



**City of Gig Harbor Design Review Board
Meeting of January 26, 2012
Civic Center, 3510 Grandview Street**

5:02 p.m. - Call to order, roll call

Present: Board Members – Chairman Darrin Filand, Vice Chairman Rick Gagliano, David Fisher, Peter Norman and Kay Paterson

Staff Present: Kristin Moerler

New Business

Chairman Filand opened the meeting introduced the project and Associate Planner Kristin Moerler for staff's presentation.

Reikow Construction LLC – Bruce Reikow – P.O. Box 1579, Gig Harbor, WA 98335-3579 - Application for Design Review Pre-Application Conference for Towne Plaza 2/3/4 located at the old Theater Site off Olympic and 56th. Project includes the construction of 4 commercial buildings.

Staff gave a brief presentation regarding the proposal and prior reviews before turning the presentation over to the applicant. Applicant, James Guerrero, introduced the proposal and design intent of the project.

The DRB started by discussing the general layout of the site, including the significant changes in grade that occur between the upper and lower parking areas on the site. The applicant indicated that the retaining walls shown along Olympic Drive are those that exist today and are only being modified where the stairs and new driveway are proposed.

The DRB discussed solid/voids and the general detailing of the architecture. The DRB indicated that the solid/voids appeared generally reasonable given the detailing on the structure, and that the existing Towne Plaza 1 building can be used as a guide for the new structures. Concerns were raised as to which building is intended to be the primary or focal building on the site.

The board discussed the size of the various buildings on the site and which should be developed as the focal point. Discussion included that the bank building appeared to be a separate project from the structures located on the upper portion of the site. The Board also discussed access off of Olympic and future road improvements/connections.

The board discussed tree retention and grades with the applicant to better understand the proposal. Generally the board supported the respect paid to maintaining the natural topography of the site, but expressed concerns about how the access into the site may negatively affect future tenants. The board then discussed hierarchy of design and which building is the primary structure on the site. The largest is the existing Towne Plaza building; however it is set back behind the four new buildings and may or may not have any visibility from Olympic. The board generally liked the scale, location and design of buildings 2/3, but expressed concerns about the Bank seeming unrelated to the rest of the site both due to access and architectural design. Discussion included potentially changing the design of building 2 so that it functions as the primary structure.

The board asked the applicant about tree retention and landscaping plans for the site. Tree retention is presently proposed adjacent to 56th as the best stand of trees near Olympic is where the site access and bank are proposed (lower area). The DRB encouraged the applicant to consider the use of a native planting plan to provide areas that overtime will replicate retained vegetation areas. Consideration should be given to how those clusters can frame the views into the site and help provide context for the structures.

The applicant reiterated the key concerns that they heard expressed by the board related to solid/void standards and hierarchy of the design, and asked about the access concerns expressed earlier. The board returned to the issue of site access and discussed a variety of options to provide vehicular access into the site off Olympic. The board discussed the orientation of Building 1 and its daylight basement design. One suggestion was to turn the building 90° and either combine it with the bank or shift it to the northeast corner of the site. Potentially this would allow for a vehicular access to be developed from Olympic to access the upper parking areas.

Further they encouraged reducing or removing the plaza between buildings 1 and 2 to facilitate the vehicular access into the site off Olympic and to focus on the plaza between buildings 2 and 3 for pedestrian access and plaza space. The Board also discussed that perhaps plazas may be overdone and that other forms of common areas could be considered that incorporated more landscaping.

The DRB concluded discussions on the project and thanked the applicant for their use of Sketch up in presenting their proposal. The applicant was encouraged to return on a pre-application basis if needed

Other Business

Approval of Minutes for August 11, 2011

MOTION: Move to approve the minutes for August 11, 2011 with the spelling corrected as discussed.
Gagliano / Patterson: Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes for September 22, 2011

MOTION: Move to approve the minutes for September 22, 2011 as written.
Gagliano / Fisher: Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes for October 27, 2011 were discussed. Staff was asked to re-write the end of the minutes to better reflect the discussion regarding testimony and public meetings that occurred near the end of the meeting. Staff will bring back the minutes at a future meeting.

Discussion of upcoming meetings.

Adjournment at 6:35pm