

**Design and Historic Review Commission Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2023**

A meeting of the City of Yuma Design and Historic Review Commission was held on Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at City Hall Council Chambers, One City Plaza, Yuma, Arizona.

DESIGN AND HISTORIC REVIEW COMMISSION MEMBERS present included Chairman Tom Rushin, Vice Chairman Amanda Coltman, Commissioners Chris Hamel, James Sheldahl, and Sandra Anthony. Commissioners Juan Leal-Rubio and William Moody were absent.

STAFF MEMBERS present included Alyssa Linville, Director of Planning and Neighborhood Services; Jennifer Albers, Assistant Director of Planning; Robert Blevins, Principal Planner; Amelia Domby, Senior Planner; Erika Peterson, Associate Planner; Rodney Short, Deputy City Attorney and Alejandro Marquez, Administrative Specialist.

Chairman Tom Rushin called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and noted there was a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 26, 2023

Motion by Commissioner Chris Hamel, second by Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman to APPROVE the minutes of July 26, 2023. Motion carried unanimously, (5-0) with two absent.

ITEMS REQUIRING COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

DHRC-41808-2023: *This is a request by Sam Lewis, on behalf of the City of Yuma, for historic review of a new shade structure to be located on the back side of the existing building, in the Main Street Historic District. The property is located at 270 S. Main Street, Yuma, AZ.*

Amelia Domby, Senior Planner summarized the staff report and recommended **APPROVAL**.

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF

None

APPLICANT / APPLICANT'S REPRESENTATIVE

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Motion by Commissioner Chris Hamel, second by Commissioner James Sheldahl, to APPROVE Case Number DHRC-41808-2023 as presented. Motion carried unanimously, (5-0) with two absent.

Chairman Tom Rushin declared a conflict of interest, recused himself from DHRC-41809-2023, and turned the meeting over to **Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman**.

DHRC-41809-2023: *This is a request by Greg LaVann of the Yuma Children's Museum, on behalf of Cunningham Sample, LLC., for historic review of new wall-mounted signage in the Brinley Avenue Historic District. The property is located at 200 S. Main Street, Yuma, AZ.*

Robert Blevins, Principal Planner summarized the staff report and recommended **DENIAL**.

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF

Commissioner James Sheldahl asked if most of the signs in the downtown area comply with the City's guidelines. **Blevins** replied yes, if the signs had permits and were approved. **Commissioner James Sheldahl** then asked if there had been any approved signs that were not in compliance with the City's guidelines. **Blevins** answered no, if there was a sign that was not in compliance it would be reported to the City's Code Enforcement department.

Commissioner Chris Hamel asked if the reason for denial was not just for the size of the sign but also the number of colors. **Blevins** replied correct. **Commissioner Chris Hamel** then asked if the proposed sign had 5 different colors. **Blevins** replied yes. **Commissioner Chris Hamel** asked if the sign was only to be located on the front of the building not the side. **Blevins** answered yes. **Commissioner James Sheldahl** then asked if a sign was placed on the side of the building would it also require approval by the Commission. **Blevins** replied yes, if it was a mural not an advertisement.

APPLICANT / APPLICANT'S REPRESENTATIVE

Greg LaVann, 200 S. Main Street, Yuma AZ, gave a brief presentation about the sign for the Childrens Museum.

Commissioner Chris Hamel stated that he liked the design of the sign, then asked if the sign was the size that the City's guidelines require it to be would it not have the same impact that the larger sign would have. **LaVann** answered no.

Commissioner Sandra Anthony stated that she was in favor of the proposed sign.

Commissioner Chris Hamel asked for clarification of which color was to be used on the storefront. **LaVann** replied the darker blue color was to be used because of the way it complements the proposed sign. **Commissioner Chris Hamel** stated if the color was to the correct standards. **LaVann** answered yes.

Commissioner James Sheldahl asked Blevins are all the sign guidelines uniform regardless of the use of the building. **Blevins** replied yes, and then stated that the sign guidelines are also based on the size of the buildings.

Commissioner James Sheldahl commented that he liked the bigger sign, but he understands that there are guidelines that are needed to be followed in order to make a decision and that he hopes that if the proposed sign is denied by the Commission that staff and the applicant can come to an agreement on the sign.

LaVann stated that he understands that there should be some compromise with the size, but he would like to keep the style and colors of the sign because it is the museum's logo.

