

City of Charlottesville
Board of Architectural Review
December 19, 2000

Minutes

Present:

Joan Fenton (Chair)

Jesse Hook

Preston Coiner

Lynne Ely

Linda Winner

Wade Tremblay

Ken Schwartz

Joe Atkins

Also Present:

Tarpley Vest

Ms. Fenton called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. On behalf of the Board, she gave a present to Ms. Vest and thanked her for all of her hard work. She then thanked Ms. Hook for her hard work as well.

Ms. Fenton asked if there were any items to be presented by the public that were not on the agenda. Seeing none, she closed that portion of the meeting.

Ms. Fenton asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. No corrections were suggested.

Ms. Ely made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Coiner seconded, and the minutes were approved, with two abstentions.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION BAR 00-12-47
416-418 W. Main Street

Ms. Vest made a brief presentation. She indicated that the application was for the former McGregor Motors building, which was currently vacant. She stated that although it was located on West Main Street, it was on the cusp of the Downtown Architectural Design Control District, which meant that distinctions between contributing and

non-contributing buildings were not applicable. She indicated that Staff had consulted the design

guidelines and felt that the proposed changes respected the building and the automotive history of the area, as well as the requirements for new additions.

The architect for the applicant then made a brief presentation. She stated that although their research on the building was scant, they were able to determine that there was originally a foundry on the site where the old automotive building now sits. She indicated that they believed it was purchased by Mr. McGregor in 1933, but were uncertain when the building was built. It was called McGregor Motors in 1940, so it might have been at that point that the building was built, but it might have been as early as 1933. She stated that the brick construction and the style of the building seemed to indicate that it was probably pre-war. She also said that they did not have any evidence of what pieces of the store front were still extant, nor what the original store front looked like, but there was one glass and steel ten-paneled piece, and an enormous aluminum and glass piece. Based on this, they tried to go with those two typologies: the plate glass and the horizontal mullion. She showed the Board a picture of the building, indicating that they planned to remove an existing garage door and put in multi-pane panels and an entryway which would lead up into the new second-story unit. An existing doorway would also be replaced with a new aluminum glass door, which would lead into the first tenant space. She outlined several other replacements planned for the ground floor, then indicated that they also planned to raise the ceiling from six feet to nine feet on the second floor. This would entail adding four feet to the existing parapet. She stated that in the center bay directly above the enormous expanse of glass, they were going to further raise the roof to allow for a mezzanine, which would be covered with a curved canopy. The canopy would be supported by five slender struts angled back to meet the existing facade. She stated that they were trying to tie the new additions back to the old facade. She added that the new parapet would be stucco, the existing brick facade would be re-painted, and on the west side elevation, a couple of large windows would be punched in on the ground floor for use by the tenants.

Ms. Fenton asked if there were any questions.

-- Mr. Atkins asked about what appeared to be occupiable office spaces with windows facing the rear, and the architect replied that there were existing windows in the rear, which did not show up very well in the photo. She added that those windows would be replaced, but not significantly altered.

-- Mr. Coiner stated that the description of proposed work indicated that the sides of the mezzanine would be sided with natural-finished pre-fabricated metal panels, and he asked if that meant galvanized metal. The architect replied that they meant to suggest a pre-finished corrugated metal panel system. She added that at present, they were seeking approval for the massing concepts so that work could begin, and they would come back with a color presentation at a later date, hopefully at the next meeting.

-- Mr. Silverman, the applicant, commented that what he was focusing on at this time was the lower floor, particularly the fenestration, since the engineer was still looking at the upper floor.

-- Mr. Atkins commented he was curious why the bonus layer on top of the cap was chosen as a solution, as opposed to additional glazing on that side. The architect replied that the existing parapet was two feet above the ceiling, and the plan was to raise the ceiling from eight to nine feet, so there was very little room between the existing parapet and the roof. She stated that they had investigated the option of additional glazing, but came to the conclusion that without raising the entire roof higher, there would not be enough room. The applicant, as well, was not interested in altering or punching holes in the existing masonry.

