

Meeting Minutes of the Design Review Board (DRB)
Tuesday, February 6th, 2024, at 6:00 PM
County Council Chambers

The Design Review Board (DRB) on Tuesday, February 6th, 2024, at 6:00pm. The following Board Members were in attendance: **Lucy Lynch, Alexander Newman, Lauren Rogers, Tori Wallace Babcock and Lukas Hauser.** Representing the City of Spartanburg's Planning Department was **Martin Livingston, Community Development Director; Oksana Holbrooks, Administrative Assistant and Nan Zhou, Planner II.**

Roll Call:

Mr. Newman: Alexander Newman

Ms. Lynch: Lucy Lynch

Mr. Hauser: Lukas Hauser

Ms. Rogers: Lauren Rogers

Ms. Babcock: Tori Wallace Babcock

Ms. Lynch: Per the Freedom of Information Act, public notice of this meeting has been published, posted and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the City of Spartanburg Zoning Ordinance. We have one item on the agenda for new business and no old business.

Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Mr. Newman and second by Ms. Rogers, the agenda was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Mr. Newman: Motion to approve.

Mr. Hauser: Second

Ms. Lynch: All in favor of approving the amended agenda say aye?

Attendees: Aye.

Ms. Lynch: Okay tonight's agenda is approved. And now has everyone had a chance to review the meeting minutes from January 2nd, 2024?

Approval of Meeting Minutes for January 2nd, 2024

On a motion by Mr. Newman to approved minutes as amended and second by Ms. Babcock, the minutes was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Ms. Lynch: Do we need to add a note about the two units facing the park?

Mr. Newman: Yes, the two units had conditional approval that lots be moved to the front.

Motion to approve?

Ms. Lynch: All in favor of approving the minutes with revisions?

Attendees: Aye.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

The Design Review Board (DRB) has received a request for Preliminary conceptual approval of the buildings form, massing, and placement on the site for a New Residence for Tori Lawing located at 186 Harris Place (Tax Map Sheet: 7-12-23-017.00). Owner: Tori Lawing Applicant: Meghan Teague, AIA; Teague Studios.

GENERAL PROJECT OVERVIEW

The proposed 0.13 single family residential project is located on Harris Place (Kennedy Street extension). This project application is sufficiently complete to issue Final Plan Approval. A similar detached single family home application was approved by the DRB in October, 2021. Since the time of the original approval, the ballpark has since been announced and commenced construction less than one block away.

AUTHORITY

This project is zoned DT-5. Design Review and approval by the Design Review Board is required.

DETERMINATION OF COMPLETENESS

- Complete

EXCEPTIONS

- 3.3.5 Permitted Parking Location: Requires discretionary relief – recommended for consistency with adjacent Kennedy Street Sideyard Overlay standards – *approved by the DRB in October, 2021*
- 7.1.2 On-Street Parking: Recommended but Discretionary Relief is suggested given the width of the lot's frontage – *approved by the DRB in October, 2021*
- 7.1.4.b. Parking Area Access - Discretionary Relief is recommended to permit front access given the surrounding site conditions – *approved by the DRB in October, 2021*

CODE REVIEW

Exceptions or deviations required are noted in *blue italics*

A. Use Standards: The proposed use (dwelling-single family) is permitted by right.

B. District Standards:

- **3.3.1 Lot Configuration:** *Not applicable*
- **3.3.2 Primary Building Standards:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.4 Building Height:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.5 Permitted Parking Location:** *Requires discretionary relief – recommended for consistency with adjacent Kennedy Street Sideyard Overlay standards*
- **3.3.6 Building Frontage:** *Stoop - permitted*

C. General Standards:

- Not applicable

D. Lot/Site Standards:

- **5.1.1 Lot Frontage:** All lots must front on a street, square, or common open space. – *Compliant*
- **5.1.3 Pedestrian Entries from Frontage Line:** Buildings must have their principal pedestrian entrances on a frontage line. – *Compliant*
- **5.1.4 Setbacks:** Front and side setbacks must be consistent with surrounding buildings. – *Compliant (note: as the adjacent house is the only structure in the block, it does not set a precedent in this case)*
- **5.1.5 Adjacent Lots:** Grading between lots to be sensitively considered. – *Not applicable*

E. Utilities and Trash Containment:

- **5.2.1 Underground Utilities:** *Compliance presumed*
- **5.2.2 Solid Waste Storage Areas:** *Compliance presumed*
- **5.2.3 Mechanical and Utility Equipment:** – *Compliant*

