

**CITY OF REDMOND
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
June 2nd, 2011**

NOTE: These minutes are not a full transcription of the meeting. Tapes are available for public review in the Redmond Planning Department.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: David Scott Meade, Joe Palmquist, Scott Waggoner, Jannine McDonald

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Craig Krueger, Lara Sirois, Mike Nichols

STAFF PRESENT: Steve Fischer, Principle Planner; Thara Johnson, Associate Planner; Carl McArthy, Code Enforcement Officer

RECORDING SECRETARY: Susan Trapp, Lady of Letters, Inc.

The Design Review Board is appointed by the City Council to make decisions on design issues regarding site planning, building elevations, landscaping, lighting and signage. Decisions are based on the design criteria set forth in the Redmond Development Guide.

CALL TO ORDER

The Design Review Board meeting was called to order by Chair David Scott Meade at 7:10 p.m.

SIGN PROGRAM

L110186, City Center Sign Program

Description: Multi-Tenant Sign Plan

Location: 15965 NE 85th Street

Applicant: Rod Heyes

Staff Contact: Carl McArthy, 425-556-2412 or cmcarthy@redmond.gov

Mr. McArthy says this is under review because the building has just turned into a multi-tenant space. Staff is recommending approval. Some newly-revised sections of the City's Zoning Code are involved in this review. Mr. McArthy pointed out that there will be a band for the bottom and top of the building to allow for tenant signs. Code section 21.44.010.(G)(11) states that signs will be based on a uniform sign concept approved by the DRB known as the Uniform Sign Program, which all future tenants will adhere to. If there are small requests, staff handles such matters; larger changes would be brought to the DRB. The City has worked with the applicant and a sign professional, and staff believes the proposal is appropriate for the current building architecture and site conditions, and meets the signage needs for the site. Therefore, staff is recommending approval from the DRB of the proposal as presented.

Rod Heyes with Sign Associates says there is currently one tenant on the upper floor. Two are on the upper floor, with the possibility of three or four in the future. With that in mind, not that many more signs would be added, and the landlord would have to approve them.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS:

Ms. McDonald:

- Asked if there was a monument sign. Mr. Reyes said no.
- The applicant says there may be a chance to erect such a sign at a later time, but that is not feasible now due to parking and setback rules.

Mr. Meade:

- Asked if a tenant could have multiple signs if that tenant had a location on both floors, for example.
- Mr. McArthy says such a tenant could have signs on the interior walls their space touches. The landlord could limit that further, but if the tenant were on a corner, two signs would be allowed.
- The applicant added that the two prominent elevations are the north and south; the ends of the building are obscured by trees, and not desirable for signs. However, signs could be placed there.

- Mr. Meade confirmed with Mr. McArthy that the DRB would be approving the location of the signs, not their materials or design. Mr. McArthy noted that the sign program is a concept.
- Details on height, length, and illumination would be determined later, but would be guided overall by the DRB's decision.
- Mr. Palmquist and Mr. Waggoner had no further comment.

MOTION BY MR. PALMQUIST, AND SECONDED BY MS. MCDONALD, TO APPROVE SIGN PROGRAM L110186, THE CITY CENTER SIGN PROGRAM. MOTION PASSES (4-0).

Mr. McArthy noted that there are two sections of revised City Code regarding signs that will come to the DRB soon; one is regarding multiple tenant spaces, the other is an added section in the Code for the Sign Program itself. That new section should make it easier for applicants to understand what is required of them when it comes to signage. The design standards overall have been made more clear, and some administrative design flexibility has been added to the Code. That could give the applicant and the DRB some wiggle room to make sign program changes, where appropriate. The DRB will review several sections of revised Code, including the following:

1. Sign legibility
2. Sign compatibility
3. Sign placement, location and size
4. Sign color and materials
5. Sign illumination

Different design standards will be in place for different signs, including wall signs, projecting signs, blade signs, window signs, and monument signs. Mr. Fischer is preparing a small binder for the DRB members to review that deals with the revised Code the Board needs to know. It should be ready soon. The DRB thanked Mr. McArthy and Mr. Fischer for their work on those issues.