-- Ms. Winner asked for clarification whether or not the applicant was seeking approval to raise the roof one level. Mr. Silverman indicated that he had spoken with his engineer that day, and he was uncertain whether he would be able to raise the roof as easily as he had thought. He stated that the application described what he would like to pursue, but if raising the roof did prove too difficult, then he would have a flat roof at eight feet and put in some skylights.

-- General discussion between the architect and the applicant followed about what they were seeking, and the architect indicated that they were just asking

for approval of the remodeling of the first floor exterior.

Ms. Fenton asked if there were further questions or comments on that portion of the application. Seeing none, she called for a motion.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion to approve the ground floor as represented in the drawings. Mr. Atkins seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

-- Ms. Ely commented that she was consistently impressed with the quality and the copiousness of the historical research on these buildings, and so she wanted to commend the applicant for taking the time to learn about the building.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION BAR 00-12-46
1200 W. Main Street

Ms. Vest gave a brief presentation. She stated that the property in question was the Kane Furniture building, which had formerly been a car rental shop and a bowling alley. According to the City file, the building dated to 1926. She indicated that the request was for changes to the exterior facade, and in Staff's assessment, the proposed storefront respected the character of the building and was therefore appropriate. Part of the proposal was for aluminum storefront windows, which the guidelines recommend against, but Staff was able to support it because in this case, they felt it would be appropriate to this particular building on West Main Street. She indicated that the applicant at this time was looking only for schematic design approval, and some of the final details and materials were still fluid.

Russell [Skin, the architect for the project, indicated that Kane Furniture simply wanted to upgrade the facade of the facility. He stated that the proposal was to put a stucco cornice on, place some steel trusses on it with a metal roof which would project about two and a half feet, replace existing wood windows with black, aluminum storefront material, and create a frame around the windows in traditional stucco. They also planned to repaint the

existing brick in a similar grey to what was already there, replace the signage with new lettering and put in new light fixtures. He stated that they were hoping the Board would give them preliminary approval, but the design was still in process, and details would be refined at the next level.

Ms. Fenton asked if there were any questions for the applicant.

-- Mr. Atkins asked about the stucco material, and Mr. Skin indicated that it would be real stucco rather than Dryvit. The architect added that the idea was to frame the windows and to give the building a plinth to work off of. He indicated that the sidewalk dropped about eight inches from one end of the building to the other, so this would give the building a base to rest on.

-- Mr. Atkins asked how far the stucco frame would project out, and Mr. Skin indicated it would be two inches or an inch and a half.

-- Mr. Schwartz asked if Kane Furniture owned the building, and Mr. Skin confirmed this.

-- Mr. Schwartz asked if the owner had ever considered building up. He added that he was in support of the proposal, and that this was just a question out of curiosity, since the building sat on prime real estate and could possibly be expanded.

-- Mr. Skin stated that the applicant had not mentioned that. He added that the building is a conglomeration of a number of old buildings, and so if they were to build up, they would have to start from scratch.

-- Mr. Schwartz commented that he would appreciate it if Mr. Skin would mention the idea to his client, since in this location, mixed-use and multi-story would be wonderful to see. However, this was not to say that he did not support the current proposal.

-- Ms. Fenton suggested that, in considering their design, they might want to look at Mr. Schwartz' idea as a possibility, so that whatever work they did now would be compatible with a future addition.

-- Mr. Schwartz commented that in the long range in this location on West Main Street, one-story buildings were not likely to be predominant building types, because the real estate there was quite valuable.

-- A member of the public commented that they might run into trouble with zoning laws and availability of parking. Mr. Skin replied that the applicant might own some of the parking lot in the back, but he was not sure.

-- Ms. Winner asked if the sign out on the pole that matched the current lettering on the building would be redesigned. Mr. Skin stated that they had not talked about whether the sign on the pole was going to get redone or if it was going to stay like it was.

-- Ms. Fenton asked if awning with signage on it over the door had been considered. Mr. Skin indicated that the idea of the truss came from the interior designer, who went down to Richmond and saw something she loved. Ms. Fenton added that in her experience, awnings worked well for signage and to attract attention.

