



Downtown Design Review Committee Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Minutes:

CHAIR NOLAN called the meeting to order at 12:16 p.m.

PRESENT: CHAIR NOLAN and MEMBERS WICHMANN, HOWE, TOUSSAINT, DE SALVIO, McGEACHY (excused until 12:25 p.m.) and DWYER

ALSO PRESENT: JONATHAN BOYLES, Senior Planner, NICOLE EDDOWES, Senior Planner, JAMES LEWIS, Deputy City Attorney, and CHEYENNE LaRANCE, Deputy City Clerk

2. Announcement Regarding: Compliance with Open Meeting Law

Minutes:

ANNOUNCEMENT MADE: This meeting has been properly noticed and posted at the following locations: City Hall, 495 South Main Street, 1st Floor; Clark County Government Center, 500 South Grand Central Parkway; Grant Sawyer Building, 555 East Washington Avenue; Howard Lieburn Senior Center, 6230 Garwood Avenue.

3. Public Comment: Comment during this portion of the agenda must be limited to matters on the agenda for action. If you wish to be heard, come forward and give your name for the record. The amount of discussion, as well as the amount of time any single speaker is allowed, may be limited.

Minutes:

None.

4. For possible action to approve the Final Minutes by reference of the Regular Meeting of November 19, 2019

Motion made by Louis De Salvio to Approve

Passed For: 6; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 1

For-Mike Nolan, Tina Wichmann, Mike Howe, Donna Toussaint, Louis De Salvio, William Dwyer; Excused-Jeff McGeachy;

5. 21-0171-ARC1 - DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE (DDRC) - PUBLIC HEARING - APPLICANT/OWNER: LAS VEGAS AND OAKEY, LLC - For possible action on a Land Use Entitlement request FOR THE REVIEW OF A PROPOSED SIGN PACKAGE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION WITHIN THE SCENIC BYWAY on 1.48 acres at the southwest corner of Oakey Boulevard and Las Vegas Boulevard (APN 162-03-302-009), C-2 (General Commercial) Zone, Ward 3 (Diaz). Staff recommends DENIAL.

Minutes:

CHAIR NOLAN declared the Public Hearing open.

Using a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was submitted and is attached as backup, NICOLE EDDOWES, Senior Planner, reported the Scenic Byway was established by the State of Nevada in order to preserve the iconic sign elements, such as neon lighting and animation, adjacent to Las Vegas Boulevard. Title

19.10 requires at least 75 percent of the total sign surface areas, excluding awning signs, consist of illuminated signage, in the form of neon signs, animated signs, or a combination thereof for all development within the Las Vegas Boulevard Scenic Byway Overlay District. These signs must also be fully illuminated from at least one hour before dusk until one hour after dawn.

She went on to state the applicant is proposing a sign package that contains zero percent neon and/or animation, where a minimum of 75 percent is required. As a substitution, the applicant proposed ceiling lighting between levels one and two of the approved development, but that lighting element does not qualify as signage, as it does not relay a commercial message. As the proposed sign package provides zero percent of the lighting and/or animation requirements of the Scenic Byway standards, staff does not support this request and recommended denial of the sign package.

Additionally, MS. EDDOWES stated approval of the proposed sign package would set a precedent for future developments adjacent to Las Vegas Boulevard, resulting in the erosion of the iconic sign elements Las Vegas Boulevard is so famous for. She noted this review is for the design elements of the signs only, as the Planning Commission already granted the applicant a Variance on May 11, 2021, related to the size of the proposed monument and wall signs.

NAMYD LYOUNI and CLEMENTE CICORIA, Punch Architecture, were present. MR. CICORIA stated they understand the significance of being on Las Vegas Boulevard and explained their design approach was to incorporate the essence of a neighborhood addition to this intersection. Their intent was to not make this a typical pop and iconic intersection, but rather pay homage to the more subtle and tranquil approach of the 1950s and 1960s. He described ceiling elements, which would be subtle and visible from the first and second floors, and spoke of this being an anchor and element of the Arts District and downtown.

MR. LYOUNI added they specifically took into consideration the requirements of the Scenic Byway, and while the ceiling lights are not technically considered signage, they included them in the square footage for that purpose. He mentioned the port-a-cochere at The Plaza and Circus Circus, which are classic Vegas spaces with animated lighting, and that by offsetting the signage and making it more timeless, it ties in historically with the ceiling.

