

APPROVED

**VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE  
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 2, 2020, 7:00 P.M.**

Chairwoman Gassen called the December 2, 2020 electronic meeting of the Architectural Design Review Board to order at 7:00 p.m. Because of the state mandated requirements regarding social distancing, the meeting was held electronically. Ch. Gassen provided an overview on how the public can participate via Zoom or through providing written comments to [planning@downers.us](mailto:planning@downers.us).

**1. ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Chairwoman Gassen (In Person); Ms. Acks, Mr. Styczynski, Ms. Chalberg, Mr. Lerner, Mr. Renner, Mr. Reimer (Electronically)

**ABSENT:** None

**STAFF:** Stan Popovich, Community Development Director, Jason Zawila, Planning Manager (In Person)

**VISITORS:** Sam Vlahos, Paul Robertson (Electronically)

**2. MOTION TO CONDUCT THE DECEMBER 2, 2020 ADRB MEETING ELECTRONICALLY**

**Motion by Chalberg, second by Acks to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2020 meeting. Roll call:**

**AYES:** Chalberg, Acks, Styczynski, Lerner, Reimer, Renner, Gassen

**NAYS:** None

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**3. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 21, 2020 MEETING MINUTES**

**Motion by Chalberg, second by Renner to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2020 meeting, as corrected.** (Planning Manager Zawila noted that he received revisions from Mr. Lerner where the wrong individual was referenced in certain parts of the minutes and will be updated with the approved minutes) **Roll call:**

**AYES:** Chalberg, Renner, Acks, Styczynski, Lerner, Reimer, Gassen

**NAYS:** None

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Ch. Gassen walked through the procedures for the public hearing for the following agenda item:

**4. OLD BUSINESS**

**Design Guidelines Review Project** – Manager Zawila recalled the direction received from the Village Council as it pertained to the village’s design guidelines. The updated design guidelines will be discussed and staff will be taking comments on the draft text with the final document to be presented at the January 13, 2021 ADRB meeting. The December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting

APPROVED

will concentrate on Task 2 which will focus on the ADRB examining the review and approval process for downtown projects, permit types and include a discussion with the ADRB to determine if the board recommends any changes to the existing process. Key policy questions, as discussed at a prior meeting, will be discussed at the December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. Those policy questions followed. Manager Zawila explained that on December 16<sup>th</sup> the ADRB will discuss and provide feedback on the following three questions: 1) what type of construction triggers design review; 2) what are the regulations; and 3) who is the decision-maker. A brief review of the 2009 Design Guidelines followed as well as how the updated guidelines will be reviewed, i.e., is the guideline new, or is it a carryover from the 2009 document or is it a revision to the 2009 guidelines. Manger Zawila provided further explanation.

**Design Guidelines Draft** – Manager Zawila explained how the document will be broken up into five parts with public comment to follow at the end.

**Section 1** – Manager Zawila indicated this was a new section to the document that provides a background and parity with the village’s comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance.

**Section 2** – Per Manager Zawila, this section was slightly revised to introduce the new sections related to utilities connection and parking facilities.

**Commissioner Comments** – A number of commissioner comments followed:

Page 2 - Downtown Core/Downtown Business: consider using the word, “services” or “businesses”, which staff offered to review or modify.

Page 3 (Section 2) – Reviewing the Scope of Areas, it was noted that utility and parking was missed in the guidelines.

Staff confirmed that the Definitions section will be listed in the new document and would include new terms. A suggestion was made that it would be helpful to refer back to the zoning ordinance when it applies.

**Sections 3 & 4** – Manager Zawila explained that this section focused on site and building design. However, he clarified there may be guidance for transitional districts that may not be appropriate for buildings in the Downtown Core (DC) District or the Downtown Business (DB) District, but could see buildings that have the appearance of single-family home but are used for commercial purposes, small scale office buildings, or townhomes. Further details followed.

