

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

**Milwaukie City Hall
10722 SE Harrison St
Monday, May 6, 2019
6:30 PM**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Cynthia Schuster, Chair
Brett Laurila, Vice Chair
Mary Neustadter
Kyle Simukka

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Brett Kelter, Associate Planner (staff liaison)
Ann Ober, City Manager

OTHERS PRESENT

Marc Wyzykowski (Johnson Development)
Dean Masukawa (LRS Architects)
Cheryl Gafner
John Herrle
Bertha Kirk
Julie MacAuley
Barbara & Jason French
Ken & Lillian Chung

1.0 Call to Order – Procedural Matters

Chair Cynthia Schuster called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2.0 Design and Landmarks Committee Notes

2.1 April 1, 2019

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

3.0 Information Items – None

4.0 Audience Participation – None

5.0 Public Meetings

5.1 Design Review—Height Variance (37th Ave & Monroe St, File #VR-2019-003)
Staff Person: Brett Kelter, Associate Planner

Chair Schuster opened the public design review meeting to consider a height variance request for the proposed Monroe Apartments at 37th Ave and Monroe St (land use file #VR-2019-003). She then recused herself [she is employed by the architecture firm working on the project], handed the meeting over to the Vice Chair, and moved to sit in the audience. **Vice Chair Brett Laurila** took over and proceeded with the meeting script, including calling for the staff presentation.

Associate Planner Brett Kelter noted that he was filling in for Associate Planner Vera Kolias, who was the lead staffer on this application but was unavailable for tonight's meeting. **Mr. Kelter** then went through the powerpoint presentation that had been prepared by Ms. Kolias to outline the proposal, which was to construct a 234-unit multifamily development comprised of five buildings, including a 5-story building that exceeded the height limit of the underlying

General Mixed Use (GMU) zone. He explained that the GMU zone allowed buildings up to 3 stories outright, with a bonus fourth story allowed outright if the project included either residential units or green building components and a fifth story allowed through the variance process for including whichever aspect was not used to justify the fourth story. The committee was charged with reviewing the variance request and making a recommendation to the Planning Commission, who would make a final decision in a public hearing scheduled for May 28. He clarified for all present that the height variance was the only issue up for discussion this evening; concerns or questions about traffic or other aspects of the proposal would have to be addressed at the Planning Commission hearing as part of its consideration of the overall project.

Mr. Kelter outlined the approval criteria for the requested height variance, which include avoiding or minimizing impacts to surrounding properties, demonstrating creativity and quality of materials or appearance, and providing public benefits or amenities beyond those required by the base zone. He noted staff's opinion that the location of the 5-story building in the middle to rear of the site provided adequate separation from the surrounding neighborhood and allowed more room for landscaping and open space on the site, which would minimize impacts from the added massing. The staff recommendation was in support of the requested variance.

Marc Wyzykowski and **Dean Masukawa** from the applicant team came forward and provided additional background on the proposal. **Mr. Wyzykowski** explained that his development firm was committed to being a long-term partner with the community. He noted that the proposed density was in the middle of the range allowed in the GMU zone for a site of this size and reported that both the Hector Campbell and Ardenwald Neighborhood District Associations (NDAs) had received the project favorably. **Mr. Masukawa** reiterated that the additional height allowed more units in one building, which freed up open space and provided room for additional tree canopy. He noted that the site grade dropped approximately 18 ft from the corner of 37th Ave and Monroe St to the location of the proposed 5-story building, which would further reduce the impact of the added mass. He outlined the 4 primary points achieved by the requested variance: delivering the proposed density, minimizing impacts, increasing amenities, and expanding possibilities for livability and accessibility.

Vice Chair Laurila called for public comment on the proposal. **Cheryl Gafner**, a neighbor on Monroe St, asked whether the proposed dogpark and playground would be available for use by the larger public and whether the 5-story building would be all residential or would include some commercial use. She noted that she also had concerns about traffic, though she understood that traffic was not a topic for discussion at this meeting. **Bertha Kirk**, another neighbor on Washington St, expressed her opposition to the project, suggesting that the wetland area on the site would probably require fill, which would raise the elevation of the proposed 5-story building.

There were no other public comments. The committee members noted a few of their own questions for staff or the applicant team. **Member Kyle Simukka** asked how the small public park at the corner of 37th Ave and Monroe St would be improved, for more detail about the high-quality materials that would be used, whether the proposed trees would be species from the City's tree list, and which green building certification would be used. **Vice Chair Laurila** had a suggestion about the gable-end design and was directed by **Mr. Kelter** to hold that topic until the group got into its deliberations; he then asked about the datum elevation for the site. **Member Mary Neustadter** asked whether the bonus floors would make the units affordable versus market-rate housing.