Ms. Fenton asked if there were any further questions. Seeing none, she closed that portion of the meeting and called for comments from the general public or the Board.

-- Ms. Fenton commented that the proposed design was a big improvement.

-- Mr. Atkins commented that based on his questions earlier, he would like to see further development and refinement of the base, with maybe some additional sill material, so that they would not have to use the molded stucco edge on the top. Following questions from the architect, he indicated he was thinking of the addition of a stone or slate sill where the stucco and the brick meet.

Mr. Atkins then made a motion to approve the schematic design as presented.

Mr. Schwartz stated that he wanted to add the note of concern about the way the stucco meets the ground. He stated that there were a number of ways of handling that, so the general language would leave room open for exploration. He added that he agreed with Mr. Atkins that there might be a way to handle it that would treat the ground better. Mr. Atkins clarified that the concern was also with how the stucco met the brick.

Mr. Coiner seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved unanimously.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION BAR 98-11-52
100 W. Main Street

Ms. Vest gave a presentation on the application. She indicated that in October, the BAR was asked to approve a number of design elements and final details to the building, which for the most part they did approve, with the exception of the arched doors and the issue of the keystones. She stated that the applicant, Oliver Kuttner, was before the Board again seeking approval of several items that were described

in his letter. Staff had reviewed the items against the design guidelines and found no problem with them, with the exception of the keystones. Concerning the latter, she referred the BAR to the packet where she had quoted from the October minutes the reason for the BAR's rejection of them previously.

Ms. Fenton asked about the arched door. Ms. Vest indicated that that was an outstanding issue, but was not on the agenda for that evening.

Mr. Oliver Kuttner, the applicant, gave a presentation on the items listed in the letter. He commented that he was not going to argue about the arched doors, and would find another location to install them. He indicated that the comments at the previous meeting about the presentation of the keystone design were valid, since only a small photo had been provided, and it had not been shown in the context of the building. However, he was certain that by now the Board members had had an opportunity to see the keystone on the building itself, and so he would like to ask the Board to reconsider approving it. He indicated that he had been told quite often that they were very beautiful, and no one had ever told him that they did not like them, other than at the BAR meeting in a less than perfect introduction. He stated that he could retrofit the keystones to the approved plain design without any problem, but he would like the Board to reconsider the ones he installed. He then distributed some photos of the keystones to the members of the Board.

He indicated the next item was a detail on the floor between the ground floor retail and the office floor. He stated that that floor was originally intended to be a piece of metal, just like the store front, but they would like to put tile on it. He presented the Board members with a sample of the tile and a drawing.

-- Mr. Atkins asked how the tile would be fixed to whatever was backing it up, and where it would meet the store front on the top and bottom. Mr. Kuttner stated that the store front would be flush with the tile.

-- Ms. Hook asked if the six-by-six tiles would abut one another, or if there would be visible grout in between them. Mr. Kuttner indicated there would be a small line of visible grout. He added that he did not want to introduce another color, so the grout

would probably be the same as the mortar color.

-- Mr. Atkins asked if ceramic tile was used elsewhere. Mr. Kuttner stated that they would like to use it elsewhere.

Mr. Kuttner indicated the third item was the corner, the big change being the addition of a cornice. He stated it would be the same cornice as was used in the rest of the building, coming around the corner itself. Referring to a drawing, he illustrated how they would like to carry it around, not simply over the corner windows, but extending out until it hits the terraces. He stated that a detail difference to the corner would be the introduction of the tile.

-- Ms. Fenton asked if he was aware of any examples of using tile in a building like this that they could see. Mr. Kuttner indicated that he did not know of any examples.

Concerning the store fronts, Mr. Kuttner stated that they wanted three store fronts to be made of wood. He indicated that the lower store front was the original design, but the upper store front was not. He referred the Board members to some sketches, and stated that they liked the upper store front design better and would like to have it approved, although they would be willing to go with the other design as well.