**Commissioner Comments** – A number of commissioner comments followed:

Section 3, A3 – Gaps in Street Wall – The new wording appears to discourage the idea of having plazas, or outdoor dining areas whereas the previous wording was positive.

Section 3, C1 – Fences Compatible with the Residential Neighborhood – The wording implies that there should be no fencing and it should be reworded more positively.

Section 4, A3 – Corner Buildings – Consider specifying that both street sides be considered facades at a corner building. Staff to review wording.

Section 4, D1 – Color – Consider whether to list dark colors not as an accent color and not primary color; do not put limitations on color due to it being subjective; consider streetscape when working with colors. Staff would review and get future feedback from commissioners.

APPROVED

Page 11, Item 4 – Alleys being Lit – Consider the type of pavement material for alleyways, such as tying it into a sidewalk or ensuring it is attractive. Staff mentioned the different requirements for alleys in the public right-of-way vs. a private alley, and indicated the matter could be looked at. Different materials could be considered, per staff.

Page 8, bottom – relating to Dark Colors – It was suggested to consider rewording.

Page 4, Item 1, Street Wall – more clarification needed. Avoid Driveways Mid-Block: if someone is at mid-block and no alley exists, it becomes unavoidable. Per Manager Zawila, this matter would be reviewed on a case by case basis but the intent was to limit curb cuts.

Page 4, Section 3a – Building Placement – refer back to the Zoning Ordinance for better clarification.

Page 5, Item A6, Transition District – Define what is meant by “building back to align with others on the street” and how is that determined. If residentially-designed buildings in the Transitional District are going to be considered, then the current residentially-designed buildings in the Downtown Business district should also be considered.

Page 5, Item B2, Building Massing – While it applies to the Downtown Core and Business, should building massing be considered in the Transition Area or is there a reason why not. Staff explained the thought was not to have additional limitations.

Page 6, Item 4, Downtown Business District – Stepping back using Line of Sight Methodology -- While it was understood on the side that may face a Downtown Transition zone, should a building be stepped back for a DB use facing a Downtown Core area? Per Manager Zawila, this topic was in the Comprehensive Plan. The Transitional District did have specific setbacks, but if there was an opportunity to have a similar setback, that was the thought process. He would ensure parity exists with the Village's Comprehensive Plan.

Per Manager Zawila, with regard to maximum height of Downtown Core buildings, where the setback is unknown for the upper stories, as compared to the Downtown Business District, the buildings in this area would be taller with a 70-foot height per the zoning and, based on the discussions staff had regarding the preference survey, it may be appropriate to begin setting back the taller business buildings that may be adjacent to the Downtown Core or Downtown Transitional Districts. A commissioner suggested implementing a two- or three-story structure and then stepping back; staff would review.

Page 7, Item 4 – Providing a walkway to the street to the building - Staff was asked for clarification, wherein Manager Zawila confirmed it meant a walkway from the public sidewalk to the front door.

Page 9, Item 2 – Materials – EIFS or Dryvit – should one be used over the other? Per Manager Zawila, the trademark for Dryvit would be reviewed.

Page 9, Item 4 – Materials – Downtown Transition Materials – should it discourage vinyl siding or should it consider certain qualities of vinyl siding since some were now at a higher quality. Manager Zawila, asked to hear more comments on the suggestion.

Page 11, Item 3 – Choosing light bulbs that emit a warm tone for exterior building – It was suggested to insert a Kelvin number (2700k) and define what is a warm tone. It was also suggested to remove the term “bulbs” and insert “lighting” to cover all lighting.

APPROVED

Page 10, Under Lighting – Provide illumination on front/rear entries to ensure customer/employee safety – Consider specifying all entries.

Sections 5, 6, 7 – Manager Zawila explained these sections focused on building elements and was organized by top, middle and base and carried over from the 2009 Design Guidelines.

Page 13, Elements D2, Rear Entrances Comparable to Front Entrances – Language may be too strong. For Knee walls/Windows installed without a knee wall that open to the sidewalk, staff confirmed those were for such instances where a restaurant has a dining area where panels can open to the sidewalk. Staff indicated there will be a picture associated with this topic.

