

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

RECORD OF ACTIONS

January 8, 2009

A. Call to Order 9:00 a.m.

Board members present: David Brown, Carol Bell, Sandy Diefenbach, Merle Watson, Karl Ulle, Robert James and Cathrine Laguna.

Board members absent: None

Staff present: Rozanne Cherry

B. Record of Actions from the December 18, 2008 meeting:

MOTION: Moved by C. Bell, seconded by C. Laguna, to approve the minutes.

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0-0

C. Oral and Written Communications: Staff indicated that Item E.2 had been withdrawn.

D. Consent Calendar: Consent item D.1 pulled for discussion.

1. ER 2006-21 Revised Grand Avenue/El Mercado Right-of-Way Improvements, a Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP) Pilot Project

Applicant: City of Escondido, Robb Zaino
Planner: Rozanne Cherry

Board member Laguna voiced concerns with the proposed palm trees being spaced differently than the historic palms. She suggested off-setting the new palm groupings or using lower palms to maintain the line of the existing palms as the prominent visible feature. Board member Ulle felt that the block should have a beginning, middle and end so it was acceptable to have differences within the palm groups. Board member Laguna stated that both parts of the project (the east and west ends of Grand Avenue) should include palms instead of elms as street trees.

Lucy Berk, a member of the public, agreed with board member Laguna. She stated that it was important to maintain the palm alignment along the Mercado block, that groupings of additional trees should be shorter than the existing palms to emphasize the traditional line, and that the landscaping should not hide the historic elements of the buildings. She suggested a study of the history of the palms on the rest of Grand Avenue and that replanting of missing palms should be considered.

Vice chair Bell agreed that any new additional palms should be lower than the existing ones and that palms should be added on the east end of Grand as well.

MOTION: Moved by K. Ulle, seconded by C. Laguna, that the added palm trees in the Mercado block be a smaller palm or other tree type that would mature to a shorter height than the existing palms, and to review the plans for the eastern end of Grand Avenue and consider replacing street trees with palm trees.

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0-0

E. Individual Case Review:

1. 2007-68-PPL Proposed Bus Shelter Design for TransNet Route 350 Bus Stops Primarily Located along Escondido Boulevard between Transit Center and Westfield Shopping Town

Applicant: Don Murphy, IBI Group, 701 B Street, Suite 1170, San Diego, CA 92101 and
Danny Vey, SANDAG, 401 B Street, Suite 800, San Diego, CA 92101
Planner: Jay Petrek

Staff presented the SANDAG planner involved in the project who explained that the BRT, or Bus Rapid Transit, program would include queue jumper lanes and signal priority.

The project architect described the project elements, which include: modular parts of the shelters to produce a bus stop marker location only, a single- or a double-shelter set up; variable message signs, which would require direct connections to electric power; lighted beacon/marker, trash receptacle and bench; all constructed of powder-coated steel or aluminum. Marker poles would be wrapped in metal sleeve, with "Breeze Rapid" routed out of the metal and acrylic letters pushed through.

Vice chair Bell and board member Dieffenbach stated that the project looked good. Board member Watson clarified an installation timeframe of mid-2009. Board member Ulle confirmed that the decision whether or not to light the pole letters had not been reached, though he recommended no illumination. He clarified that the roof of the shelter would be up-lit from underneath. He preferred the blue aluminum material. Board member James asked about road widening on Bear Valley Parkway. Ron Miller, engineer with the City, explained the County's plan for widening Bear Valley Parkway. He also stated that the subject project would include transponders on the buses to tie into traffic signals to help keep the buses on schedule.

Chairman Brown felt that the benches could accommodate sleeping. He confirmed that the City would be responsible for emptying the trash receptacles. He complimented the design, noting especially the LED beacon marker as a good idea.

MOTION: Moved by M. Watson, seconded by S. Diefenbach, to approve project as submitted.

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0-1 (Laguna abstained)

2. Withdrawn

3. PHG 08-0046 Revision/Expansion to Existing Freeway Sign 655 West Citracado Parkway

Applicant: Terry Nations, Clear Sign & Design, 170 Navajo Street, San Marcos, CA 92078
Planner: Kristina Owens

Staff described the history of the existing 20' high, 96 square foot sign for Acacia Animal Hospital at the site, which was approved under the original planned development (PD). The proposed PD modification and new sign would accommodate a panel for Children's Hospital's urgent care services by raising the height to 30' and the size to 192 square feet. The resulting sign would be larger than what would be allowed in the Commercial General zone but since the site is a PD, the larger sign would be considered. Staff expressed concern that the proposed sign was not integrated into the site since it was using the existing structure.

The applicant stated that the proposed sign would use the existing sign panel with new poles. The reason for the expansion was that the urgent care use required visibility from the freeway.

Board member Watson stated that, at the previous sign approval, DRB questioned about including a hospital panel and was assured that a second panel was not needed. He also stated that the proposed sign was out of scale with the site.

Property owner Gary Gallerstein explained the history of the tenant signs and previous freeway sign request.

Board member Ulle stated that the DRB preferred not to permit pylon signs at the freeway, but for emergency services it might be considered. He felt that the large scale of the proposed sign was not appropriate. Board member James felt the sign was too large and had too many colors and fonts. Vice chair Bell agreed that, aesthetically, the scale was off. She also stated that the priority of panel locations seemed off as well, since the urgent care panel was buried at the bottom with a logo and font size that were very difficult to read. Mr. Gallerstein confirmed that the sign could not be seen from northbound I-15 but upon completion of CalTran's current work, it would probably be more visible.

Chairman Brown felt that the sign should be coordinated with CalTrans and the ultimate improvements they have planned adjacent to the site. This sign missed the boat in terms of design and accomplishing the goal of informing the public of the urgent care center's location. The entire sign would require attention. Mr. Gallerstein stated that they were already working with CalTrans.

Rozanne Cherry clarified that, as a modification of the PD, 2 signs or signs on the buildings could be considered. As a PD, the signs would require enhanced design elements that would reflect the design elements of the buildings.

MOTION: Moved by M. Watson, seconded by S. Diefenbach, to redesign and resubmit.

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0-0

F. Current Business: None

G. Oral Communications: Staff advised the Board that the City would not provide coffee at future meetings. Vice chair Bell suggested that a coffee cart at City Hall would be popular.

- H. Board Member Discussion: Chairman Brown mentioned that he was considering stopping his board member compensation and would talk to the City Clerk. Board member Laguna agreed.

Board member James commented that the hotel project was no longer proceeding because City Council canceled the contract.

- I. Adjournment at 10:20 a.m. to the next regularly scheduled Design Review Board meeting on Thursday, January 22, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. in Training Room #1 at City Hall, 201 North Broadway.

David Brown, Chairman
of the Design Review Board

Rozanne Cherry, Secretary
of the Design Review Board