Concerning the railing design, he commented that the one they presented previously was too busy. They would like to use that design, but with less repetition. He stated that they would like the repetition to work out with the four long columns in the center section of the building. He pointed the Board to several sketches, and indicated he would like to have the Board's comments on the design.

Concerning the tile, Mr. Kuttner commented that he wanted the Board to see the tile together with the brick and the cast stone, to get an idea of how the colors worked together.

-- Ms. Hook asked how many different surfaces one would be looking at when facing the building. Mr. Kuttner replied that there would be glass, silicone rubber, aluminum siding, brick and mortar, tile and tile grout, steel for the balconies, and the cornice material.

-- Ms. Fenton asked about the brick paver. Mr. Kuttner stated that they were going to bring part of

the downtown mall surface back with a brick paver. He stated that the brick paver that was used on the downtown mall was custom-made, which was very hard to get, so they would like to replace it with a standard-size brick paver, in light of the fact that the downtown mall brick paver was likely to be replaced anyway. He indicated that he would like to use a standard-sized paver separated by a concrete band, similar to quite a few other places on the mall.

Ms. Fenton asked if there were any questions for the applicant.

-- Mr. Atkins commented that the paving was already approved for the downtown mall, and asked what Mr. Kuttner was seeking approval for. Mr. Kuttner stated that the approval was for similar paver, which could mean similar material, similar color or same size, but the same size brick simply was not available.

-- Mr. Coiner asked what his timetable was on installing the pavers. Mr. Kuttner stated that he wanted to get the rest of the side of the building up on the Water Street side, and then one crew would work on the pavers and the other would work on things inside the building.

-- Mr. Coiner asked if the pavers would go all the way to Water Street, and Mr. Kuttner indicated that it would go half-way. It would go to the apartment entrance, and then it would switch into a standard sidewalk with standard road asphalt.

-- Mr. Coiner then asked what would happen if the keystones were not approved. Mr. Kuttner said they would grind them down and put a cap on them.

-- Ms. Fenton commented that there was a concern as to what his thinking was in putting up keystones that weren't approved. Mr. Kuttner indicated that Maurice Cox had told him that this was ridiculous, the keystones were beautiful, and to go ahead and put them up, and Gabe Silverman had told him the same thing, so he put them up. He stated that he was planning to take them down after the last meeting, but others convinced him that once the BAR saw the keystones in the context of the whole building, they would probably approve them anyway. He commented that it was not possible to put a keystone in afterwards, but he could certainly retrofit it to a plain surface if necessary.

-- For the benefit of Board members who had not been there for a long time, Ms. Fenton explained that usually, in cases where work was done that was not

approved, the BAR looked at the work as if it were a new proposal and did not take into consideration why it was done or how it was done.

-- Ms. Winner asked if the motion last time had been for the approval of something, with the exception of the keystone.

-- Mr. Kuttner commented that he did not present the item well at the previous meeting. He indicated he would do whatever the Board wanted him to do, and suggested that they might want to take time to think about it or go and look at the keystone in the context of the building.

-- Mr. Atkins asked Ms. Vest what exactly the previous motion said. Ms. Vest indicated that they had been presented with sixteen numbered items, and the Board had approved some of them and omitted others.

-- Mr. Kuttner commented that the Board had approved a plainer keystone. He stated the original idea was for no keystone, but for each brick to be cut separately at a different angle, to be a continuously

arching system. After commenting on his view of the merits of the keystone he selected, he asked the Board to look at the building and decide on the matter at the next meeting.

Ms. Fenton asked if there were any other questions. Seeing none, she closed that portion of the meeting and called for comments.

-- Mr. Atkins stated that he was comfortable with the keystones and would prefer not to see them ground down. He commented that it was unfortunate and frustrating to have to vote on something the Board rejected, but in this case, he felt the keystones were not worth that level of objection. For the second item, he stated that he would like to discuss rather than give his point of view on the ceramic tile. He indicated he had some concerns about a palate of too many materials. He thought the powder-coated metal that matched the store front was clearly a good thing, and so he would be interested to hear other people's comments on the ceramic tile. He stated that he felt very comfortable with the stucco at the corner, as well as with the wood store front and the hand railings, preferably with medium spacing for the latter. He also felt that the standard-size brick seemed like a reasonable option, although he wished he could see where it was starting and stopping.

