DESIGN COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, January 25, 2017
Mercer Island City Hall

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL 7:00 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Minutes from January 25, 2017

REGULAR BUSINESS

Agenda Item #1: Study Session for Bartell Drugs
Study session to assist Bartell Drugs with the feasibility stage for purchase of property in the Town Center.

Staff Contact: Nicole Gaudette

OTHER BUSINESS

Staff Comments
Planned Absences for Future Meetings
Announcements & Communications
Next Scheduled Meetings: April 26, 2017 at 7:00PM

ADJOURN
CALL TO ORDER:
Chair Richard Erwin called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM in the Council Chambers, 9611 SE 36th Street, Mercer Island, Washington.

ROLL CALL:
Chair Richard Erwin, Commissioners Anthony Perez, Suzanne Foster, Lara Sanderson, Tami Szerlip, Commissioners Hui Tian and Colin Brandt were absent.

STAFF PRESENT:
Evan Maxim, Planning Manager; Kari Sand, City Attorney; Nicole Gaudette, Senior Planner; were present.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:
The Commission reviewed the minutes from the December 14, 2016 meeting. The minutes were approved as amended by a vote of 5-0.

REGULAR BUSINESS:
Commissioner Sanderson moved to consider all three agenda items under one motion. Commissioner Perez seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Commissioner Perez moved to recommend that the City Council direct the Planning Commission to review the sign code, specifically as relates to neon signage and light concealment related to design review as illustrated in DSR16-019 and DSR16-020, and the Town Center Design Standards as related to lighting and light transmittal off-site. Commissioner Sanderson seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Agenda Item #1: Design Review DSR16-019 - Freshy’s Tenant Wall Sign
Nicole Gaudette, Senior Planner, provided a brief staff presentation on the project, which reflects a proposed wall sign at the Hadley building.

Nicole Gaudette reviewed the proposed sign design and its compliance with the adopted standards of the Town Center Design Standards (MICC 19.11).

CJ Williams, Western Neon Custom Sign Builders, the applicant representative provided additional detail regarding the proposed neon sign design.

Evan Maxim, Planning Manager, provided code citations to MICC 19.11.090(B)(6) and 19.11.110(B)(5) regarding the use of neon in lighting and building design.

Commissioners Perez and Sanderson discussed the halo effect associated with a neon sign and whether the neon lighting should be channel set.

Agenda Item #2: Design Review DSR16-020 - Mioposto Tenant Wall Sign
Nicole Gaudette, Senior Planner, provided a brief staff presentation on the project, which reflects a proposed wall sign at the Hadley building.

Nicole Gaudette reviewed the proposed sign design and its compliance with the adopted standards of the Town Center Design Standards (MICC 19.11).

Agenda Item #3: Design Review DSR16-021 - Orange Theory Tenant Wall Sign
Nicole Gaudette, Senior Planner, provided a brief staff presentation on the project, which reflects a proposed wall sign at the Hadley building.

Nicole Gaudette reviewed the proposed sign design and its compliance with the adopted standards of the Town Center Design Standards (MICC 19.10).

Commissioner Sanderson moved to grant design approval of all three design reviews, specifically for the proposed Freshy’s, Mioposto, and Orange Theory wall signs. Approval will allow for construction of all three new wall signs as reflected in the staff recommendation(s) for DSR16-019, DSR16-0020, and DSR16-021 and the associated Exhibit 1. Commissioner Perez seconded the motion. It passed unanimously, 5-0.

OTHER BUSINESS: None

PLANNED ABSENCES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS: Commissioner Foster will be absent from the March 8th, 2017 meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

The next scheduled meeting is February 8th, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Evan Maxim, Planning Manager
1. SUMMARY

The applicant is participating in a Design Commission study session to review a proposed site development concept for a proposed new drug store and pharmacy located in the TC-4 subarea in the Town Center (TC) zone. The property currently contains one building that is occupied by a few businesses including Seven Star Restaurant and Lounge, Tony Maroni’s, and King Insurance. This design review session is part of the applicant’s feasibility study for purchase of the property. The design shown on the plans may not comply with design standards. The focus will not be on the overall design of the building and site, but will rather focus on the applicant’s four questions. After answering the applicant’s questions, the design commission may provide guidance to the applicant regarding design consideration beyond the scope of feasibility.