F. Building Standards:

- **6.1.1 General Design Principles - Connectivity:** *Not applicable*
- **6.1.2 General Design Principles - Housing:** – *Compliant*
- **6.1.3 General Design Principles – Mixed-Use Infill & Redevelopment:** *Not applicable*
- **6.1.1 General Design Principles - Downtown Should be Urban:** *Compliant*
- **6.1.5 General Design Principles - Put People First:** Streetscapes should be composed of wide sidewalks for walking, seating, public art, and landscaping. – *Compliant*
- **6.2 Required Building Design Standards:**
 - **6.2.1 Architectural Style:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.2 Compatibility:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.3 Proportions:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.4 Wall Materials:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.5 Façade Treatment:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.6 Building Entrances:** *Compliant*
- **6.3 Specific Building Design Standards for all D-T4 and Residential Structures**
 - **6.3.1 Roof and Eaves:** *Compliant*
 - **6.3.2 Façade Design:** *Compliant*
 - **6.3.3 Building Entrances:** *Compliant*
 - **6.4.4 Garages**
 - **a. Garage Setbacks:** *Compliant*
 - **b. Garage Width:** *Compliant*
 - **6.3.5 Materials:** *Compliant*

G. Parking:

- **Parking Area Access:** *Parking is provided via a front-loaded driveway. Previous exception was granted by the DRB*

H. Streetscape and Site Landscaping:

- **8.1 Required Streetscape:**
 - D-T5: 12 ft/14 ft without tree wells; 8 ft sidewalk; trees in wells – *Compliant*

I. Signage: Not applicable.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION

- **Color:** While the use of black as an exterior color is “on-trend”, it is not grounded in the vernacular of the region. Black can help to “pop” feature elements, but we think that the use of black as the predominant building color lacks visual interest. In this particular case, we would recommend that the window trim be thickened and painted with a light color (white or stained wood to match lower entry) and consider the use of the lighter stained wood in the rake of the roof overhang. The same consideration could be made with the feature window on the gable-end front façade. We are also concerned with use of black on the board and batten walls and feature window inset panel. Black tends to be very unforgiving and large smooth panels tend to weather differently than lap siding, exposing weather damage sooner. As a south-facing home, this elevation will be exposed to weathering much more so than other elevations.
- **West elevation:** There appears to be an outdoor deck that is surrounded by an extension of the gable end wall using the board and batten treatment. First, it appears the window in this location should actually be a doorway based on the floor plan. And, as an outdoor space, we would recommend a stained cedar treatment similar to the entry area rather than extending the board and batten half wall to allow for air circulation on the patio. At a minimum, we recommend that an appropriate cap be placed on the top of the wall.
- **Wall Trim:** There is wall trim depicted on the front gable-end but not on any other elevation. Please confirm.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend final approval with the design recommendations noted above.

Applicant:

Meghan Teague, AIA; Teague Studios.

Public Comments:

None.

Discussion:

The proposed residence will complement the surround buildings and area.

A motion was made by Ms. Babcock, seconded Ms. Rogers to do a final approval with a condition that window trim will match front elevation by a vote of 5-0.

The Design Review Board (DRB) has received a request for Full and Final Approval for conversion of residential on the first floor located at 249 E. Main Street (Tax Map Sheet: 7-12-19-002.00). Owner/Applicant: Brandon McKillop.

GENERAL PROJECT OVERVIEW

The applicant is seeking to convert an existing one-story commercial building into a two-unit dwelling along Main Street between Broad Street and Dean Street.

AUTHORITY

This project is zoned DT-5. Formal design review and approval by the Design Review Board is required because of the requested change in use on the ground floor along Main Street from commercial to housing. The Board has previously approved the location of residential on the ground floor facing Main Street at their October, 2023 meeting subject to additional design scrutiny for consistency with the intent of the code.

DETERMINATION OF COMPLETENESS

- Application is partially complete for Preliminary Review. Additional questions have been posed to the applicant and are included at the end for additional material. The application still lacks the following:
 - Site plan showing the rear unit access to a sidewalk
 - Roof plan showing location of rooftop units

EXCEPTIONS REQUIRED FOR APPROVAL

- 6.1.2.B Key Principle: Housing – Housing should not be placed on the ground floor frontage in D-T6 and along Main Street. – *Approved by the DRB*

CODE REVIEW

J. Applicability Matrix: This is presumed to be a substantial modification where the improvements are greater than 50% of appraised value or a minor modification. Compliance is required of the expanded building area only (filling in of the front façade) and the landscaping requirements to the extent practical.

K. Use Standards: The proposed use is permitted by right (though not on the street facing side).

L. District Standards:

- **3.3.1 Lot Configuration:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.2 Primary Building Standards:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.4 Building Height:** *Compliant*
- **3.3.5 Permitted Parking Location:** *Not applicable*

3.3.6 Building Frontage: *Shopfront – permitted – awning or canopy required*

M. General Standards:

- Not applicable

N. Lot/Site Standards:

- **5.1.1 Lot Frontage:** All lots must front on a street, square, or common open space. *Compliant*

O. Utilities and Trash Containment:

- **5.2.1 Underground Utilities:** *Compliant*
- **5.2.2 Solid Waste Storage Areas:** *No information provided*
- **5.2.3 Mechanical and Utility Equipment:** *No information provided*