-- Mr. Kuttner indicated that the brick would start

and stop at a concrete sidewalk.

-- Mr. Coiner said that he could live with the keystones, and would be concerned about what they would look like if they were ground off. He stated he was also concerned about the brick pavers. He believed they would be getting ahead of themselves if they approved a different type of paver at this time, given what may happen on the mall. He stated that he had heard that the brick was hard to get, but Wachovia was able to get them. He commented that he just did not feel comfortable determining the type of paver that could influence the whole mall.

-- Ms. Winner stated that some things came down to personal taste or preference, which was not necessarily part of her purview, and therefore she would support the keystones. She commented she would like to hear more discussion from other people

regarding the use of the ceramic tiles; if there were issues other than just the different surfaces on the building, she would like to hear about them.

Concerning the brick pavers, she indicated that the Staff report mentioned having the applicant coordinate with the City to ensure consistency with the mall, and she asked what the timetable was on that.

-- Ms. Fenton said she thought it would be at least a year. General discussion followed.

-- Ms. Winner commented that before she voted on anything, she would like to hear about whether the changes on the mall were going to happen sooner or later, because either way the BAR recommended that it be done, it could end up not being consistent with whatever future developments were on the mall.

-- Mr. Tremblay stated that he was comfortable with the building details. As far as the pavers were concerned, he stated that this was a side street piece that was going to be buffered on both sides by concrete, and so if it was done in a standard size paver with matching color and pattern, he felt it should work fine. He did not think it would be reasonable to hold the applicant up until the City made a decision.

-- Mr. Kuttner commented that the timeframe was not a two-month timeframe, but a year's timeframe. He stated it was a \$10 million project, and that money would not be spent easily without many people having something to say about it.

-- Ms. Ely commented she was undecided on the ceramic tile issue. Concerning the third item, she indicated she liked the revised detail on the corner. She also

liked the wood store front, and like Mr. Atkins, she would prefer the broader spacing on the railing. She stated she did not have a problem with the brick paver, but she was uncomfortable with the keystones. She commented that she liked the concept, but the more ornate design added a level of frilliness to a building that was not very frilly. She would prefer to see them with some sort of a simpler face.

-- Mr. Schwartz commented that he supported the ceramic tile proposal but not the keystones. He stated that although it did appear that these issues were a matter of personal taste, the main issue was how appropriate the details were to the qualities of

the building itself, and to the adjoining buildings. Concerning the ceramic tile, he felt that although it was an unusual detail for a spandrel panel in a building, in the context of this project, it was a relatively subtle and quiet detail, and so he did not feel it would be too busy or incompatible with the overall nature of the building. However, he felt that the keystones were totally inappropriate. In a building that was as modern and abstract as this one, he would expect to find a plainer keystone, typical of the kind found throughout Charlottesville, rather than this more ornate design which would be more appropriate for a baroque-style building. He commented that he supported the corner element, and that he thought it looked very compatible with the cornices that were already there. He agreed that the wooden store front was an improvement over the earlier one that they had diagrammatically approved, and he felt it would work better from a retailing standpoint as well. Concerning the railing details, he stated he appreciated the applicant looking at different ways of accomplishing them, and he believed that all of the possibilities explored were better than just a simple repetitive railing with no articulation, because they allowed some sort of accent. He pointed out his preferences among the different designs presented, commenting that like Mr. Atkins, he preferred the design that was a little bit closer than the one that was farther away, but he would support either of those designs. He agreed with Mr. Tremblay's comments regarding the brick pavers. He stated that, so long as the applicant understood and so long as Ms. Vest could assist in coordinating, in whatever way that was going to happen, he felt that there was a difference between the side streets and the mall itself. The issue would be to make sure that the standard size pavers

and the details and the detailed site plan matched with whatever site review the City expected anyway. He asked Ms. Vest if the City had a detailed drawing that they expected the applicant to submit as part of this process, since it was in the public right-of-way.

