

**CITY OF MILWAUKIE
DESIGN AND LANDMARKS COMMITTEE
NOTES**

**Milwaukie City Hall
10722 SE Main St
Monday, March 2, 2020
6:30 PM**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Cynthia Schuster, Chair
Brett Laurila, Vice Chair
Mary Neustadter
Tracy Orvis

STAFF PRESENT

Brett Kelter, Associate Planner (staff liaison)
Denny Egner, Planning Director

OTHERS PRESENT

Elizabeth Decker, JET Planning

MEMBERS ABSENT

Evan Smiley

1.0 Call to Order – Procedural Matters

Chair Cynthia Schuster called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2.0 Design and Landmarks Committee Notes

2.1 February 3, 2020

Chair Schuster called for any revisions to the February meeting notes; there were none, and the notes were approved unanimously.

3.0 Information Items

Associate Planner Brett Kelter gave a quick report on the annual leadership summit meeting held February 11 with the City Council and chairs of the various other citywide boards and committees. It was a chance for the City Recorder's office to promote some standardization of bylaws and meeting procedures, which seemed less significant for the Design and Landmarks Committee (DLC) since this group already has an established process for its operation.

Mr. Kelter reminded the members of the annual volunteer appreciation dinner scheduled for March 31 (6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the Milwaukie Center), for which invitations should be sent out shortly. He encouraged everyone to attend and take the opportunity to meet some of the other volunteers in the community while receiving the City's gratitude for all their efforts. At the request of the event's coordinators, he took a few photos of the members present, to be included in a looping slide show at the event.

4.0 Audience Participation – None

5.0 Public Meetings – None

6.0 Worksession Items

6.1 Downtown design review process (continued)
Staff People: Brett Kelter, Denny Egner, Elizabeth Decker

Mr. Kelter reopened this worksession item with introductions. **Elizabeth Decker** explained that she is a consultant (her firm is JET Planning) and had worked with the SERA team that developed the draft amendments the group has been working through. **Denny Egner** reintroduced himself as the Planning Director, and the group members reintroduced themselves

as well. **Mr. Kelter** explained the plan for the evening—to discuss the downtown design review process and applicability, then follow up on the Weather Protection element, and finally discuss the four element sections that Ms. Decker had revised to include in the packet. He appreciated the group being willing to stay until at least 8:30 p.m. if possible.

Mr. Kelter walked through a power point presentation to review the background of the current code structure and how the design guidelines fit in to the design review process. He noted the group's earlier finding of gaps between the existing guidelines and the current design elements, leading to the current effort for alignment. He highlighted the fact that there are separate standards and guidelines for multifamily development across the whole city and not just downtown and suggested that one issue to resolve was whether multifamily projects downtown should meet only those multifamily-specific standards or if some of the design elements being clarified with the update project should also apply. He pointed out the current applicability triggers for different types of projects and the review type and approval criteria for each.

Mr. Kelter noted that, for Type II decisions, the Planning Director is the decision maker and that the DLC did not have a formal role in reviewing them. **Planning Director Denny Egner** indicated that his own inclination would be to involve the committee in the review as almost a part of the staff team, calling on the DLC's expertise to help inform his decision. There was a suggestion to consider writing the committee more clearly into the review process, perhaps either just before or just after the preapplication conference stage.

Ms. Decker presented some ideas for consideration regarding applicability triggers and providing both clear and objective and discretionary review paths. She noted examples of how the design review process works in a few other nearby communities and identified the following key questions for the group's consideration:

- If we are going to create nuanced design guidelines, which types of projects (size, location, cost, project type/uses) would most benefit from DLC review? How to best employ DLC review capacity?
- If we are going to develop robust design standards, which types of projects can most benefit from a nondiscretionary review?
- Should multifamily projects downtown automatically be subject to the downtown design standards, regardless of whether they already meet the multifamily standards or guidelines of 19.505.3?

The group discussion included a point about providing a higher standard in general along Main Street, with the guidance perhaps going even further in setting the bar for Main Street. **Chair Schuster** and **Committee Member Tracy Orvis** agreed that size was an important consideration for triggering design review, as it could be hard to keep large projects from seeming monolithic. **Committee Member Mary Neustadter** wondered whether there should be a distinction made between rehabilitation projects and new construction, suggesting that rehabilitation projects do not usually need as much scrutiny as new construction. **Vice Chair Brett Laurila** agreed that the question of how to handle multifamily and mixed-use projects was an important one. There was some difference of opinion about whether large-scale projects that can meet the design standards should still be subject to discretionary review—this will be discussed further as the update project moves forward.

The group then worked through the various questions identified in the working draft for Element I (Weather Protection), giving staff guidance about needed revisions and the direction to go with edits.

Lastly, the members dove back in to the first element (Element A, Site Frontage) and addressed the questions provided in the discussion guide. One suggestion was to consider setting a range

of adjustments for some of the dimensional standards, to provide an opportunity for some flexibility in the nondiscretionary review process. **Mr. Egner** described some of the reasoning behind the different percentages of required minimum frontage occupancy for different streets downtown and noted the challenges that come with holding every street frontage to the same high standard as Main Street, especially since the potential for full-block redevelopment is limited. **Chair Schuster** suggested looking back at the diagram the group highlighted at an earlier meeting. It was noted that the guidance language needs to be significantly shored up across most elements to ensure that it is adequately reflecting the quality demanded by the corresponding standards.

Given the late hour, the group agreed to suspend the conversation for the evening and to come back at a special meeting on March 16 to go through Elements B-D.

7.0 Other Business/Updates

7.1 Update on recruitment of youth members

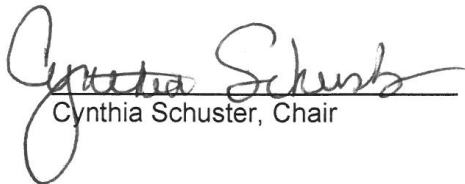
Mr. Kelter noted that interviews with potential youth members for various boards and committees were held a few weeks ago, with a few no-shows and a host of new applications coming in at the last minute. The City Recorder's office is coordinating a second set of interviews—**Mr. Kelter** will keep the group posted as things develop.

8.0 Design and Landmarks Committee Discussion Items – None

9.0 Forecast for Future Meetings

March 16, 2020	Special meeting
April 6, 2020	Regular meeting
May 4, 2020 (tent.)	Regular meeting

Chair Schuster adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.



Cynthia Schuster, Chair

Respectfully submitted,
Brett Kelter, Associate Planner