Commissioner Chris Hamel stated that he liked the colors and the fact that the bigger sign says Yuma County on it, and that he hopes staff and the applicant can come to an agreement on the size of the sign.

Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman stated she also liked the overall design of the proposed sign, and then stated if the sign is denied she hopes that a middle ground can be found with staff and the applicant.

Blevins noted that signs that are presented to staff that do not meet the guidelines are usually negotiated and redone before they are presented to the commission for approval. **Blevins** went on to say that if the Commission does not approve the proposed sign staff would need the dimensions of what the sign needs to be as directed by the Commission.

Commissioner Chris Hamel referred to a previously approved sign and asked if that particular sign had been shrunk to the appropriate size before it was presented to the Commission.

Blevins replied yes, and that there are other signs in the area that were negotiated before they were presented and approved by the Commission.

Commissioner James Sheldahl commented that he does not feel that a compromise should be made at the hearing.

Vice Chairman Amanda Coltman agreed.

Commissioner Chris Hamel also agreed.

Rodney Short, Deputy City Attorney stated it seems that the Commission may need more information from the applicant and staff to be able to make a decision, and that the case could be continued to a different hearing date.

Commissioner James Sheldahl commented that a continuance may be a good idea so that a decision could be made.

LaVann stated that the museum is going to have a Gala on November 3rd and would like to paint the building before the event.

Vice Chairman Amanda Coltman asked if a vote could be made for just the painting of the building.

Jennifer Albers, Assistant Director of Planning clarified that the application before the Commission is just for the sign not the color of the building and that a vote to approve to paint is not necessary because the color had previously been approved by staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Art Morales, 1565 S. 34th Avenue, Yuma, Az, commented that he is speaking on behalf of his 5-year-old daughter who would be one of the future users of the museum, and who will be excited to see the sign. **Morales** also stated that the size of the sign would not cause any harm to anyone on the road or the pathway. **Morales** then commented to look at future buildings in the area that are more modern than historical, and that the downtown area was changing, and that the commission should review and maybe update its policies to keep up with the changes. **Morales** went on to say that we should be showcasing the vibrancy of our community and enhancing the colors of our downtown area. **Morales** then asked the Commission to consider approving the Childrens Museums sign.

Lois Haley, Founder of the Childrens Museum, commented that the idea to open the museum came to her in 2013 and that it took 10 years to come into reality. **Haley** stated when the location of where the museum was discussed she asked her board that she wanted it in the downtown area, because not only would it benefit both the children of Yuma and the surrounding businesses by attracting the public to the area. **Haley** then commented the logo came from a contest that they held, and that a student from San Pasqual was the designer. **Haley** then asked the Commission not to change the colors of the logo and the design, because of its representation of Yuma County.

Motion by Commissioner Chris Hamel, second by Commissioner Sandra Anthony, to CONTINUE Case Number DHRC-41809-2023 to the next hearing date of October 11, 2023. Motion carried unanimously (4-0) with two absent and one recused.

Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman returned the meeting to **Chairman Tom Rushin**.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

None

INFORMATION ITEMS

Staff

Memorandum: Policy for Consideration of color changes following DHRC approvals.

Jennifer Albers, Assistant Director of Planning, discussed the “Policy for Consideration of color changes following DHRC approvals”.

Robert Blevins, Principal Planner stated that one of the reasons for the new policy was because of a previous case where the applicant made changes after the original design was approved.

Commissioner Chris Hamel stated he likes the way the policy was written, and then stated maybe we should also look at the amount of painted area that has been changed versus what was recommended, and how much of a change would it require to come back to the Commission for approval. **Albers** replied that it had been an all or nothing change to the area, then stated that maybe a discussion is needed to figure out how much of a change to the painted area would cause staff to require an approval of the Commission. **Albers** then stated that staff could add a percent of change that would require Commission approval. **Commissioner Chris Hamel** stated that he would like staff to make the decision regarding how much of a change was made.

Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman agreed with Commissioner Chris Hamel.

Chairman Tom Rushin stated that he approved of the language that was presented, and then stated that there needs to be some room for exceptions on certain projects to be approved.

Blevins commented the staff doesn't want to overstep their decision making of the Commission, and that some boundaries are needed to be discussed. **Blevins** then referred to the Administrative Approvals where staff was allowed to make decisions without the Commission's approval.