-- Ms. Vest confirmed this. She stated that as a point of clarity, she was not implying that Mr. Kuttner should wait until the City had a paver

resolved for the mall before he ordered his pavers; she meant that they should coordinate and make sure everything was consistent.

-- Mr. Schwartz said that he supported Ms. Vest's comments. He felt she was trying give them the green light to move forward, but there still needed to be coordination, as there would be in any project, to make sure that everything worked with the City's expectations.

-- Ms. Hook stated that now that the keystones were in place, she really needed to take a look at the keystones. She felt that she would most likely go with her original conviction that they added one more element, and there was a need to avoid a cluttered look. She stated that there were a number of different surfaces and shapes and sizes, and it was important to let those things stand alone, rather than continuously adding to or decorating the building. She stated she was in support of the other items proposed, but for the railings, she would prefer a spacing that was farther apart rather than closer together.

-- Ms. Fenton commented that, concerning the pavers, it might end up that the City did something different and they would have to be changed.

-- Mr. Kuttner added that the City had a small stockpile of those pavers, but it was dwindling.

-- Concerning the ceramic tiles, Ms. Fenton commented that she had a hard time visualizing how they would appear on the building, although she liked the way the colors all worked together. She commented that the keystones were probably going to be one of those quirky things that, ten years in the future, people were going to wonder why they were selected. She stated that she had thought they would look awful, but they did not.

-- Ms. Winner commented that she respected Mr. Schwartz' views as a professional, but in her experience in interior design, it was no longer a considered inappropriate to take an eclectic approach and mix elements from different periods, and so she

felt that appropriateness might not be a final measure. She added that she sometimes found quirkiness kind of attractive.

Mr. Tremblay made a motion to approve Items 2 through 6, as proposed by the applicant, and to defer action on Item Number 1, since one member of the BAR would like the opportunity to review it. He commented that the timing on Item 1 was not critical and that it would be good if they had more time to look at it.

Mr. Schwartz commented that in his opinion, the public was best served when projects were presented in a coordinated way where details were part of the larger strategy of how the building evolved in the public cityscape. On the history of the key stones, he commented that they started out with a very simple and very abstract way of making an opening in a brick wall, which was beautiful and very appropriate in the strategy. The Board was then presented with a keystone as a very late detail, as the brick was going up the wall, and the comments from the Board were that a keystone would be fine, but the baroque design was not the ideal match with the building's overall character. However, the ornate keystone was put in, and he felt it was an uncomfortable situation to be in. He stated he did not believe the issue of whether or not people liked a detail, or the public liked it, should be the basis for making decisions on a board.

Ms. Winner commented that that was an interesting point, that things in the public purview were different from what you might have inside your home, and choices might be based on a different criteria.

Mr. Schwartz commented that he agreed with others that, in the grand scheme of things, the keystones were not a huge issue. However, he was going to vote against them now or next month or whenever they came up, and he was going to object strongly to the way in which this whole thing had unfolded, because he felt that it had placed them in a bad situation as a result of the less than optimal sequence in which everything had been presented to them.

Mr. Schwartz seconded Mr. Tremblay's motion for Items 2 through 6 for approval. Concerning the railings, he indicated the approval was for any of the four options that were presented. As a friendly

amendment, he commented they should echo the remark that Ms. Vest put in the Staff report for the brick pavers, just to make sure that the record had her wording in there as well to get that coordination to happen.

Mr. Atkins commented that he would prefer to take care of everything now. Mr. Schwartz suggested voting on Items 2 through 6, and then opening up the floor for discussion on Item 1.

A vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Fenton asked if there was any further discussion on the keystones, or if someone wanted to make a motion.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion to deny Item Number 1, seconded by Ms. Ely.

Ms. Fenton called for any discussion.

-- Mr. Atkins commented that he agreed with all that had been said, but he did not feel that this issue met an appropriate threshold for the Board that would necessitate that they stand firm.