CHAIR NOLAN thought it was a beautiful building, but he reminded everyone the subject location is on a scenic byway, and everyone must adhere to what the City is trying to accomplish. He recalled a previous application involving a beautiful \$400,000 stone sign, but required changes to the project to adhere to the new requirements. He pointed out there were businesses that wanted their signage to be the same as it was at their other locations, but ultimately had to make the necessary modifications to meet the Scenic Byway neon requirement. He stated he is very familiar with this corner and believes what the applicant is proposing is needed and the best thing to be constructed on Las Vegas Boulevard in quite some time, but it will set the standard, and if it does not meet the neon requirement, it is not in line with what the City is trying to accomplish. He thought there were alternatives that provided the same look and felt there needed to be neon either on the monument or elsewhere.

MEMBER HOWE confirmed with the applicant the ceiling consisted of programmable LED (light emitting diode) lights that change color and scintillate. The applicant explained the ceiling consists of a highly reflective mosaic tile to allow for more accentuation of light and is meant to be an art element with a subtle, umbra-like effect. MR. HOWE appreciated that impact and what it brings to Las Vegas Boulevard; however, he expressed concern with the large monument sign. Although a Variance was approved for a larger sign, he took issue with the font on the annex and the match to the actual structure. He thought this presented an opportunity for LED channelized lettering or neon-esque lighting without having a large impact on the budget.

MR. CICORIA agreed that sign could use some attention and more elements could be added to it. MR. LYOUNI also agreed the sign could be more dynamic and less corporate. MEMBER HOWE stated he lives in this area and appreciates the balance of the applicant's approach in trying to make it a neighborhood asset as well. The monument sign is very prominent on Oakey and Las Vegas Boulevards, and there is a lot of opportunity to make the sign more exciting.

MEMBER WICHMANN agreed with MEMBER HOWE, but noted the Committee addressed the vertical signs and not the contribution the ceiling lighting might add and wondered if the animated ceiling lighting that

changes colors along with an updated annex design could be added together to meet the 75 percent neon requirement.

MEMBER DE SALVIO stated he had no issue with the mural or the ceiling, but had the same concern with the monument sign. He mentioned a discussion involving The Strat having only LED lighting and no neon because of the possibility of not being able to obtain neon, the gas shortage and the art of fixing such becoming a dying breed. He thought the monument sign could be improved, and he could support the project if the look of neon could be achieved without actually utilizing neon.

CHAIR NOLAN agreed it is difficult to obtain neon, but there is an LED replacement that can be used that looks like neon, whether that be channel letters or framing the sign, to bring the sign into compliance.

MEMBER TOUSSAINT expressed her love for this corner as she grew up in this area. She agreed the sign needed improvement and that the address is too low, but thought it was a beautiful building otherwise.

MEMBER DWYER asked about the number of bulbs being used for the awning. MR. LYOUBI did not have an exact count, but said there were quite a few, and while not an inexpensive solution, it was their way of paying homage to the style. He said his understanding was that awning signs were exempt from the neon requirement, but they intend to turn them on an hour before dusk and off an hour after dawn to stay in line with the Scenic Byway requirements.

CHAIR NOLAN commented the applicant wants to maintain certain historical elements, while the Committee has to figure out how to tie that into the Scenic Byway requirements. He loves the building, but was worried about future developments and did not believe they would be able to reach the 75 percent required. JONATHAN BOYLES, Senior Planner, stated staff cannot consider ambiance lighting as part of the overall signage square footage, and confirmed the 75 percent requirement would not be achieved with the subject proposal.

MR. LYOUBI wondered if language could be included in the Variance in this instance to make such count in order to achieve the Scenic Byway's mission through something other than signage. Since the font needs to be addressed anyway, CHAIR NOLAN asked the applicant if they would be open to neon-looking LED lights on the monument signs. MR. CICORIA thought this could be done, and that particular monument sign could start to introduce some of those other elements described.

With regard to not meeting the 75 percent, MEMBER DE SALVIO asked if that was in relation to the sign or both the sign and the ceiling. MS. EDDOWES stated staff is strictly looking at signage, and the lighting on the ceiling would not qualify. MEMBER DE SALVIO asked what it would take to achieve 75 percent if certain parts of the sign were wrapped with LED lights to provide that neon aesthetic. MS. EDDOWES stated the 75 percent could be achieved through a combination of neon and motion and suggested a white LED could be used to mimic neon, and it could chase and outline the boxes. MEMBER DE SALVIO felt this could be done in a classy manner and still be compatible and meet the requirement. MR. CICORIA confirmed they would be willing to make that adjustment. MS. EDDOWES clarified for MR. LYOUBI the 75 percent applied to each monument sign independently and the building signage independently and not holistically. MR. LYOUBI also asked about the ceiling lights. MR. HOWE interjected stating although the ceiling lights do not count towards the 75 percent calculation, they are a strong contributing factor for him to support the project.