Upon receipt of a formal preliminary design review application by the City, a public meeting and subsequent open record public hearing will be scheduled in front of the Design Commission pursuant to Mercer Island City Code (MICC) 19.15.040(F)(2). When the applicant formally comes before the Design Commission, the project must meet the criteria listed in MICC Section 19.11, Town Center Development and Design Standards.

2. STAFF ANALYSIS AND CRITERIA FOR REVIEW

Pursuant to MICC 19.15.010(E), 19.15.040(F)(1)(b), and 19.15.040(F)(1)(c), major new construction inside of the Town Center is subject to review by the Design Commission. MICC 19.15.040(F)(2)(b)(ii) allows for the applicant to schedule a study session with the Design Commission “to discuss project concepts before the plans are fully developed.” Using the preliminary information provided to the City by the applicant, planning staff conducted an initial cursory review of the project.

The applicant has provided a list of four questions that they would like to discuss with the design commission. The questions are provided below.
1. **Applicant question:** Mercer Island zoning requires a 60’ maximum frontage for multiple user. We would like to know if Bartell Drugs can take the entire street frontage as a single user.

   **Staff analysis:** The code does not allow a single use to occupy street frontage exceeding 60-feet in length. However, it gives the design commission authority to allow a continuous linear frontage of up to 66-feet if features to promote pedestrian activity are provided. Bartell is proposing 105.5-feet of frontage. Staff does not know of a code provision that allows the frontage to be as large as proposed. The intent of the street frontage limitation is to: 1) restrict large space users that dominate ground floor frontages, inconsistent with the policy goals of a vibrant streetscape; and 2) create spaces that are potentially more affordable for smaller businesses.

   **MICC 19.11.020(B) Required Ground Floor Uses.**
   3. No use shall occupy a continuous linear street frontage exceeding 60 feet in length. The design commission may approve up to an additional six feet in length if the use incorporates a feature to promote pedestrian activity, including but not limited to: an additional pedestrian entrance onto a sidewalk or through-block connection, or additional 10 percent transparency beyond the requirement of MICC 19.11.100(B)(1)(b).

2. **Applicant question:** To break up the street façade, we are proposing to step back the entry vestibule and provide its own fenestration and height modulation to differentiate it from the remaining store façade. Is this acceptable as we have shown? (Please see Scheme A of the proposed plan set.)

   **Staff analysis:** Please see the staff analysis and code section above for question #1.

3. **Applicant question:** For pedestrian access off 78th Ave SE, can we go down stairs and a ramp to get to the main entrance of our retail space? (Please see Conceptual Grading Plan CC-02B.)

   **Staff analysis:** The applicant intends for the building to be 2-feet below street level. The code requires all building design to be oriented towards the street. Weather protection at the sidewalk level of buildings is required as are street level windows. The code places importance on the design of 78th Ave SE to accommodate pedestrian activity, including setbacks of structures. These requirements need to be considered as they may be difficult to meet if the proposed building is lower than street level on the 78th Avenue side.

   Staff recommends that the Design Commissioners review the following Figure 2, and subsequent code sections in evaluating this question.
MICC 19.11.030(A) Bulk Regulations by Subarea.

6. Setbacks
   a. 78th Avenue SE. 78th Avenue SE. All structures shall be set back so that space is provided for at least 15 feet of sidewalk between the structure and the face of the street curb, excluding locations where the curbline is interrupted by parking pockets. Additional setbacks are encouraged to provide space for more pedestrian-oriented activities and to accommodate street trees and parking pockets.

MICC 19.11.060(A) Minor Site Features.

3. Additional Sidewalk Setback. At least five feet of sidewalk width, in addition to the minimum sidewalk setback provided for in MICC 19.11.030(A)(6), may be provided along 78th Avenue SE, along the entire street frontage of the development site. Such additional sidewalk should be designed to provide additional pedestrian access where parking pockets narrow the sidewalk, to accommodate street trees.
and benches, or to create spaces for more pedestrian-oriented activities such as outdoor dining or seating.

