



**City of Sebastopol**  
Incorporated 1902  
Planning Department  
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**APPROVED DRAFT MINUTES**

TREE/DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL  
MINUTES OF March 03, 2021  
4:00 P.M.

The notice of the meeting was posted on September 30, 2021.

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD:**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** Vice Chair Langberg called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M. and read a procedural statement.

Director Svanstrom advised that:

- The public could join the meeting via Zoom and gave instructions.
- Governor Newsome had signed AB 361 allowing additional remote meetings until January 1, 2024.
- City Council had directed City meetings to continue remotely at least through the end of November 2021.
- City Council had directed City staff to work on installing technology for hybrid formats to allow the public to continue to join City meetings remotely even after the City resumes in-person meetings due to the popularity of remote meetings and the increased participation.
- When in-person meetings resume COVID would still be a factor, so meetings may be held in one of the more spacious Youth Annex rooms, which would allow for social distancing.

- 2. ROLL CALL:**
- |                 |                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Present:</b> | Lars Langberg, Vice Chair<br>Marshall Balfe, Board Member<br>Christine Level, Board Member<br>Cary Bush, Board Member |
| <b>Absent:</b>  | Ted Luthin, Chair (excused)                                                                                           |
| <b>Staff:</b>   | Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director<br>John Jay, Associate Planner                                                      |

- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** None.

**4. PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATE ON MATTERS OF GENERAL INTEREST:**

Vice Chair Langberg, as liaison to the Public Arts Committee (PAC), advised that the PAC has called for entries for eight sculptures to be installed in a community sculpture garden in

Ives Park. Six entries have been selected so far and will be presented to the City Council on October 19<sup>th</sup> with the remaining two sculptures to be determined.

Director Svanstrom advised the Board that:

- The City has partnered with Urban Water Rights Restoration Institute to do a community visioning process regarding the Calder Creek Naturalization. They will meet with the Planning Commission on October 26<sup>th</sup> regarding design direction return to the Commission with design alternatives in early December, and present the final recommended option to the Commission on January 2022 and then to the City Council.
- The public draft of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan will be released next week with the Planning Commission reviewing it at its October 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- The CEQA environmental study for the Huntley Square Townhome project at 7950 Bodega Avenue has been published and will be heard at the Planning Commission's November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Commission will provide a recommendation to the City Council, the final approval body. The application will then return to the DRB/Tree Board for design review and tree permits.
- The Planning Commission will hear and discuss a potential gas station ban within the City at its October 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Climate Action Committee has reviewed it, made language recommendations, and unanimously recommended the item move forward at Council's direction.

The Board asked questions of Director Svanstrom.

In addition, Director Svanstrom announced the City's new Associate Planner, John Jay, joined the City three weeks previously.

Associate Planner Jay introduced himself to the Board.

**5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:** None.

**6. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None.

**7. REGULAR AGENDA:**

- A. FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: 132 N. Main Street and 6988 McKinley Street** – The first quarter applications for the City's Façade Improvement Program, which includes applications for: 132 N. Main Street – exterior painting of walls, window, and trim; and 6988 McKinley Street – reauthorize rebate for signage/approval that was granted for Fiscal Year 2020-21.

Director Svanstrom presented the staff report.

The applicant presented and was available for questions.

The Board had no questions for Director Svanstrom or the applicant.

The Board discussed the application as follows:

132 N. Main Street

**Cary Bush, Board Member**

The proposed white color would stand out and that would be a good thing given the nature and context of the business that is going in there now. They have a pretty clean brand and I think this paint job would freshen that up as well.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

I completely agree with Cary. I think it would be a nice change and stand out, and it's consistent with the business. I'm completely happy with the application

**Lars Langberg, Vice Chair**

I have one question for staff I just remembered. In the application they talked about starting work at 5:00 or 5:30 in the morning, and I don't know if that's allowed. I remember years ago working in San Francisco, you couldn't start before 7:00 or 7:30.

