

**Meeting Minutes
State College Borough Design Review Board
February 16, 2016**

The State College Borough Design Review Board (DRB) met on Tuesday, February 16, 2016 in the State College Borough Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street in Room 241. Chairman Rick Bryant called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Members present

Rick Bryant, Bond Reinhardt and Alexandra Staub

Others Present:

Anne Messner, Planner/Zoning; Gary Brandeis, Fraser Partners LLC; and Sarah Smith, Staff Assistant

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Reinhardt made a motion to approve the February 2, 2016 minutes as submitted and Ms. Staub seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Chair Report

Chairman Bryant expressed his gratitude to Mr. Wheeler for giving the Design Review Board report to Council.

Public Hour

No one in the audience wished to discuss items not on the agenda.

Signs

Fraser Centre Sign Variance Request, 118 South Fraser Street, Gary Brandeis, Fraser Partners LLC, owner, CID Zoning District

Proposal Description from the Developer

Mr. Devon joined the meeting at 10:16 a.m.

Mr. Brandeis gave an overview of the Sign Variance Request for the Fraser Centre. Ms. Messner explained that the Board was being asked to review the proposal in an advisory capacity before the request would be presented to the Zoning Hearing Board which would be deciding on the request. The highlights of the proposal were:

- The Fraser Centre would be built with a Hyatt Place, Target, H&M, Federal TapHouse and residential units.
- The developer felt it would be more efficient to submit one signage plan with the requests of all the tenants rather than having each tenant submitting individually.

- Mr. Brandeis noted that the current signage code was not created for a project of the scope of the Fraser Centre.
- The signs that were being requested were the same as the signs that were requested by those retailers all over the country.
- Mr. Brandeis included the alleys in the linear footage calculations
- There would be a Starbucks in the Fraser Center, but there would be no signs outside the building.
- Residential
 - No signage requested
- Hyatt Place
 - Requested 2 signs – the logo and the Hyatt name
 - Above the 25 foot height limit due to placement of windows
- Target
 - Requested 8 signs – exceeds number of signs permitted
 - Signs on Beaver Avenue exceeds the square footage – red background with illuminated white bulls eye
 - Two signs on Fraser/Calder exceed the height limit
 - Blade sign at Fraser mid-block entrance exceeds the height limit
 - The total square footage of the signs exceeds the sign ordinance
 - Also requesting an “Order Pickup” directional sign, but this is disregarded in the sign ordinance
- H&M
 - Requesting 3 signs
 - Fraser/Calder signs meet the sign ordinance
 - Sign at midblock Fraser entrance meets the sign ordinance
 - All store frontage and signs are on white, metal panels
- Federal TapHouse
 - Requesting 3 signs
 - Two signs on Fraser/Calder exceed the height limit
 - Also exceeds sign square footage limit of 20 sq. ft. since they have no street level premise
 - Sign at midblock Fraser entrance meets the sign ordinance
- When evaluating tenants, the developer turned away many potential tenants as they did not wish to duplicate what other stores in the area were already doing.

Ms. Messner noted that the Design Review Board’s role in the application was only advisory to the Zoning Hearing Board. The Board did not need to be concerned with the variance, but mostly with the design of the signs.

The comments/questions from the Board included:

- Hyatt Place sign
 - Tastefully placed
 - There were no concerns about this sign
 - Inquired if there would be anything to show from a distance where the Hyatt was (no distance signs, but there is a curb cut for drop offs and valet parking)
- Residences

- Noted that the residents would know where they were going so a sign for the residences may not be necessary. Inquired about the non-residents who would be visiting (nothing on the exterior)
- Inquired about security and how the residents would get into their part of the building (the elevators work on a key fob and visitors would need to be buzzed up).
- Target sign
 - Suggested that the bottom of the Target blade sign at the midblock be moved so that it ends at the bottom of the metal panel and which would have all of the Target signs aligning at the tops and bottoms of the signs
 - Inquired about the material for the Target sign (metal panel wall – will be a red film with the illuminated white bulls eye placed on top)
 - Inquired why there was no written name anywhere
- H&M
 - Inquired about where the H&M sign at the Fraser midblock entrance would line up (the top of the H&M sign would line up with the top of the windows)
- Federal TapHouse
 - Inquired about neon alcoholic signs within the building (the developer has final jurisdiction in signage and they will not be permitting those signs on the interior)
 - Expressed concern about the placement of the sign as it was not quite centered over the door (wanted to denote that on the right of the vestibule inside is where the stairs/elevator were that patrons would use to reach the TapHouse)
- Inquired about the differences in calculations when including the linear footage on the alleys as compared to without the linear footages (this would have to be worked out at the Zoning Hearing Board – the practice had been to not include the alleys)
- Noted that the building is already unique so the signs should also be different from the normal for downtown.
- Noted that the Design Review Board supported the variance requests due to the unique nature of the building and the situation.

Ms. Messner stated that staff would summarize the Board's comments and forward them to the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Reinhardt made a motion to forward the Board's comments to the Zoning Hearing Board and Mr. Devon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Work Program

2016 Holtzman Award

Ms. Messner reviewed the history of the Holtzman Award. She suggested 1311 South Atherton Street and the Liberty Craft House. She requested that the Board start thinking about the Award and have possible suggestions to discuss at the March 1 meeting.

Official Reports and Correspondence

Borough Council (BC): Ms. Messner noted that Council received all of the Work Programs from the Boards. Ms. Messner also stated that there will be upcoming public open houses regarding the MLK Plaza and she invited the members to attend.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, this meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m. by Mr. Reinhardt.

Respectfully submitted by,
Sarah E. Smith, Staff Assistant