P. Building Standards:

- **6.1.2 General Design Principles - Housing:** Housing should not be placed on the ground floor
- frontage in D-T6 and along Main Street. – *DRB previously approved exception*
- **6.1.3 General Design Principles – Mixed-Use Infill and Redevelopment:** *Compliant*
- **6.1.4 General Design Principles – Downtown Should be Urban:** *Compliant*
- **6.1.5 General Design Principles - Put People First:** Ground floor activity is critical to pedestrian comfort and activity. Long expanses of inactivity are strongly discouraged. – *DRB previously approved exception*
- **6.2 Required Building Design Standards:**
 - **6.2.1 Architectural Style:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.2 Compatibility:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.3 Proportions:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.4 Wall Materials:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.5 Façade Treatment:** *Compliant*
 - **6.2.6 Building Entrances:** *Compliant*
- **6.3 Specific Building Design Standards for Residential Structures/Frontages in D-T5 (option a)**
 - **6.3.1 Roof and Eaves:** *Compliant*
 - **6.3.2 Façade Design:** *Presumed Compliant – Calculation not provided*
 - **6.3.3 Building Entrances: Raised Entries** *Not Compliant – Exception provided by the DRB subject to enhanced design*
 - **6.3.5 Materials:** *Compliant*
- **6.4 Specific Building Design Standards for Mixed-use and Commercial Buildings in D-T5 (option b)**
 - **6.4.1 Roof and Eaves:** *Compliant*
 - **6.4.2 Canopies/Awnings:** *Existing canopy to be removed*
 - **6.4.3 Encroachments:** *Not applicable*
 - **6.4.4 Ground Level Detailing:** *Compliant*
 - **6.4.5 Materials:** *Compliant*

Q. Parking:

- **Not Applicable**

R. Streetscape and Site Landscaping:

- **8.1 Required Streetscape:** 12 ft streetscape zone with a minimum 8 ft sidewalk and trees planted in wells consistent with downtown standards (40 ft on-center). - *One tree is required if there are no conflicts with underground utilities*

S. Signage: Not applicable.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION

- **Front Unit Entry:** The proposed front façade is consistent with the neighboring commercial properties though we continue to question the direct access entry from the sidewalk into the living space of the unit. The code requires that residential units be elevated to provide a sense of privacy from the sidewalk but no alternate configuration has been provided. We would strongly encourage some type of visual offset or an entry vestibule to provide a more appropriate transition to the private space.
- **Rear Unit:** We remain very concerned about the quality of the space for the rear unit. There is very little natural light into the unit and the stairs from the entry drops to an unfinished landing. Additionally, there is no sidewalk that would provide all-weather access into the unit from the public sidewalk or parking area.
- **Rooftop units:** No rooftop plan was provided and we do not know the location of the rooftop mechanical units and if they will be properly screened.
- **Street Tree required:** Because the application is a change in use, the streetscape is required to be upgraded. Consistent with the downtown standards, one street tree is required, using a tree well.
- **Front Façade Canopy/Awning:** The existing canopy is being removed and no replacement has been provided. It is appropriate to provide some type of covering over a doorway, at a minimum, to provide shelter from the elements before entry. Along Main Street, the canopies and awnings of buildings also provide shelter from sun and rain to pedestrians walking by. It appears that no canopies or awnings have been provided in the renovation of the facades of the neighboring buildings, however, that should not be the precedent. Because this application requires Board approval, we strongly recommend the installation of some type of a canopy or awning that is consistent with the other commercial storefronts along Main Street and with the code requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

We remain very concerned that the quality of the residential units and the renovation of the façade are inconsistent with a Main Street location. While the DRB previously approved the conversion of the space to residential, they were very clear that they wanted to see that the level of investment was consistent with its Main Street location.

At present, we lack details about a rear entry landing and sidewalk as well as the location for rooftop mechanical equipment locations. In addition, we question the interior arrangement of the units to provide a sense of privacy that is consistent with other standards in the code for ground floor residential (e.g., elevated entries, landscape setback, courtyards). We are also very

concerned that the lack of natural light into the rear unit makes for a very substandard living experience. To be clear, we are supportive of a wide diversity of housing affordability throughout the community and do not believe that this needs to be a luxury unit to fit in. However, along Main Street, the expectations are much higher than they would be if they were in a neighborhood setting and to be clear, we would have the same concerns of the quality of the interior space and its lack of natural light in any location.

We believe that the applicant would greatly benefit from design assistance from an architect or housing designer.

Applicant:

Brandon McKillop

Public Comments:

None.

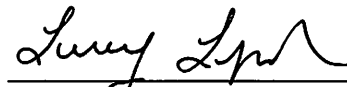
Discussion:

The applicant did not have sufficient amount of specifications or drawings presented. They would greatly benefit from design assistance from an architect or housing designer.

No motion was made, but a recommendation for continuance to next month's meeting until ready to present by a vote of 5-0.

Staff Announcements: None

Adjourn meeting at 7:35 PM



Lucy Lynch, Chairperson