PROJECT REVIEW

L110203, Emerald Heights-Fitness Center

Description: Construction of a new 12,000 square foot fitness center

Location: 10945 – 179th Ave NE

Applicant: Julie Lawton

Staff Contact: Thara Johnson, 425-556-2470, tmjohnson@redmond.gov

Ms. Johnson noted that the DRB had seen this project at the beginning of this year on January 20th as a pre-application. The proposal includes a new fitness center, which has a swimming pool, salon, spa, cardio room, and locker facility. The current pool building will be demolished to make way for an auditorium once the fitness center is done. The location of the fitness center is currently used as parking and pedestrian connections. The DRB, at the last meeting, made comments regarding the project massing, windows, and materials. The applicant has revised the materials and elevations in accordance with those comments by doing the following:

1. One of the siding materials has been eliminated, reducing the palette from four to three colors.
2. Materials have been applied in a more monolithic manner, by using false stone on the two high parapet pieces, which are the courtyard façade and the office portion at the north entrance.
3. The north entrance is more prominent, through the use of false stone.
4. The revised design, overall, repeats the window design on the southwest façade of the exercise room, thereby improving the relationship to the spa and pool windows, as well as the entrance.
5. Staff had asked for a plant palette for a proposed green roof on the fitness center, which has been provided.

Staff says the building elevations, colors, and materials meet the City design standards, and is recommending approval of the application, subject to standard conditions.

Architect Andy Kosusko presented on behalf of the applicant. He showed the DRB the material palette, which involves changes to the faux stone, such that there is a better relation to the existing materials on

the site. The roofing material is now a membrane. A skilled nursing center and independent resident apartments flank the project, and single-story duplex cottages are across the street from it. Ash trees and red maples, as well as flowering magnolias, encircle the project with year-round color and texture. The green roof is 1,100 square feet, with a mixture of sedum produced in Bellingham. Outdoor seating and a water feature have been added to the courtyard elevation at the south end of the pool. The higher parapet has some of the faux stone, as well. On the north elevation, the stone is used again around the office space area. The high pitched roof areas of the pool and the cardio area are covered with lap siding, which matches the siding elsewhere on campus. The panel used will be smooth, but the lap siding will have texture. A line of mechanical units is now across the roof at the southwest façade, and those units have been screened. The applicant says the scale of the building relates well to the Corwin Building, the dining space, and other buildings on the site. Aerial shots show the context, as well.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC AND DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Meade:

- Opened the meeting up for public comment. A Dr. Donald Taves, a resident of Emerald Heights, spoke to the Board. He asked about the bamboo screening on the site.

Dr. Donald Taves:

- The applicant says it will be a black bamboo that will grow about 15 feet high, and provide privacy to the pool. Dr. Taves says the present pool has a nice outlook through glass onto a croquet and lawn bowling court.
- Dr. Taves says he is concerned about the design of the fitness center. He says the project does not conform to the development concepts provided to the City as the basis for the recent zoning change for Emerald Heights from R4 to R6, in June of 2010.
- In that zoning change, Dr. Taves read a section noting that all new buildings will be compatible with Emerald Heights and surrounding neighborhood. He does not believe the new design is compatible, nor appropriate.
- Dr. Taves believes the site of the building is poor, in that it is further for the residents to walk. He is concerned that the auditorium would not be built, which could present some aesthetic and heating problems for the elevated walkway proposed to the fitness center.
- The auditorium, Dr. Taves says, has narrow access areas in comparison to the old auditorium.
- Dr. Taves is concerned that the proposed building placement cuts the current fire lane into two lanes, which he says will obscure views for residents. He says this is a frivolous, expensive project that does not fit with the City's Code, which calls for low-impact development.
- Dr. Taves says this facility will waste energy and resources, and he believes that the existing facility is at least as good as any competing facility. He would like to see it expanded rather than demolished.
- Dr. Taves says he would like Emerald Heights to remain a quality, aesthetically pleasing facility.

