

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

Milwaukie City Hall
10722 SE Harrison St
Monday, January 7, 2019
6:30 PM

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Lauren Loosveldt, Chair
Cynthia Schuster, Vice Chair
Mary Neustadter
Brett Laurila

STAFF PRESENT

Brett Kelter, Associate Planner (staff liaison)

OTHERS PRESENT

Joseph Edge, Planning Commissioner

MEMBERS ABSENT

Kyle Simukka

1.0 Call to Order – Procedural Matters

Chair Lauren Loosveldt called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

2.0 Design and Landmarks Committee Notes

2.1 December 12, 2018

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

3.0 Information Items – None

4.0 Audience Participation

Gary Klein, owner and resident at 10795 SE Riverway Ln, came forward to express his opposition to the proliferation of large electronic readerboard signs in Milwaukie, particularly along the stretch of McLoughlin Blvd in the North Industrial area. He shared photos of one section of highway in western Canada where many such signs are spaced so closely together that they impact the view of the nearby mountains.

Committee Member Mary Neustadter asked whether Mr. Klein was aware of any studies about electronic readerboard signs being distractions for motorists—Mr. Klein was not.

Committee Member Brett Laurila asked for clarification of Mr. Klein's objection to the signs, whether it was the number or size or something else. **Mr. Klein** responded that he does not like any of them, that even one sign is too many—they are ugly and distracting, and the newest ones are even larger than before.

Ms. Neustadter assumed that the City must have regulations for billboard-type signs.

Associate Planner Brett Kelter confirmed that the City's sign code does set limits (including size, height, rate of copy change, etc.). He explained that ODOT is also involved in regulating these "outdoor advertising signs" and has a permit system for them along state highways. There has been substantial litigation about outdoor advertising signs and it is a complex issue, with many communities attempting to limit their proliferation in the face of sign companies and property owners asserting their rights to have them. The City most frequently regulates them as either freestanding or roof signs and limits their size in relation to the length of street frontage. Within the last few years, the City has adopted new rules that further limit the maximum allowable size regardless of frontage length (to 250 sq ft per display surface).

Mr. Klein read an email from a government planner in Canada that cited the signs in the photos as very distracting to drivers. He asked the committee members to please do something to make it harder to install such signs in Milwaukie, as he believes they are distracting for drivers and ruin the city's beauty. He thanked the members for the opportunity to speak tonight.

5.0 Public Meetings – None

7.0 Other Business/Updates

7.1 Officer Elections

Before diving into the worksession item, **Mr. Kelver** suggested the group conduct the election of officers, which the bylaws require be held annually at the first meeting of the year. **Chair Loosveldt** asked Vice Chair Cynthia Schuster whether she was interested in continuing as Vice Chair—Ms. Schuster said she was. No one else was nominated and the members' vote was unanimous to approve Ms. Schuster as Vice Chair. **Chair Loosveldt** confirmed that she was interested in continuing as Chair and no one else was nominated. The members' vote was unanimous to approve Ms. Loosveldt as Chair.

6.0 Worksession Items

6.1 Downtown Design Review process (continued) Staff Person: Brett Kelver, Associate Planner

Mr. Kelver provided copies of a document summarizing the outstanding questions and discussion items from the group's initial review of the draft Design Review document. He suggested that the members work through the list of items while he continues to prepare a revised draft that incorporates the discussion to date.

Vice Chair Schuster suggested that the group identify some action items and perhaps make a presentation to the Planning Commission. She has been collecting images that she thinks will help illustrate some of the changes the group has been discussing. **Chair Loosveldt** suggested looking at the materials matrix again as well, and **Vice Chair Schuster** noted that she had examples to show percentages of different building materials. The group agreed that Elements C (Exterior Building Materials), D (Façade Transparency), and H (Building Massing) would be good topics for Vice Chair Schuster's image presentation at an upcoming committee meeting.

Chair Loosveldt suggested the group develop a roadmap or timeline for presenting some of the draft information to the Planning Commission and City Council. She asked for staff thoughts; **Mr. Kelver** noted that staff had no clear timeline for moving the entire project forward through the necessary stages. He agreed that it would be helpful to identify some key issues that the group could present to the Commission and Council.

