

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Corridor Review Committee Meeting May 4, 2023

The Corridor Review Committee met in formal session at 2:00 P.M., Thursday, May 4, 2023, in the Alcazar Room at City Hall, St. Augustine, Florida. Michael Dixon, Chair, called the regular meeting to order, and the following were present:

1. ROLL CALL: Michael Dixon, Chair
Vaughn Cochran, Vice-Chair
Lorna MacDonald

City Staff: Julie Courtney, Historic Preservation Officer
Candice Seymour, Historic Preservation Planner
Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney
Elyse Wiemann, Recording Secretary

2. General Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

(None)

3. Approval of Minutes

MOTION

Ms. MacDonald MOVED to APPROVE the April 6, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Cochran and APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

4. Modification and approval of Agenda

MOTION

MOVED to APPROVE the Agenda. The motion was SECONDED by and APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

5. New Business

5. (a) HP2023-0022 – Grace Construction Consultants, LLC - Applicant
Sebastian Marina, LLLP - Owner–
169 King Street

For design review of a new restaurant development along the King Street Entry Corridor.

Ms. Seymour read the staff report and said based on a review of the King Street Design Standards for Entry Corridors and without evidence to the contrary, the CRC may approve the proposed design if the Committee finds that it meets the purpose and intent of the Standards with architecture that is appropriate and compatible with the Corridor and surrounding structures; and, approve identified modifications if the CRC can make the following findings under the review criteria in section 3.7.5:

Criteria 1: Strict application of the Standards is not warranted and granting a modification will fulfill the intent of the standards.

Criteria 2: The modification is not a prohibited type of modification listed in Section 4.7.4.

Criteria 3: The modification is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and generally consistent with the purpose of the city's Land Development Regulations and the Standards.

Criteria 4: The modification will not have a material negative impact on adjacent uses, or the applicant proposes to mitigate the negative impact to be created by the modification. Any approval of the design should include the following conditions:

- A street wall be added along King Street to, at minimum, screen the visible portion of the parking lot

- Proposed exterior lighting for walkway and parking areas shall conform to the requirements set forth in the Standards

- The design elements that do not meet the DSEC as determined by staff, require approval by the Planning and Zoning Board or have been modified to a threshold which can be approved by the CRC and meets the review criteria under section 3.7.5. All findings must be proven by the applicant and accepted by the CRC in order to grant a modification. In doing so, the CRC recognizes that the approval is unique to this property and its conditions and does not establish any precedent. If these findings cannot be made based upon this application and any additional testimony the Modification can be denied and the applicant may seek an appeal before the City Commission.

Matt Lottie and Alex Grace reviewed the application.

Ex Parte Communication:

(None)

Mr. Cochran asked how the knee wall came about and if landscaping could be added in front of the knee wall.

Ms. Seymour replied screening for parking required a three to five-foot-high knee wall to screen parking along King Street. She said it was not recommended to have the wall all the way across but that could help delineate the entrance; however, at minimum, it was needed for parking. She said there could be landscaping in front of the wall.

Public hearing was opened.

Charles Pappas said instead of the wall that was being recommended through the

corridor design guidelines, it would be better if landscaping could be used. He said the future of this area would be heavy foot traffic as it was developed, and a wall confined a sidewalk more than landscaping.

Public hearing was closed.

Mr. Grace noted a space where the knee wall could be included and still have the landscaping desired. He said keeping the corridor open was a more warming approach to pedestrians as they expected a lot of foot traffic from the surrounding businesses.

Ms. Lopez said the Board should narrow down which items the Board did not have jurisdiction to grant. She said the staff recommendation had two items which was the maximum front setback and the second was the building frontage. She said the applicant needed to provide that information in order to understand if the Board could grant the setbacks.

Ms. Seymour said those were the items that needed to be addressed and the knee wall could be mitigated as suggested by the applicant.

Mr. Lottie said he thought the setbacks would not apply since the building was elevated. He said the landscape would create the frontage in front of the right-of-way line and the intent was not to have a large setback from the right-of-way line the condition would not apply since it was an elevated story.

Ms. Seymour advised setbacks were measured from the eve of the roofline in zoning.

Board discussion:

- City Code design guidelines allowed the CRC to grant up to 19.5-foot setback
- Thought the applicant was within the setback requirements

Ms. Seymour said the concern was the building sloped away from the property line and depending on if 50% of the building was in the approvable setback.

Board discussion:

- Setback started at 17 feet 10 inches and setback a little further as the building angled away from the street; however, thought this was a minor issue
- Board could allow up to 19.5 feet
- Asked for clarification regarding the building frontage requirement

Ms. Seymour explained the building frontage only counted if the building were within the allowable setback, and since it was outside the approval setback potentially then it would not meet the required frontage. She said the minimum frontage allowed would be 62.3%.