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

I can answer that. I don't believe the Public Works Department, which issues the encroachment permit for work on the sidewalk, has that kind of restriction, and in fact in some of the commercial areas they *want* it to be earlier, because once pedestrians start activating the street it's a lot more difficult. We do have a noise ordinance that has certain hours if you're doing construction noise, however, I don't anticipate that even the proposed pressure washing to the building façade would conflict with that.

Vice Chair Langberg asked the Board for a motion.

**Cary Bush, Board Member**

I take it a motion would approve both of the projects in its entirety?

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

If you include that in your motion it will.

6988 McKinley Street

**Lars Langberg, Vice Chair**

Before we go there, we haven't talked about the other one. I have a question that is sort of precedent setting. If somebody does some work and doesn't get their paperwork together ahead of time and comes back next quarter for reimbursement, it seems like that's what's happening here: I had to fix my storefront door here and I didn't think that I could use this money, but my sense was once you do the work you can't get the money, so I'd like some input on that, Kari.

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

This is a little bit unusual because it was approved already prior to the work being done, and in fact I believe the work was done, the invoices just didn't get to us until after the fiscal year closed, so in my mind it does meet that. But I will say that we have always had issues with applications that we approved towards the end of the fiscal year, even when it was on a rolling basis, because we're not allowed to do the carry-over. I would like, for our quarterly, to think about how we might restructure the program so that last quarter, which I believe the next deadline is October 19<sup>th</sup> and then there's one in January and then there's one in March, which means that it would come to the DRB first or second meeting in April, we'll certainly try to have it at that earlier meeting because applicants always run into this issue with their approvals towards the end of the year. It might be a discussion for Council next year when we do budgeting that there be some sort of grace period or carryover, or just ability for the Planning Director, once those funds are committed, that they be able to be carried over until the applicant can get their work done. I do know a couple of instances,

even though it was just simple signs, where they weren't able to meet the deadline in the past.

**Lars Langberg, Vice Chair**

All right, that all made sense. Thank you. Cary, carry on.

Board Member Bush moved to approve the application as submitted.

Board Member Level seconded the motion.

AYES: Vice Chair Langberg, and Board Members Balfe, Bush, and Level

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

**Lars Langberg, Vice Chair**

It passes unanimously. Craig, thank you for your time.

**Cary Bush, Board Member**

Great program. Going to good use.

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

Thank you, Craig, and just so you know, John will be getting you the approval letter, but at this point there's no appeal body or anything, so you can proceed with the work at this point.

Vice Chair Langberg moved to the next item.

**8. DISCUSSION:**

**A. TOUR OF PAST PROJECTS**

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

I talked a little while ago about the potential to do a walking tour, depending on where the sites are, to be able to look at past projects, for new members to understand the types of things we tend to look for, but also to look and say that condition didn't actually work out that well, or this got changed and that was too significant of a change for staff to handle. It would help us as staff, and certainly John as he's getting to know the City and the preferences and how the Board interprets the design guidelines, but also for the Board members to be able to talk about it and further the discussion on their design. I don't know if any of you have had time to think about different places or sites that you'd like to talk about, and they don't need to be DRB projects, they could be things that were approved at the staff level but you felt should have gone to the Board and you want to talk through what makes that designation one way or the other.

Vice Chair Langberg asked for Board comments.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

I can certainly say that the revised Revibe Café and Scoop Bar, whatever it's called now, next to the Florence Lofts, could be an interesting topic of conversation. That's not the building that we approved, so how did that happen?

**Lars Langberg, Vice Chair**

That's the one that's now Flavor Bistro?

**Christine Level, Board Member**

Is that what it is? Next to the Florence Lofts.

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

The Flavor Bistro was the Quonset Hut, and I think when I moved in, because it's near me, it was a Mexican market or something.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

Yes, that's the one I'm talking about. That ended up being quite different from what we approved, and how the ADA grant got approved in place is a complete mystery, if you want to ever go take a look at them. I think that would be a good one to have for discussion because that is a classic example, and I think we've had quite a number of cases where we approve something and something different showed up. That's just the one that comes fresh in my mind.