**MICC 19.11.100 Building Design.**

**A. Objectives.** Building facades should be designed with a variety of architectural elements that suggest the building’s use and how it relates to other development in the area. Buildings should be oriented to the street frontage to enliven the street edge as well as to maximize access from the public sidewalk. Building facades should provide visual interest to pedestrians. Special care should be given to landscaping, mass and roof forms of buildings to provide visual interest from residential areas located on the hillside surrounding the Town Center as well as from public streets or sidewalks. Street level windows, minimum building setbacks, on-street entrances, landscaping and articulated walls should be encouraged. Building facades should be designed to achieve the purpose of the development and design standards and the Town Center vision described in MICC 19.11.010. Architectural features and other amenities should be used to highlight buildings, site features and entries and add visual interest. Within the Town Center, all development shall provide elements that attract the interest of residents, shoppers and workers.

**B. Development and Design Standards**

1. **(b). Ground Floor Windows and Doors.** Major new construction along 77th Avenue SE, 78th Avenue SE and SE 27th Street, within the TC-5, TC-4 and TC-4 Plus subareas, shall have at least 75 percent of the length of the ground floor facade between the height of two feet and seven feet devoted to windows and doors affording views into retail, office, or lobby space.

6. **(6). Entrances.** Building entrances should concentrate along the sidewalk and should be physically and visually inviting. Entrance doors shall be recessed from the facade surface to emphasize the entrance and provide a sheltered transition to the interior of the building. Special paving treatments and/or landscaping should be used to enhance the entrance. Pedestrian walkways with wheelchair ramps at least eight feet wide should be constructed between the sidewalk and building entrances.

10. **(10). Corner Lots.** Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner. Corner entries and/or architectural treatment should be used to emphasize the corner.

13. **(13). Weather Protection.** Specially designed all-weather features that integrate weather protection systems at the sidewalk level of buildings to protect pedestrians from the effects of rain, wind, glare, shadow, reflection and sunlight and to make spending time outdoors feasible in all seasons. All major new construction shall have awnings, canopies, trellises, pergolas, covered arcades or all-weather features along 80 percent of a building’s frontage along the retail frontages shown on Figure 2.

- Any canopy or awning over a public sidewalk should be a permanent architectural element.
- Any canopy or awning over a public sidewalk should project out from the building facade a minimum horizontal width of six feet and be between eight to 12 feet above grade.
- Architectural details should not be concealed by awnings or canopies.
- Awning shapes should relate to the shape of the facade’s architectural elements. The use of traditionally shaped awnings is encouraged.
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f. All awnings or canopies shall function to protect pedestrians from rain and other weather conditions.

**MICC 19.11.120 Street Standards.**
All major new construction abutting 77th Avenue SE or 78th Avenue SE shall improve the right-of-way adjacent to the property as required in Figure 14. Major new construction abutting all other streets shall improve the right-of-way adjacent to the property as required by the Mercer Island Town Center Streetscape Manual. The design commission may require or grant a modification to the nature or extent of any required street improvement for any of the following reasons upon recommendation by the city engineer:

A. If unusual topographic or physical conditions preclude the construction of the improvements as required; or
B. If the required improvement is part of a larger project that has been scheduled for implementation in the city’s six-year capital improvement program; or
C. If angled parking is required but parallel parking would enhance pedestrian, vehicle or bicycle safety, or result in a more desirable pedestrian environment; or
D. If other unusual circumstances preclude the construction of the improvements as required.
4. **Applicant question:** The code states’ “if public parking is not provided, a minimum of 60% of the ground floor street frontage shall be occupied by the permitted uses: retail, restaurant and/or personal service use.” We are not proposing public parking. Given the grade issues along SE 29th Street, this requirement is difficult to meet. As proposed, there is a 64-foot covered drive-thru. This represents approximately 60% of the frontage after subtracting out driveways and the plaza area. The building represents approximately 45% of the 78th Ave SE frontage, but approximately 64% when the vestibule and trellis structures are added (again after subtracting out driveways). Does this meet the intent of the code? (Please see Conceptual Grading Plan CC-02B.)