-- Ms. Hook stated that she felt very puzzled that they had a whole Board voicing their opinion, and then it was ignored because two citizens said they liked the keystones.

-- Mr. Kuttner stated that regardless of the Board's decision, he had planned to put them in, and then modify them if necessary, because that was what he had and he was trying to get the building finished, fighting weather, season, etc. He stated that the costs involved were huge, and so he did not care if he had to retrofit a keystone, compared to stopping construction because a Board meets once a month.

-- Mr. Coiner commented that he was concerned what the keystones would look like if they were ground off, and Mr. Kuttner indicated that they would look good.

-- Ms. Fenton asked Mr. Schwartz if he was comfortable with grinding the keystones off, and he indicated he would be.

-- Mr. Coiner commented that he was ready to support leaving the keystones, but since Mr. Kuttner assured

them that they would look great if they were retrofitted, he would vote in favor of the motion.

A vote was taken on the motion to deny approval. Mr.

Coiner, Ms. Ely and Mr. Schwartz voted in favor of the motion; Mr. Atkins, Ms. Winner and Mr. Tremblay voted against it; and Ms. Fenton and Ms. Hook abstained. The motion failed.

Mr. Schwartz then offered a motion for deferral, and Mr. Tremblay seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried, seven to one.

Mr. Kuttner commented that he wanted to ask about a window that faced one of the balconies that was actually visible from the mall, but Ms. Fenton indicated that it would be better to return to that issue at the next meeting.

Ms. Fenton indicated that the next item on the agenda was the discussion of the Corridor Study Design Guidelines. She stated that at the last meeting, some of the questions that came up were how much detail, and what kinds of things the Board wanted to endorse or not endorse. She indicated that one of the major complaints the developers and builders had was that there was nothing specific on a lot of issues in the code, and this was a lot more specific than anything that they had done. She stated that when she read it, the language "shall" indicated to her a specific guideline of how things ought to be. She liked the idea of having some sort of specific guidelines, but she felt that the wording should indicate that something was "preferred" or "desirable," which would make it clear that if something did not meet the guidelines, there would be room for exceptions.

She then asked if the Board members had any comments on the Corridor Study Design.

-- Mr. Atkins stated that this was confusing, because there were things that were generally suggested that were perfectly in tune with either existing zoning laws, or those that might be changed to become consistent, and with the Board's guidelines; and there were very specific suggestions, such as those

concerning lanterns at intersections, which seemed to necessitate that they distinguish between what was a guideline and what was a proposal.

-- Mr. Schwartz commented that his interpretation was that the Planning Commission would be incorporating this into the Comprehensive Plan. However, he felt that the Planning Commission probably shared the feelings just expressed, that there was so much in

the plan, all of it would not happen at once, and some would probably not happen at all. He stated he felt the real issue was how the plan would unfold, how it would get implemented, and what actually would become firm guidelines versus general aspirations. He commented that he felt that would follow after the Comprehensive Plan, and that this document did not really do a good job of telling them exactly what they should do first. He commented that from the BAR standpoint, they might want to look at it from a more general overview prospective, asking whether or not there were issues that they felt were the most important ones. He commented that he felt the Planning Commission was very supportive of the plan, but also cautious because there was so much in it, sometimes in great detail. He stated that one of the questions they answered for him was that the Downtown Mall, West Main Street and Emmet Street were three corridors that were likely to be the significant steps that would start this process and that would gain the most attention and probably the most money. In his opinion, narrowing it down to three out of fourteen corridors made it more manageable to think about. He indicated that that was where it stood in the Planning Commission, and that it had not been adopted yet formally, but it was in the process of being folded into the Comprehensive Plan. In order to do that, they had to do a considerable amount of editing of the implementation portions of the back of that document as well.