MEMBER WICHMANN noted the documentation includes the 1,830 square feet of wall sign G in the tabulation, and she thought that looked like a mural and would be difficult to achieve the 75 percent. She asked if that was intended to be considered a sign as opposed to a mural. MR. LYOUBI explained only a portion is considered signage, and their argument was that they were replacing an existing painted sign with a new wall sign.

CHAIR NOLAN said the old sign was worn and asked for more clarification as to what they intended to do with the replacement sign. MR. CICORIA said they could look at ultimately creating an identifier for a particular market in a neon application, but they were looking at it as a large scale mural. CHAIR NOLAN said the other murals they displayed were beautiful and added a lot to the building, but this one looked like a painted sign.

MR. LYOUBI indicated they were thinking 60 percent would be tenant signage and 40 percent would be wall art, which would then be exempt from the requirement. MR. CICORIA added they are still working on the name of

the plaza, and this could be an area where they could incorporate a neon element and identify tenants within the structure.

CHAIR NOLAN asked if that was something that would have to come back before the Committee. MS. EDDOWES stated as long as what was being proposed met the 75 percent requirement, it could be approved administratively. The Committee could also place a condition of approval that would satisfy the requirements as they see fit.

Discussion took place between the applicant and MEMBER WICHMANN regarding the location of the bodega mural. MEMBER WICHMANN cautioned their developer may not want to commit to 75 percent neon or animation because tenants change out frequently. MR. CICORIA agreed it becomes complicated with tenants changing, and reiterated that the plaza name itself would be an animated neon sign, and the other elements would be painted. The wall is approximately 25 to 28 feet tall, and they did not think painting it one color would be the right approach. They like the graphic idea that is prevalent in the downtown area, but in subtle fashion.

MEMBER WICHMANN asked if the Committee would consider this a mural or a sign since it identifies tenants. MEMBER HOWE commented it is commercial signage, adding he would support a blanket waiver on the wall. He likes painted signs and did not see how neon animated lighting could be done on the wall given the challenge of revolving tenants. He thought the focus should be on the signage fronting Las Vegas and Oakey Boulevards.

Further discussion took place amongst the members and applicant to address the remaining tenant signage for the building, exclusive of the two monument signs and south wall. MR. BOYLES clarified the Waiver being requested would apply to all remaining signs on site, and the revised conditions would apply to the signage that is shown on Elevation G for the wall signage facing the south elevation and the two monument signs. The remaining signs would be allowed to have no animation and/or neon pursuant to the Waiver. At the request of DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY JIM LEWIS, MS. EDDOWES read the three added conditions into the record for clarification. The applicant agreed to these conditions.

CHAIR NOLAN declared the Public Hearing closed.

Motion made by Mike Howe to Approve subject to conditions and adding the following conditions as read for the record:

- A. A Waiver is hereby approved to allow zero percent neon and/or animation for the painted wall sign on the south building façade.
- B. The two monument signs must provide 75 percent neon and/or animation.
- C. A Waiver is hereby approved to allow the tenant wall signs and window signs to be internally illuminated with no animation and/or neon.

Passed For: 7; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

For-Mike Nolan, Tina Wichmann, Mike Howe, Donna Toussaint, Louis De Salvio, Jeff McGeachy, William Dwyer;

6. **Citizens Participation:** Public comment during this portion of the agenda must be limited to matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee. No subject may be acted upon by the Committee unless that subject is on the agenda and is scheduled for action. If you wish to be heard, come forward and give your name for the record. The amount of discussion on any single subject, as well as the amount of time any single speaker is allowed, may be limited.

Minutes:
None.

7. **Adjournment**

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Cheyenne LaRance, Deputy City Clerk

Jonathan Boyles, Senior Planner

Minutes Prepared by:

Debra A. Outland, Deputy City Clerk

THIS MEETING WAS PROPERLY NOTICED AND POSTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

City Hall, 495 South Main Street, 1st Floor
Clark County Government Center, 500 South Grand Central Parkway
Grant Sawyer Building, 555 East Washington Avenue
Howard Lieburn Senior Center, 6230 Garwood Avenue