**Staff analysis:** The code states that driveways shall be not be used in calculating the percentage of ground floor use. It is silent as to parking lots. Based upon the design vision in MICC 19.11.110, staff believes that the vision intends to encourage or promote pedestrian oriented space adjacent to the street and encourage walk up commercial space. However, the specific requirements of 19.11.020 appear to be ambiguous with regard to the presence of a drive through. Staff is seeking guidance from the Design Commission in applying this standard.
19.11.010 General.

2. Function. The design of buildings, structures and streetscapes within the Town Center is intended to support a built environment that is convenient and accessible to pedestrians, motorists, bicyclists and public transit users. Development should enhance the Town Center as a vibrant, healthy, mixed use downtown that serves as the city’s retail, business, social, cultural and entertainment center and ensures the commercial and economic vitality of the area. New or redevelopment should increase the attractions and pedestrian amenities that bring residents to the Town Center, including local shopping, services, offices, specialty retail, restaurants, residences, festivals, special events, and entertainment. Outdoor spaces should function as social settings for a variety of experiences, adding to the comfort of life in Mercer Island, while maintaining a human scale and an ability for easy pedestrian circulation.

3. Site Features. New or redevelopment should include public amenities, such as storefronts with canopies, street trees, greenery, seating, fountains or water features, outdoor cafes, sculpture or other forms of art, and places for gathering and lingering. The use of materials, color, texture, form and massing, proportion, public amenities, mitigation of environmental impacts, landscaping and vegetation, and architectural detail should be incorporated in the design of new or redevelopment with the purpose of supporting a human scale, pedestrian-oriented Town Center. New or redevelopment shall be coordinated and consistent with the downtown street standards.

4. Pedestrian Orientation. Pedestrian-oriented and customer intensive retail businesses and offices are encouraged to locate on the street level to promote active use of sidewalks by pedestrians, thus increasing the activity level and economic viability of the Town Center. New or redevelopment should also enhance and support a range of transportation choices and be designed to maximize opportunities for alternative modes of transportation and maintain individual mobility. Even with a healthy variety of development in the Town Center, each individual development or redevelopment project shall favor the pedestrian over the automobile in terms of site design, building placement and parking locations.

MICC 19.11.020(B) Required Ground Floor Uses.

2. If public parking is not provided pursuant to MICC 19.11.130(B)(5), then the following applies:
   a. A minimum of 60 percent of the ground floor street frontage shall be occupied by one or more of the following permitted uses: retail, restaurant, and/or personal service use.
   b. A maximum of 40 percent of each ground floor street frontage can be occupied by the following uses: hotel/motel, personal service, public facility, or office.
   c. Driveways, service and truck loading areas, parking garage entrances and lobbies shall not be included in calculating the required percentages of ground floor use.

III. RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommended motion at this time, as this is a Design Commission study session.
OUTDOOR PLAZA AREA

6'-0" BENCH

32" HIGH LINEAR ROCKWALL WATER FEATURE, WITH PLANTING AT BASE.

NEW BARTELL DRUG STORE

PHARMACY DRIVE-THRU EXIT

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"
Design Review Board Questions

Client: Bartell Drugs
Contact: Glenn Steiner

Project Name: Bartell Drugs Mercer Island

Phone: (425)885-4300
E-mail: glenn@magellanarchitects.com

Building Jurisdiction: City of Mercer Island

Parcel #: 531510-1326
Zoning: TC-4 (Town Center)

Questions:

1.) The Mercer Island Zoning requires a 60’ max street frontage for multiple users, we would like to know if Bartell Drugs can take the entire street frontage as a single user?

2.) To break up the street facade, we are proposing to step back the entry vestibule and provide its own fenestration and height modulation to differentiate it from the remaining store façade. Is this acceptable as we have shown?

3.) For pedestrian access, off 78th Ave. SE, can we go down stairs and a ramp to get to the main entrance of our retail space?

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