Mr. Masukawa and **Mr. Wyzykowski** returned to the presentation table to address the various questions and provide their rebuttal. **Mr. Masukawa** explained that the building would use fiber-cement lap and panel siding and that they would plant native species trees as per the City's prescribed lists. At the moment, they were talking primarily about using the Earth Advantage certification. **Mr. Wyzykowski** explained that the small public park at the corner would likely be

impacted by the larger construction project and that it would be restored accordingly. Use of the on-site playground and dogpark were intended primarily for residents of the proposed development. Stormwater management would be provided at the Oak St/Monroe St corner of the site. None of the units would be subsidized or qualify as formally “affordable” units—the market would determine the cost.

Vice Chair Laurila had one final question about the height difference between the 3-story buildings (which are not affected by the variance) and the sidewalk along Monroe St. **Mr. Masukawa** confirmed that the grade does drop significantly as you approach the corner of Oak St and Monroe St.

Vice Chair Laurila closed the public testimony portion of the meeting and opened the floor for discussion by the committee members. **Mr. Simukka** noted that he was in favor of the project and would recommend approval of the variance. **Ms. Neustadter** wished the public park at the corner of 37th Ave and Monroe St was larger and that the proposed dogpark would be open to the public; but she also expressed support for the proposal and thought the height issues had been sufficiently addressed. **Vice Chair Laurila** affirmed his general support of the project and the requested variance. He reiterated his belief that the gable ends contributed to the massing impacts, which could be reduced by breaking the large single gable ends into two ends each. The other members were generally supportive of his suggestion and agreed to provide a recommendation in favor of the variance with a suggestion that the Planning Commission consider options for breaking up the 3 single gable ends to reduce the massing and visual impacts. **Mr. Simukka** made such a motion and it passed unanimously. **Mr. Kelter** explained that he would provide a summary of the group’s recommendation for Ms. Kolias to incorporate into the staff report for the May 28 commission hearing.

6.0 Worksession Items

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

Chair Schuster returned to the dais for the remainder of the meeting. Before diving in to the Design Review topic with the time remaining, **Mr. Kelter** confirmed that the group agreed to save 5 to 10 minutes at the end of the meeting to discuss Mr. Simukka’s availability (at his request).

Mr. Kelter asked City Manager Ann Ober to join him at the presentation table, and she gave the group an update on the larger process to update the City’s Comprehensive Plan. **Ms. Ober** explained that Phase 3 of the Comp Plan update process is now underway and is the forum for a community discussion about urban design. She is holding off any amendments to any part of the zoning code until after the Comp Plan update is finished, which should be just before the end of the year. In the meantime, she explained that there was no availability for worksession with the Council, so the committee’s efforts would be best directed at pushing forward with its revisions and holding worksessions with the Planning Commission to hash out the proposed Design Review amendments. She noted there would soon be a town hall or open house meeting focused on urban design that the group was encouraged to participate in, and that some policy statements on urban design were being drafted that the members were invited to review and comment on. **Mr. Kelter** agreed to pass along that information as soon as it was available.

Ms. Neustadter asked where historic preservation fit in to the overall Comp Plan update effort. **Ms. Ober** said the group was encouraged to look at the policies related to housing and historic preservation that had been developed to date and provide comment. **Mr. Kelter** agreed to pass along those draft policies as well. **Ms. Ober** thanked the committee for its ongoing efforts and for allowing her to speak to them, then bid the group goodnight.

Mr. Kelter looked ahead to the June 3 meeting and suggested that the group could aim to discuss the draft policies on urban design and housing/historic preservation, in addition to discussing the revised draft of the first few design elements that he had included with the packet for this meeting. **Chair Schuster** promised to bring some examples that would help illustrate some of the outstanding questions related to transparency and building materials.

With only a few minutes remaining before 8:30 p.m., the group wrapped up this part of the discussion for the evening.

7.0 Other Business/Updates – None

8.0 Design and Landmarks Committee Discussion Items

Mr. Simukka announced that he would be resigning from the committee, effective at the end of the meeting, as he and his family would be taking an opportunity to move to Norway on May 31. The other members were congratulatory and wished him well, and there was a brief discussion about recruitment to fill the two open spots on the committee. **Ms. Neustadter** reported that she had met someone at the recent volunteer appreciation dinner who might be interested. **Mr. Kelter** reminded the members to refer any possible candidates to the Office of the City Recorder for an application.

Vice Chair Laurila noted that, in response to the recent request by the Axletree developers to modify some of the windows on the Washington St façade, he had worked with Ms. Kolas to recalculate the transparency figures. He confirmed that, although the developers had initially miscalculated, they had worked out the numbers and the façade was still meeting the minimum standard.

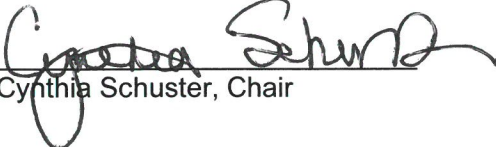
There were no other items for discussion.

9.0 Forecast for Future Meetings

June 3, 2019	Regular meeting
June 25, 2019	Joint worksession with Planning Commission
July 1, 2019	Regular meeting (consider cancelling)
July 9, 2019	Joint worksession with Planning Commission

Chair Schuster adjourned the meeting at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brett Kelter, Associate Planner


Cynthia Schuster, Chair