Ellen Taves:

- Ms. Taves, another resident of the facility, spoke to re-emphasize the points made by Dr. Taves.
- She is concerned that the new building is not compatible with Emerald Heights' current buildings and also not compatible with the residences around it.

Herbert Stevenson:

- Mr. Stevenson lives on a corner unit, and he believes the new building would be an invasion of his privacy.
- He says the fitness center is not good to look at, but he has no problem with it in its current state.

Ms. Johnson:

- Clarified the zoning change referred to by Dr. Taves. She says that request was mainly to increase the density within the Emerald Heights facility.
- She noted that the proposal at tonight's meeting, the site plan entitlement for the fitness center, is not associated with the zoning change. She says the entitlement could go forward whether that zoning change is approved by City Council or not.
- Ms. Johnson noted that the Council has not made a decision on the zoning change yet.

Mr. Palmquist:

- Asked about the appearance of the old buildings compared to the new buildings, and if that was discussed at the last meeting.
- He believes it is the Board's position that the project is compatible in terms of materials. The shed roof is clearly a move to a more modern look compared to the original buildings.
- Mr. Palmquist says the public would not really be able to even see this project as they drive by the site. He is asking what the Board's responsibility is, seeing as how most of the public comments appear to be internal concerns about the appearance of the new building.
- Ms. Johnson says there has not been a lot of feedback on this proposal, nor the zoning change, from surrounding neighbors.
- Mr. Fischer says the role of the DRB on this project is like any other project in town, to apply the design criteria from the City Code. The fact that the site is screened well from the public does not mean that it does not need to adhere to the Code.
- Mr. Palmquist says the only design concern he had was on the north entrance, which he says appears to have been resolved.
- He asked about the south entrance, around the side, and if there was a roof covering. The applicant says there was a covering, about five to six feet wide.
- Beyond that, Mr. Palmquist says the monolithic approach to materials has cleaned up the project well.

Mr. Meade:

- Asked about the tunnel referred to in the public comments. The applicant says it is more of a breezeway. There is glazing on both sides in the current passage. With the new proposal, the path will go across the front of the auditorium, and another pathway has been added.
- The new pathway will be covered as well, the applicant notes.
- The applicant added, by way of responding to some public comments, that the position of this building was the best way to keep the maximum number of buildings in use during construction.
- The applicant says residents spoke up during the master plan process, and wanted to keep the pool open during any construction.
- Mr. Palmquist asked about the timeline for building and construction, and how residents would gain access. The applicant says that access would happen from the outside.

Ms. McDonald:

- Says that there are some different window types noted in the design. The applicant explained that a curtain wall system was deemed best to support a large expanse of glass, two and a half by six feet, in some locations. The smaller windows are two feet by four and a half.
- The new, traditional windows are vinyl, with a solid, bulky look.
- The existing windows are metal, with a much smaller profile.

Mr. Meade:

- Asked about the logic of using the bamboo on this project.
- The applicant says there is a service drive that comes by, with a lot of through traffic. Although there is a push to get more light in this project, the idea is to screen away the view of that traffic, using an organic element like the bamboo.

Herbert Stevenson:

- Expressed concern about his corner unit being so close to that bamboo, and what taking five feet of dirt away to plant that bamboo would do to the foundation of the building.
- The applicant noted that the fire lane does not cut into the corner, and follows the grade.
- Regarding the fact that the fire lane will be cut into two sections, he noted that this was not a regularly trafficked street, and fire access would not be compromised.

Mr. Meade:

- Asked about the surface material for the fire lane.
- The applicant says it would be an asphalt drive with a concrete walk.