-- Ms. Fenton stated that she felt the value of the Corridor Study was that a lot of it appeared to set forth some clear guidelines, which would give the Board the ability to back up a request or a requirement by having something to point to. Otherwise, it often came across as a matter of opinion, and the Board was not empowered to act on some things that it perceived were right. She stated

that even if this was not in their own guidelines yet, it would be helpful to have a way to refer to these Corridor Study guidelines for the time being. She commented that she was not sure whether the City was waiting for them to give their support or to offer any suggestions to this. Ms. Vest indicated that this was coming before them again because they had requested a second chance to look it over. Ms. Fenton suggested that the Board might want to offer a letter of support. She stated that she had not come across anything that glaringly would not work; it was more a matter of there being so many details.

-- Mr. Atkins suggested that they speak specifically about the Urban Design Guideline section, because that seemed to have the most direct bearing on the BAR's guidelines, and then look at the three likely corridors to be implemented.

-- Mr. Schwartz added that time was of the essence, because if the BAR wanted to come forward to the Planning Commission with anything in writing, it would probably have to be in the hands of the Planning Commission by the following month. He then asked if there was a role that they could play to help in the process of rethinking how the BAR functioned. If they took as a given that there might be an expanded responsibility of the BAR, if Emmet Street was added, as a design control review mechanism for the guidelines that might come into place there, then the BAR might want to be part of the process to think through how they could do the business of the BAR better. He stated that as a member of the BAR, when he read the proposal, he was not offended to hear that there was a perception that the BAR was not functioning optimally from the standpoint of the developers; he believed it was true. He did not have any ideas about how to solve this, but he felt they might want to weigh in with some words that basically said: "We would like to be a part of that process. We recognize that there may be interesting opportunities and challenges as we fine-tune or right-size or restructure the BAR as we imagine it into the future." He commented that an effective BAR for the kinds of things that were being described, might be a little bit different than what the BAR had been for the last twenty years.

-- Mr. Atkins commented that the Urban Design

Guidelines seemed to be appropriate as long as they were not in conflict with zoning and the view of the Comprehensive Plan. Concerning the Downtown Mall, he felt that there had been a tendency toward homogenization and theming and a holistic mall approach that he was very uncomfortable with. He would prefer to see another set of recommendations dealing with much bigger issues, leaving the smaller issues to vendors and restaurants.

-- Ms. Fenton asked if everyone was willing to offer in general the BAR's support of what the study was suggesting for the corridors and for downtown.

-- Ms. Winner asked Mr. Atkins whether, if they were to send a letter of support, he would like to see something stated in the letter about his concern or the BAR's concern about the mall. Mr. Atkins

confirmed this.

-- Ms. Fenton commented that her biggest concern was the changes that were being suggested for the mall, such as the planting of trees, the taking down of trees, or the requirement that every cafe should have exactly the same furniture and should be exactly the same. She indicated she did not feel that was a necessity, and that it was fine not to have every cafe look alike. She stated she liked the guidelines for how structures should work, but perhaps they were inappropriate for the specifics of the mall.

-- Ms. Winner asked Mr. Schwartz if, once this was integrated into the Comprehensive Plan, there would then be a further step, such as consulting with the BAR about the specific recommendations. Mr. Schwartz replied that that was the kind of thing that should be put into a letter as the BAR's understanding.

-- Ms. Vest said that her understanding was that that would come in the implementation phase.

-- Ms. Winner suggested that the BAR could emphasize that they would like to play a role as collaborative partners in the implementation.

-- Mr. Schwartz commented that that was a good way to put it. He indicated that that would be true with the parking study as well. He suggested that they should try to come up with a draft of a letter concerning these issues a week before their next meeting.

-- Ms. Vest suggested that try to get the letter to the Planning Commission by the January meeting.

-- Mr. Schwartz commented on what he felt the letter should contain, including the specific examples that had just been suggested, and particularly the point raised by Ms. Winner that in the implementation stage, the BAR would like to be an active participant in studying the options. He indicated that the letter did not need to be long, but it should be something that could be handled by the Planning Commission at their next meeting on January 12th.

-- After general discussion about people's time and availability, it was decided that Mr. Schwartz would do a rough draft in collaboration with Ms. Vest, and then email everyone a copy by January 5th.

Mr. Tremblay made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Schwartz seconded, and the motion carried.

Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.