Page 14, Item 4E – Awnings – Internally illuminated awnings – Staff recalled an incident where a vinyl awning was lit underneath where some commissioners felt it was inappropriate for the downtown area. It was suggested to add that awnings with signage internally illuminated should be prohibited, while decorative lighting would be appropriate.

Page 12, Item A1, Commercial Storefronts, Relatively Thin Framing Elements – Consider adding storefronts with a thicker mullion design and be large display windows.

Page 12, Item B1, Entrances – Orient primary building entrances to a public street – It was suggested to add “entrances to a public space.”

Page 14, Item 3, Windows – Clarification of “window glazing may be located on upper stories only and should be clear and less slightly tinted...” Manager Zawila would follow up with the carryover, but indicated the point was to not have tinted windows on the ground floor, but it could be appropriate for the upper stories.

Page 15, Windows – No guidance was being given to the Downtown Transition Area. Manager Zawila would review, possibly expand on it, and return language to the ADRB in January. Both Manager Zawila and Director Popovich noted that because there were some residentially-designed commercial buildings in the area, they did not want to limit the window design, especially to private residential homes.

Page 15, Section 3, Windows– consider whether to add text that if a window is going to be replaced – whether historic or not – should any replacement window fill the entire opening. Manager Zawila recalled the commissioners did not support half-filled windows and the text was a carry-over from the previous guidelines. Dialog followed that if a building already had replacement windows, were only half filled, and renovations were being proposed, would it be required to fill in the original or only that portion that had been changed prior. Per Manager Zawila, the current guidance was as stated. Director Popovich’s preference was that if the previous window replacement filled half way but the old opening could be detected, the space should be filled entirely. However, if the window replacement was completely filled and redesigned, then it could not be returned.

Sections 8 and 9 – Manager Zawila explained that utilities consideration and parking lots were two new topics under these two sections. The utilities consideration could have some limitation as to where they can be located. However, there was an ability to provide some guidance.

Section 2 – While it currently addressed utilities/parking not being visible from nearby streets, sidewalks, and customer parking, it was suggested to add verbiage about what is

APPROVED

acceptable and using landscaping as a possible buffer. Per staff, landscaping was covered in another section but if not totally covered, verbiage could be added as an option. (Director Popovich refers to the buffering of refuse containers either by a certain size wall or by evergreens, which text can be used in this section.)

Introduction to Section 8 – Define the term “utility structure.”

Page 18, Item 8.2 – Per Ch. Gassen, any time references can be made to the village’s zoning ordinance, it should do so.

**Document Format** – Manager Zawila indicated the photos on the overhead were examples of what the guidelines document will look like and many graphics will be provided in the document. Planner Flora Ramirez was thanked for her design scheme on the document. Manager Zawila invited comments from the commissioners. All comments about the format were positive.

### **Public Comment**

Chairwoman Gassen asked staff if any written comments were received on this matter. Per staff, no comments were received. Ch. Gassen invited comments from the public.

Mr. Robertson – Did not have any comments but thanked the ADRB for its “hard work.”

Final Commissioner comments included revising the wording about process, specifically about wording being regulatory or advisory.

Ch. Gassen reminded everyone this topic discussion will continue at its December 16, 2020 Zoom meeting. Manager Zawila presented a couple of slides on what tasks will be presented and discussed at the next couple of meetings. He asked the ADRB to look in their emails for their next meeting materials and videos, noting that an invitation will be also be extended to the Downers Grove Downtown Management Corporation.

**5. NEW BUSINESS** – None

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

### **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Ch. Gassen called for a motion to adjourn.

**Mr. Reimer moved, seconded by Mr. Styczynski to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.**

**Roll call:**

**AYE: Reimer, Styczynski, Acks, Chalberg, Lerner, Renner, Gassen**

/s/ Celeste K. Weilandt  
(As transcribed by MP-3 audio)