Chairman Tom Rushin stated the administrative approvals were discussed over a few months to decide on what types of approvals that staff could make.

Vice-Chairman Amanda Coltman asked what the consequences were if an applicant does not follow the guidelines in the new policy. **Blevins** replied that it could be referred to the Code Enforcement department. **Commissioner James Sheldahl** asked how high on the Code Enforcement priority list would these types of violations be. **Albers** replied that all violations are addressed as they come in.

Rodney Short, Deputy City Attorney, stated if everyone is following a set of guidelines it sets a precedence on property and how you run your property, if someone were to go way beyond those guidelines and the neighboring properties were detrimentally affected by it they would have a case for civil remedy.

Chairman Tom Rushin stated since this is not an action item there is no need to vote on this matter, then asked if there was any direction that the commission would like to give staff.

Commissioner Chris Hamel agreed that this is not an action item, then stated that some constraints should be put in place and that there should be further discussion on what would happen if an applicant went outside of the guidelines.

Commissioner James Sheldahl agreed that the language that was presented was appropriate, and that there should be some exceptions to some proposals even after the initial approval was made. **Commissioner James Sheldahl** then asked but what if the applicant goes beyond the guidelines would there be some civil liabilities toward the Commission if an exception was made.

Rodney Short, Deputy City Attorney, answered that the commission follows certain guidelines but if an exception was made that barely exceeds the guidelines and does affect the neighboring businesses there should not be an issue.

Chairman Tom Rushin commented the reason for administrative approvals on the agenda was created was so that the proposals can be approved by staff and did not need the approval of the Commission, but if a project goes beyond the guidelines, it is then reviewed by the Commission. **Chairman Tom Rushin** then commented about how and why the Commission was formed.

Chairman Tom Rushin asked if staff had anything more to add to the policy please do so, and then present it to the Commission.

Jennifer Albers, Assistant Director of Planning, stated per the Chairmans request staff had printed out new copies of the Historic Districts Maps and made available to the Commission.

Administrative Approvals

Historic District

DHRC-40808-2022: *This is a request by Signmasters, on behalf of Debra and David Mansheim, for review of a new wall-mounted sign for Dosis VR Games in the Main Street Historic District. The property is located at 245 S. Main Street, Yuma, AZ.*

DHRC-40781-2022: *This is a request by the City of Yuma to replace the front doors on City Hall in the Main Street Historic District. The property is located at One City Plaza, Yuma, AZ.*

DHRC-40540-2022: *This is a request by Air Central Heating and Cooling, on behalf of Bob Lutes, for new rooftop A/C equipment, to be located at 221 S. Main Street, in the Main Street Historic District, Yuma, AZ.*

DHRC-41581-2023: *This is a request by Hansberger Refrigeration and Electric, on behalf of Cunningham Sample, LLC., for historic review of the replacement of roof-mounted air conditioning equipment in the Brinley Avenue Historic District. The property is located at 200 S. Main Street, Yuma, AZ.*

Aesthetic Overlay

DHRC-41585-2023: *This is a request by Yuma Electric Service, on behalf of Sharon L. Miller, for a new outdoor generator for the property located at 1463 E. 10th Street, in the General Commercial/Aesthetic Overlay (B-2/AO) District., Yuma, AZ.*

Chairman Tom Rushin acknowledged the Administrative Approvals.

National Heritage Area

Chairman Tom Rushin stated he will extend an invitation to Cathy Douglas and ask for a presentation on the Heritage Area.

Commission

Commissioner James Sheldahl stated he recently visited the city of Phoenix's Art District, and then asked is there a difference in public art and signage because what he noticed was that they used both types to advertise their businesses and that it added vibrancy to the district. **Commissioner James Sheldahl** then stated if there was any guidance to the Yuma Main Street area on what kind of art can be used as signage. **Chairman Tom Rushin** commented that maybe staff could reach out to find out what type of district it represents, and then stated that there is some art located in the downtown area.

Robert Blevins, Principal Planner stated that staff provided copies of the Main Street Guidelines to all the Commissioners for review and future discussion and to possibly make additions or changes.

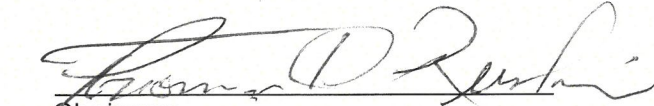
Public Comment

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Minutes approved this 11 day of October, 2023.


Chairman