Barbara Mudge:

- Ms. Mudge, a resident of Emerald Heights, says the building of this structure will take away many parking spaces. She is concerned that the applicant would take away half of her lawn, at her cottage unit, to add parking places within ten feet of her home. She objects to that.
- The applicant says 43 parking places will be lost with this project, but 41 will be added, so the net loss is only two spaces. There are spaces added all around the property to deal with this. An island separates the parking areas.

Dr. Donald Taves:

- Asked to see a picture of the fire lane near the dining room. The applicant noted again that this fire lane was not a road; a fire truck would use the patio area in the case of an emergency.
- A paver or concrete material would be used in that patio area. Planters in that area could be rolled out of the way easily in the case of a fire.

Mr. Waggoner:

- Asked about the landscape plan, and if the patio plan would be installed during the building project. The applicant explained that for the preparation for the construction of the auditorium, the green area around the patio would have to be re-seeded.
- The final courtyard renderings are just conceptual at this point.
- Mr. Waggoner asked, relating back to the covered walkways, if those were the main access points for the auditorium or coming in from the street.
- The applicant says 85% of the population of the site use those covered walkways. Some of the cottage units and other foot traffic would use an external route.

Ellen Taves:

- Asked why it was necessary to blacktop the fire lane that comes so close to Mr. Stevenson's apartment, when it is only going to be used in emergencies. Now, there is grass with embedded concrete blocks.
- The applicant noted that reinforced grass is no longer allowed, though that was the original proposal. The fire department's regulations for fire lanes have changed.

Mr. Waggoner:

- Asked about the mechanical units, and where they would be placed. The applicant pointed out where they would be placed on the roof, and showed the screening.
- Mr. Waggoner asked if the screening would fully block out the view for one of the closest buildings. The applicant says it would be a partial screen; it matches the height of that building. A screen completely obscuring the units would involve a much larger construction.

Mr. Meade:

- Asked the applicant to describe the process Emerald Heights went through to develop this project and explain it to the residents.
- The applicant says Emerald Heights is a non-profit that owns and operates this property. A master plan process was taken on initially to determine placement of new facilities, starting in 2007.
- There have been resident forums, with multiple schemes developed over the last few years.

Dr. Donald Taves:

- Says the control of this project is isolated from the residents, and driven by the master plan the applicant wants to put through.
- Dr. Taves says that plan was appropriate when the site was expanding, but at this point, he believes the applicant should be re-entrenching rather than spending money on this project.
- Dr. Taves says the money spent on this project should be put into skilled nursing. He says the residents are not very happy.
- He says 180 people signed a petition against the zoning change. He says 78% of the people are parties of record for the zoning change. He says residents do not feel they were any part of this design.

- Dr. Taves noted that some residents were selected to be on committees, but their objections were smothered. Those residents did not explain to the others that they were not being heard.
- Dr. Taves says the residents feel manipulated, and they do not like that.

Ellen Taves:

- Says that unlike any other residential retirement community she knows of, the residents are the sole support of Emerald Heights.
- Ms. Taves says the residents have supplied all of the funds to support Emerald Heights. She says the board and administration have informed the residents rather than consulting them on changes, except for selected residents who have been on committees.

Ms. McDonald:

- Says if one were not familiar with the property, and looked at the contextual photos, it would appear the building does not fit with the property. It looks like a new building in an existing surrounding.
- Having said that, she says that typically, new buildings are built in their time, and as time passes in Redmond there will be new buildings, which is part of living in the city.
- She says while the new building does not match the exact forms of the surrounding buildings, the colors and trim and proportion work with the existing buildings successfully.

MOTION BY MS. MCDONALD, AND SECONDED BY MR. PALMQUIST, TO PROVIDE CONDITIONAL APPROVAL TO PROJECT L110203, THE EMERALD HEIGHTS-FITNESS CENTER, WITH STANDARD STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONDITIONS. MOTION PASSES (4-0).

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION MADE BY MR. PALMQUIST AND SECONDED BY MS. MCDONALD TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:14 P.M. MOTION PASSES (4-0).

MINUTES APPROVED ON

RECORDING SECRETARY