**Cary Bush, Board Member**

I thought Handline might be a good example to look at. We saw them quite a few times. I remember going back and forth on certain variations in heights, protecting the public from the private sector, and in lieu fees of underground wires. It's just a good site development project that might warrant a walk through. I think there was some autonomy given to a number of those types of projects and those developers. Fern Bar might be another one to review, because ultimately I think what was built was something a lot different from originally presented. There was quite a bit of autonomy there on that project that I don't even know if the DRB even saw. And it's not a bad thing; it's just a matter of review and discussion. The last one I can think of too is still under works, and that's along Healdsburg Avenue going up north.

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

The mixed-use project at Healdsburg and Murphy?

**Cary Bush, Board Member**

That's correct. It still sits idle.

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

I can give you an update on that. That project was approved before I got here, but I think the building permit was issued as well. It's one of the few handfuls of projects that we all know it's been happening for a long time. I do know that they were getting fairly close to finishing it, but the owner passed away a few months ago, so it has been in a probate kind of situation. I do know Steve in the Building Department is working very closely with the attorneys to try to get it resolved.

**Cary Bush, Board Member**

Every project has got a story, doesn't it?

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

It does. I'm interested to see the Handline because remember I submitted a comment as a member of the public about the fence.

**Cary Bush, Board Member**

I remember the gabion cages were a huge item of discussion. Remember that, Lars, back in the day? I think, Christine, you possibly were recused from that discussion, I don't remember, but it was an interesting unfolding of pieces and parts, and worked well.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

Yes, those gabion cages were absolutely classic. He did not want to pay the dumping fee for the asphalt, so he put them in those cages. It was a completely toxic material in those cages, asphalt petroleum, but there you have it. The other thing about the Handline building that I thought was really interesting and that we didn't consider at the time is the mechanical equipment, because when I look at that building I see it just glaringly up there. It really made me think about how essential that kind of thing is when you have the position and height of the building and the road above the building, and that would be an architectural consideration but it was really just an afterthought. That's an interesting project in a lot of ways.

**Lars Langberg, Vice Chair**

Then right next door to it is a project that went through a very different design review process that got approved, then appealed, and then had its very own subcommittee on the City Council.

**Christine Level, Board Member**

Yes, it did. I think what we really need to do is have a coffee table book with all the projects that the City can put out and their stories.

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

I will say the way that we generally do these tours is to notice it as a special meeting or a special location and actually just do the tour. We don't record it or take any sort of minutes for it, so there can be some frank discussions without hurting anybody's feelings. You mentioned the Florence Lofts, to talk about that project if we're looking at the bistro next door, and then also the Exchange Bank that was just completed.

**Cary Bush, Board Member**

Oh, that's a good one. Yes, that's great.

**Lars Langberg, Vice Chair**

I purposely stopped in the Exchange Bank one day just to see it, because it's so provocative and we all liked it, so that would be good. There's one right near me here that I've always been curious about—it was well before my time on the DRB—that houses King Falafel and the comics place. To me it's an example of how the hell did that get through design review? That would be my opening question to that building

**Christine Level, Board Member**

That was before my time too. Wasn't that a tire shop or something before? It was a remodel, that building.

**Lars Langberg, Vice Chair**

I think you're right. I think that's maybe part of why it got through, so to speak, is it was a remodel that became a bigger remodel, and then become a tear down, and it just happened, from what I understand, but that's all I know about it. It's such a prominent site in town.

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

I'll work with John to put together a route or a tour and try to assess the time that it might take to do this and we'll try to maybe schedule it. We do have one sign item for our next meeting that I know we have to have, but we'll try to find the time hopefully before the rainy season to try to take a look at some of these; if not all of them, at least some of them, and we can always have a part two as well.

**Cary Bush, Board Member**

It's a great idea.

**Lars Langberg, Vice Chair**

Yes, great idea.

**Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director**

All right, thank you, all. I appreciate that. I'll try to do a little background on if there were specific approval items and make the reports available if you want to jog your member or see how did that happen.

**Lars Langberg, Vice Chair**

That would be great. Okay, thank you for that.

**9. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES:** None.

**10. ADJOURNMENT:** Vice Chair Langberg adjourned the meeting at 4:34 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Tree/Design Review Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 20, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.