar that included installation of banners on Plaza lights for the 2016 Jack London Centennial. Comm. Tippell seconded. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Marcus Jack London State Historic Park, brought a sample of the approved banner with the sponsor named.

Comm. Essert confirmed with Associate Planner Atkins that the banner policy allows for non-profit sponsorship as long as it does not encompass more than 20% of the banner.

Item 2- Site and Design Review- Consideration of two new awnings and four new awning signs for a hotel (Sonoma Hotel) at 110 West Spain Street.

Applicant: Tim Farfan and Craig Miller

Associate Planner Atkins presented the staff report.

Craig Miller, co-owner, requested to change the color and to replace the previously approved signs that fell down during a windstorm.

Chair Randolph opened the item to public comment.

No public comment.

Chair Randolph closed the item to public comment.

Comm. Tippell felt the color selected is too similar to the building color and recommended a brighter color.

Comm. Johnson agreed with Comm. Tippell's comments and preferred burgandy.

Comms. Barnett, Essert and Chair Randolph are of the opinion that paint color changes should be at the sole discretion of the business owners.

Comm. Barnett made a motion to approve the two new awnings and four new awning signs for Sonoma Hotel. Comm. Essert seconded. The motion carried (4-1). (Comm. Tippell dissenting).

Item # 3 (formerly #4) Sign Review- consideration of design review for a restaurant(Murphy's Irish Pub Expansion) at 464 First Street East.

Applicant: Murphy's Irish Pub, LLC

Associate Planner Atkins presented the staff report.

Chair Randolph opened the item to public comment.

Bill Pollack, co-owner of Murphy's Irish Pub LLC, said the expansion into the former smoke shop space is intended to host small scale special events. There will be an outdoor fire pit, bench seating and will offer classic cocktails.

Comm. Essert confirmed with the applicant that the fabric will be a new design element.

Chair Randolph opened the item to public comment.

No public comment.

Chair Randolph closed the item to public comment.

Comm. Essert preferred the new design but is disappointed with the metal awning because it compresses the space. He recommended a more traditional appearance.

Comms. Johnson, Barnett and Tippell supported the proposed changes especially the new fire pit.

Chair Randolph agreed the expansion is a great addition to the alleyway.

Bill Pollack explained the rationale for the design of the screening is so it can be pulled down with one hand.

Comm. Tippell made a motion to approve the restaurant expansion for Murphy's Irish Pub as submitted. Comm. Johnson seconded The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Item # 4 – Site design and architectural review of proposed alterations and an addition to a residence at 227 East Spain Street.

Applicant: Robert Baumann & Associates

Associate Planner Atkins presented the staff report.

Chair Randolph opened the item to public comment.

Bill Wisialowski, property owner, agreed with staff that the existing tree is located more to the south than indicated on the site plan. He said no changes will be made to the original house design but there is a connector between the old and new addition. The single level addition will accommodate his desire to “age in place”.

Comm. Tippell requested seeing the actual paint colors.

Comm. Johnson visited the site and appreciated the survey.

Steve Weingard, next door neighbor, is confused by the story board and location of the dormer to the East side. He opposed the five windows that in his view will compromise his privacy. Although he agreed with some of the changes made, he disagreed that the project complied with the Secretary of Interior Standards in terms of scale and mass and felt the addition should be set back further from the existing structure.

Comm. Barnett inquired about the specific guidelines for story poles.

Planning Director Goodison responded they typically have been used for larger projects.

Cathy Sperring, neighbor, is primarily concerned with setbacks since the new structure is along the adjoining side yard.

Robert Demler, resident/President for the League of Historic Preservation, said the Board supported the application and clarified that George McKale spoke on behalf of the League at the last meeting. Bill Wisialowski, property owner, is a member of the League of Historic Preservation in Sonoma.

Victor Conforti, resident/local architect, said he was not contacted by the applicant. He expressed reservations with the site plan since he viewed the story poles did not accurately reflect the proposal. He contended that CEQA/Secretary of Interior requirements prohibit diminishing the size and scale of the original structure and recommended a reduction. Furthermore, he suggested that the State could remove the property as a contributing member of the Historic District.

Chair Randolph closed the item to public comment.

Planning Director Goodison confirmed that CEQA is a major factor that must be considered when making a decision on the proposal.

Bill Wisialowski, responded to the Sperring's concern that the back of the building will compromise their privacy and said it will be more oriented towards the internal backyard area. He believed the placement of the story poles is accurate.

Planning Director Goodison and Associate Planner Atkins measured the story poles and concurred that the story pole locations were consistent with the site plan.

Robert Baumann, project architect, clarified that the wall height does not include the roof in response to Mr. Conforti's concern and maintained the new structure complies with all codes.

Bill Wisialowski sent an email to neighbors late last week for input about the plan.

Alice Duffee, Historic Resource Preservation consultant, stated that she felt the current proposal is consistent with the Secretary of Interior Standards and an attempt to delist the property from the Sonoma Plaza NRHP district would not be feasible.

Comm. Barnett confirmed with the consultant that certain Historic resource elements must be retained.

Comm. Essert questioned whether the second unit complied in regards to square footage and character design.

Commissioner Comments:

Comm. Essert commended the applicant's efforts to reduce the length of the addition.

Comm. Barnett appreciated the story poles, new design and respect for the historic district. He remained concerned for striking a balance between the rights of the property owners and preserving the quality of life for residents and the community at large in regards to the stringent historic regulations in place.

Patricia Cullinan, resident, recommended a State Historic Preservation review in addition to the DRHPC's project evaluation.

Comm. Johnson applauded the applicant's efforts and felt the "spirit" of historic preservation is being addressed and is sympathetic to the resident's concerns for retaining the neighborhood character.

Comm. Tippell preferred the new traditional farmhouse design and is more confident with the project's merits since the League of Historic Preservation supported it.

Chair Randolph appreciated the project team reaching out to neighbors and staff and is hopeful for a decision tonight.

Comm. Barnett will not support until the State Office of Historic Preservation has reviewed it.

Planning Director Goodison said since the City is a Certified Local Government the commissioners have discretion to evaluate the State and Federal guidelines for historic preservation.

Alice Duffee stated that in her experience the State is available on an advisory basis.

Comm. Johnson made a motion to approve the proposed alterations and an addition to the residence at 227 East Spain Street as submitted. Comm. Tippell seconded. The motion carried 4-1 (Comm. Barnett dissenting).

Discussion Item #8 – Discussion and review of sign regulations related to commercial real estate signs.

Associate Planner Atkins presented the staff report.

There is an 18 month time limit for real estate signs in the City. She recommended removing the language of five or more units so it applies to all real estate signs. Staff will return to the commission with updated language on how signs should be attached to historic designated structures.

Issues Update: Associate Planner Atkins reported the following;

There is a California preservation webinar training for commissioners on February 17th at noon at the City Hall Conference room. Leslie Tippell, Bill Essert and Kelso Barnett will attend.

Comments from the Audience: None

Comments from the Commission: Chair Barnett received comments about the color of the LED lights recently installed on the light standards around the City.

Comm. Barnett is of the opinion that the new illuminated sign at the Sonoma Community Center sign might be too bright.

Adjournment: Chair Randolph made a motion to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 15, 2016. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly and regularly adopted at a regular meeting of the Design Review and Historic Preservation Commission on the 15th day of March 2016.

Approved:

Cristina Morris, Administrative Assistant