Board discussion:

- Did not feel having a few inches more or less in the setback would make any difference as it would not change the appearance and relationship to the street
- Proposed Hardy board color was cobblestone and the Board felt it was appropriate
- Main floor was considered at ten-foot elevation from grade and had glazing calculations of 56% and was in the appropriate range
- Felt the entrance from King Street was appropriate and beautiful
- Felt the knee wall could be eliminated

Ms. Lopez advised the Board they may not have jurisdiction over the knee wall.

Mr. Dixon said that was just an observation by the Board and felt it was a well-thought-out design. He said they did not want to create walls down King Street that would confine people to the sidewalk.

Mr. Cochran asked the purpose of the knee wall.

Ms. Seymour replied the knee wall was to screen the parking area. She said the applicant provided a solution for that to add the knee wall in front of the turnaround to screen the parking from King Street. She said there was no curb cut there and this would provide screening. She noted curb cuts along King Street were limited and the guidelines stated there should not be a curb cut off King Street unless absolutely necessary.

Mr. Cochran suggested adding the sign to the back of the knee wall to give it a purpose.

Applicant response:

- Willing to extend the roofline to what was needed to be in compliance without the need for a variance

Board discussion:

- Unsure if changing the concept in inches or feet would make it better as it would reduce other elements of the property

Mr. Grace asked for clarification regarding the code the roofline eve and asked what the maximum setback was as he thought they were in compliance.

Ms. Seymour replied the 19.5 foot was the maximum allowed setback would have to be approved by the Board. She said at least 50% of the building frontage would have to be in that setback. She said normally it would have to be within fifteen feet, but the Board could approve a 30% modification which was the 19.5. She said fifteen feet was required for 50% of the building frontage according to code, and the rest of the building could be stepped back up to 20 feet.

Mr. Grace said 50% of the building had to be within the 15 feet of the property line. He said they could shift towards King Street and reduce the landscape screen and buffer if that was required.

Ms. Seymour suggested the building could be moved forward by a foot potentially then the majority of the building frontage would be within the approved setback by the Board.

Ms. Lopez suggested the Board could approve to have 50% of the frontage be all the way up to 19.5 feet, which was the most the Board could grant. She said if the applicant needed more than what the Board could grant, they would have to apply to the Planning and Zoning Board (PZB).

Mr. Grace asked for what was allowable by the Board, and they would work within those parameters unless unable to then they could apply for a variance with the PZB. He asked about the building frontage at 70%.

Ms. Seymour replied the Board design standards required a building frontage of at least 70% along the corridor and they were at 56% of the site frontage. She noted the location of the building did not matter but it was the ratio of the entire street frontage and how much of the building was along the street.

Mr. Grace asked what the Board was allowed to grant.

Ms. Lopez replied the Board could grant 62.3%.

Mr. Grace said if the Board would grant that they would work within those parameters. He clarified everything was being measured from roof eave to roof eave.

Ms. Seymour replied she would add at least an additional four feet which would be less than needed. She said in the staff report she mentioned a significant tree could help with the frontage.

MOTION

Ms. MacDonald MOVED to APPROVE the setback as allowed to 19.5 feet, then 62.3% on the frontage requirements, the Hardy Board color would be cobblestone, remaining floor would be at the proposed ten foot elevation making the calculations of the glazing at the 56% which was within the appropriate range, the entrance setback from King Street has access and the access path was sufficient to delineate the entrance to the building, and have a partial wall with landscaping as agree to by the applicant. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Cochran.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: MacDonald, Cochran, Dixon

NAYES: NONE

6. Other Business

6. (a) St. Augustine History Festival (May 10-14) with special Window Workshop at The Waterworks (May 13)

Mr. Dixon noted the learning opportunities that were available to the public.

Ms. Courtney said they would be discussing how to restore windows and make them energy efficient and hurricane ready.

Mr. Dixon noted a letter from Ms. Courtney regarding House Bill 1317 and Senate Bill 1346.

Ms. Courtney noted there were some amendments have been made to the bills but there were still many concerns regarding Historic Preservation throughout the State. She said the senate approved the amendments; however, it can be signed into law.

Ms. Lopez said the legislative consultant felt the bill could be eliminated or could exempt the City of St. Augustine and some other

jurisdictions that meet the criteria regarding demolition.

Ms. Courtney said the fear was how this could affect the City in the years to come.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:57 P.M.¹

¹ Transcribed by Elyse Wiemann