

MEETING MINUTES

URBANA MOR DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

DATE: November 18, 2015

APPROVED

TIME: 5:00 p.m.

PLACE: Urbana City Building
City Council Chambers
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: Matt Cho, Scott Kunkel, Dannie Otto, Jeffery Poss, Kim Smith, Jonah Weisskopf

STAFF PRESENT: Lorrie Pearson, Planning Manager; Christopher Marx, Planner I

OTHERS PRESENT: Kima Kheirloomoom

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chair Poss called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was declared with all members present.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Planning staff requested that the item on the agenda under Study Session be heard prior to the case under New Public Hearings. This change was accepted by the Board members.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes from the September 30, 2015 meeting were presented for approval. Ms. Smith asked for a clarification on Page 4 to Mr. Engstrom's response to Mr. Otto's question regarding open porches in a setback. She suggested adding language so it reads as follows, "Mr. Engstrom replied yes. Open porches may encroach into a required yard, but only up to five feet and no closer than five feet to the property line." Ms. Smith moved to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Kunkel seconded the motion. The minutes were then approved by unanimous voice vote.

3B. STUDY SESSION

MOR Zoning District and Guidelines

Lorrie Pearson, Planning Manager, gave a presentation on the following:

- History (1990-2003)
 - Downtown to Campus Plan
 - MOR District created
 - Development Review Board (DRB) created
- Mixed Office Residential Zoning District Map
- Amendment (2003)
 - Changes to DRB
 - Project Reviews
 - Review Criteria
 - Required Design Items
- Design Guidelines (2004)
- Summary

Mr. Cho asked for a definition of “adaptive reuse”. Ms. Pearson explained the definition.

Mr. Cho asked about the incentives for adaptive reuse. Ms. Pearson stated that the incentives were part of the Downtown to Campus Plan. It was translated into the MOR Zoning District by providing administrative review. Administrative review is a quicker process and saves time, which is the incentive.

Mr. Otto asked if staff states that an application meets the intent of the MOR District, is there a means for the Board to deny the application or does it mean that the case should be approved. Ms. Pearson replied that it is the MOR Development Review Board’s role to evaluate the Planning staff’s analysis.

Ms. Smith commented that during the previous case that was reviewed on September 30, 2015, it seemed that the massing and scale of the building were a big concern. Has there been any review by City staff on whether the calculations allowed for massing and scale should be changed. Ms. Pearson said not yet; however, this exercise is part of the process to re-familiarize the Board members with the details of the MOR District. Chair Poss stated that there were several issues, such as massing and scale and economic interest of adjacent property owners, mentioned during the case on September 30th that suggests a review of the MOR details be in order.

Mr. Cho inquired as to whether the changes that were made in 2003 and 2004 had made a positive impact on the development and adaptive re-use of existing buildings in the MOR District. Ms. Pearson did not feel that with the recession there were enough cases to make a determination on the success of those changes. Chair Poss added that there are a variety of interpretations of the MOR District and what it means. He was comfortable with the conflict because it is the nature of a living organism, whether it is a person, an entity or a place. Each member has to use their own judgement and value system to interpret each criteria/guideline.

Mr. Otto believed that if the primary purpose of the MOR Development Review process is to adaptively reuse existing structures, then the City needs to look at the Ordinance and criteria to see if it is working. If the primary purpose is the economic development and growth of the real

estate tax base, then that needs to be clarified. It does not seem like the result of the last case met the purpose of the 1990s or the 2003 Ordinances. If adaptive reuse is not legitimate anymore, then let us simply say so and disband the district. Ms. Pearson noted that this was discussed in 2003 when the MOR Development review process was revised and there was a recognition that not everyone wanted to convert their old houses into retail shops.

Chair Poss stated that it would be helpful to know how many cases there were during each period and whether the cases were for adaptive reuse or for tear down /rebuild projects. Ms. Pearson replied that she could provide that information to the board members in an email. Chair Poss felt it would give them a larger perspective of whether any changes need to be made. There are incentives for adaptive reuse and he wondered if those incentives were changing the overall context of decisions that were being made by property owners in the MOR District.

Mr. Kunkel felt they needed to be aware that there were other contemplated projects that did not occur because of the requirements of the MOR District. Chair Poss added that the more restrictions that are placed, the fewer opportunities people are going to see. That is character versus economics. The MOR Board is trying to find the uncomfortable balance between adaptively reusing existing properties and new developments.

