

RALEIGH APPEARANCE COMMISSION
Minutes of the Business Meeting
Thursday, September 22, 2011

Members present: Elizabeth Byrd, Asa Fleming, Jedidiah Gant, Tyler Highsmith, Bang Le, Wayne Maiorano, Leza Mundt, Dean Rains, Julieta Sherk, Robert Taylor, Ted Van Dyk and Vincent Whitehurst.

Members not present: John Holmes (*excused*), Lee Tripi (*excused*) and Stan Williams (*excused*).

Staff present: Christine Darges, Planning Manager; Doug Hill.

REVIEW OF AUGUST MINUTES

Vincent Whitehurst called for review of the minutes of the August 16 commission meeting. Dean Rains moved that the minutes be approved as submitted. Jedidiah Gant seconded; passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of Officers

Leza Mundt presented the proposed slate on behalf of the Nominating Committee: Ted Van Dyk - Chair; Elizabeth Byrd - Vice-Chair. The two officers were elected by acclamation.

INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION

Unified Development Ordinance Update

Christine Darges, Project Manager for the UDO update, stated that the Appearance Commission (AC) was being considered for the role of design alternative review body. She provided a handout outlining possible content and process for performing that task. In discussion, the following points were made:

- Under the proposed procedure, if any particular site plan components could not be approved by staff, but the applicant still wished to include them, those components would be referred to the AC.
- Public notification would be made of the upcoming AC review, and review provided within 30 days.
- Notices to neighbors would cite specific Code standards applicable to the alternatives being sought. The same Code standards would be the basis for AC review and recommendation.
- The AC would make written recommendation to the Planning Director; the Director would make the final call.
- If the AC would need additional information to complete its recommendations, a second meeting could be held the next day.
- Applicant appeals of AC decisions would go to the Planning Director for resolution.
- There would be no deadlines for applications, but the time needed to accomplish the alternative review process would be noted up front.
- It is anticipated that review meetings would typically involve just the applicant, respective AC members, and individuals owning property within 100 feet of the site.

- Review would focus only on those aspects of the proposal for which alternative design was being sought; no comments would be sought or considered regarding any other aspects of the design proposal.
- Training of AC members would be provided before such a process is implemented.
(Jedidiah Gant left the meeting at this point.)
- The AC would likely not review alternative sidewalk or street design; those matters would go to the Public Works Director. However, in discussion, members felt that the public realm should receive public input – especially in regard to transitions between urban form intensities; the AC could assist with that input.

The list of design topics being proposed for future AC review was compiled from site plan components identified in the draft UDO as being administered by the Planning Director. Members requested, however, that landscaping, streetscapes, and any other matters currently on the commission’s Site Plan Review Checklist also be included in the list. It was noted that plan review often requires consideration beyond an either/or Code interpretation, if optimal design and a larger vision of urban form are to be achieved.

When asked about a timeline for the proposed procedural changes, Ms. Darges noted that an update will be presented to City Council in October, with the public hearing on the UDO draft to be set sometime after New Years. Full implementation would occur after rezoning of Mixed Use and other new districts is accomplished. Ted Van Dyk observed that there could be an interim period in which the AC could be reviewing site plans under the current zoning districts, but using standards of the new UDO. Vincent Whitehurst requested that the pending new iteration of the UDO draft be forwarded to the commission as soon as possible.
(Christine Darges and Tyler Highsmith left the meeting at this point.)

Ted Van Dyk called for further discussion of the possible new procedures at the October meeting, along with potential thresholds (e.g., building square footage, height, etc.) for a full project going to public review. He asked that members revisit the memorandum prepared by the UDO consultants regarding design review procedures in other cities.

2011 Sir Walter Raleigh Awards

Doug Hill noted that invitations had been distributed. Elizabeth Byrd, Julieta Sherk and Doug Hill are to meet with Marbles staff before the October 12 event to run through logistics. Asa Fleming noted his contact at WRAL might be able to assign a crew to cover the event. Vincent Whitehurst offered that Jedidiah Gant could provide online coverage if included on the press release list. Additional discussion addressed event flow and format.

OTHER BUSINESS

Public Art Policy

Leza Mundt, the commission’s representative on the Public Art Policy task force, noted that the draft policy will soon be going before City Council.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:25 PM.

OCTOBER 2011 MEETING SCHEDULE

***2011 Sir Walter Raleigh Awards
for Community Appearance***

Wed., Oct. 12 – 6:00-9:30 PM;
Marbles Kids Museum (201 E. Hargett St.)

Development Review Committee/
Strategic-Outreach Committee

Thurs., Oct. 13 – 4:30 PM; Room 809, OEP

Development Review Committee/
Appearance Commission

Thurs., Oct. 27 – 4:30 PM; Room 809, OEP