Mr. Laurila said he was most interested in the issue of building heights and height bonuses, though he understands that other members do not share his opinion that there should be a credit for open space if the development includes affordable housing. **Chair Loosveldt** suggested that the Green Architecture element might be another topic to focus on, though she conceded that it might be wise to see first what is going on with the larger conversation in the city about green architecture. **Planning Commissioner Joseph Edge** suggested that it might also be good to review things in the context of the City's Climate Action Plan.

In summary, the group agreed to start the next stage of review with the outstanding questions for Elements A (Site Frontage), B (Wall Structure & Building Façade Details), E (Doors & Entrance Locations), and G (Corners). Elements C (Exterior Building Materials), D (Façade Transparency), F (Windows), and H (Building Massing) are tied together, so those outstanding questions would probably be better addressed in the same discussion.

A. Site Frontage

- Regarding Standard C-d (relief from the frontage occupancy requirement for multiple frontages) and the group's earlier note to add distinctions based on adjacency to transit streets, **Mr. Edge** noted that Jackson St is the only street without a first-floor-build-to requirement that actually has bus stops, so perhaps developing an additional distinction based on transit-street adjacency is not necessary. **Vice Chair Schuster** shared her view that McLoughlin Blvd should be more of a front door for the community than a back door, so she was opposed to allowing new development the option of not meeting the frontage occupancy requirement along McLoughlin Blvd. The other members agreed that it was preferable not to give any breaks from the frontage occupancy requirement, so Standard C-d could be deleted.
- The group discussed Figure 19.304-5 (first-floor build-to lines) and proposed that it be revised to include all block faces in Downtown, including along McLoughlin Blvd, even in front of the wastewater treatment plant; but not the block of Lake Rd or Main St between 21st Ave and Main St. Leading up to that conclusion, there was some discussion about whether block faces with historic properties (like City Hall and the Masonic Lodge) should be subject to the first-floor build-to requirement. Although the hope would be that historic properties would be protected from redevelopment, it seemed prudent to apply the requirement to those sites in the event they did redevelop, given that the code allows for their demolition. There was also some discussion of whether to delete the figure altogether, though the consensus was that it was important to have a visual specifying that McLoughlin Blvd frontages were subject to the requirement.

On Figure 19.304-6 (minimum frontage occupancy), the group agreed that McLoughlin Blvd and all block faces on Main St should be designated with the 90% minimum occupancy requirement. **Mr. Edge** reminded the group that land use decisions about City Hall and the wastewater treatment plant would be discretionary ones (because those sites are Community Service Uses), so nuances could be worked out. **Mr. Kelter** suggested that it might be good to get clearer about what kinds or levels of improvement would trigger the applicability of the design standards. **Chair Loosveldt** noted that the wastewater treatment plant does not technically touch the McLoughlin Blvd right-of-way (the Trolley Trail parcel is between the plant and McLoughlin Blvd), so there might not be much point in adding a red line to the western side of the McLoughlin Blvd right-of-way.

The group concluded its work on this item for the evening, agreeing to pick back up with Figure 19.304-6 at the February meeting, to finish its discussion of the outstanding questions for Element A. **Vice Chair Schuster** said she would aim to make a visual presentation to the group about Elements C, D, and F (and H) at the March meeting.

8.0 Design and Landmarks Committee Discussion Items

Chair Loosveldt raised a concern with Member Kyle Simukka's absence from several recent meetings (albeit with good reason, given his new baby), noting that the Design Review work is important and would benefit from all the members' voices. **Mr. Kelter** confirmed that he had touched base with Mr. Simukka and that Kyle had expressed an interest in continuing to serve on the committee. **Mr. Kelter** clarified that the bylaws set a 75% attendance record as the performance threshold for members but that there is not a strict requirement to have that level of attendance—rather, it can be used as a basis for initiating dismissal from the committee if warranted.

Mr. Laurila noted that both his term and Mr. Simukka's term were due to expire at the end of March and suggested that now might be a good time to confirm with Kyle whether he would like

to continue on the committee or if the City should recruit for a replacement. **Mr. Kelter** agreed to let Mr. Simukka know that the question had come up for discussion and suggested that the group might discuss this issue further at the February meeting.

9.0 Forecast for Future Meetings

Feb. 4, 2019	Regular meeting
March 4, 2019	Regular meeting

Chair Loosveldt adjourned the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brett Kelter, Associate Planner



Lauren Loosveldt, Chair