Mr. Otto requested that City staff include in the email if there were any projects that required substantial revisions prior to being approved or were denied. Ms. Pearson said that she could include this information as well.

Mr. Cho asked if other cities used MOR Districts as a way to promote adaptive reuse of existing structures. He wondered if the MOR zoning was outdated. Ms. Pearson responded by saying that every community has their own strategy. City staff are currently reviewing the Home Occupation regulations and are researching how businesses are changing, specifically the merging of home and work. The City strives to achieve mixed use because if a person can live and work in the same neighborhood, there are many benefits from environmental to social. Therefore, she cannot say whether the MOR District is working or not working at this point. However, if there are changes that can be made to improve the process and intent, then it is something that City staff and City Council can look at.

Mr. Kunkel commented that there are a whole basket of tools that could be used to promote adaptive reuse if the scale is tipped towards new development. He would rather provide good incentives to promote adaptive reuse than to tighten the requirements for new development.

Cho stated that he would like to revisit the MOR requirements. He would like to see some innovative changes that would work and encourage adaptive reuse for the properties in the MOR District.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

6. OLD BUSINESS

Discussion of Amendment to the Official Bylaws

Ms. Pearson stated that City staff is looking into potentially creating another area in the downtown that would require some design review. Staff will be gathering public input soon to find out what the community wants for this area. Once a district or design guidelines are created for the Downtown area, City staff can begin to discuss the merging of the Design Review Board and the MOR Development Review Board and the districts that will be covered.

7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

Case No. DRB-2015-02 – A request by Kima Kheiolomoom for review of a Site Plan and design of a garage at 410 West Elm Street in the MOR, Mixed Office Residential Zoning District.

Chair Poss opened the public hearing for this case. Christopher Marx, Planner I, presented this case to the MOR Development Review Board. He gave a brief description of the proposed site and of the adjacent properties noting their current land uses and zoning. He showed the Site Plan noting the location of the new garage on the property. He reviewed the Site Plan criteria from Section XI-12.I of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance. He also discussed how the proposed garage would conform to the MOR Design Guidelines with regards to façade zone, building orientation and patterns, massing and scale, openings, outdoor living space, materials, parking areas, landscaping and commercial site design. He read the options of the Board and presented staff's recommendation. He noted that the applicant was present at the meeting.

Chair Poss asked if there were any questions from the Board members for City staff regarding the proposal.

Mr. Otto inquired if the owner was required to provide three parking spaces. Mr. Marx answered that the property owner was required to provide two parking spaces for the single-family use.

Chair Poss suggested changing the language for Condition #3 to read as such, "*The building material of the garage simulates the pattern and scale of the exteriors found on the surrounding houses in the district.*"

With no further questions for City staff, Chair Poss opened the hearing for public input.

Kima Kheiolomoom, applicant, approached the MOR Development Review Board to answer any questions the Board members may have.

Mr. Cho wondered if the applicant had scaled down the size of the garage in order to meet the requirements of the MOR District. Mr. Kheiolomoom replied no. They only have one car in the family. They prefer the green space in the backyard rather than filling it up with the structure.

Mr. Otto asked if the roof material was the same as the siding material only turned a different direction. Mr. Kheiolomoom answered that the roof material is a ribbed material with wider spaces, and would be placed vertically to allow snow and ice to slide off during the winter months. The two materials are similar but not exactly the same.

Ms. Smith inquired about the height of the walls and the peak of the roof. Mr. Kheiolomoom clarified that the walls would be nine feet in height. There would be an additional four feet to the peak of the roof.

With no further public input or questions for the applicant, Chair Poss closed the public input portion of the hearing. He, then, opened the meeting up for discussion and/or motion(s) by the MOR Development Review Board.

Mr. Kunkel moved that the MOR Development Review Board approve the application in Case No. DRB-2015-02 as recommended by City staff including the first two conditions as written in the staff memo and with the change that Condition #3 read as follows: *“The building material of the garage simulates the pattern and scale of the exteriors found on the surrounding houses in the district.”* Mr. Cho seconded the motion.

Mr. Cho	-	Yes	Mr. Kunkel	-	Yes
Mr. Otto	-	Yes	Mr. Poss	-	Yes
Ms. Smith	-	Yes	Mr. Weisskopf	-	Yes

The motion was approved by unanimous vote 6-0.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATIONS

There was none.

10. STAFF REPORT

There was none.

11. STUDY SESSION

Refer to 3B above for minutes on the study session item.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Smith moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Weisskopf seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorrie Pearson, Secretary
MOR Development Review Board