



# Design Guidelines Ad Hoc Committee Regular Meeting Minutes

**November 18, 2024 at 2:00 PM**

City Hall Commission Chambers  
401 S. Park Avenue

## **Present**

Phil Anderson, Lucy Boudet, Maurizio Maso, Deborah Ziel, Charles Williams, Vashon Sarkisian

## **Absent**

Emily Williams

## **Staff**

Director of Planning and Zoning Allison McGillis, Planning Consultant Jeff Briggs, Senior Planner/Zoning Official John Harbilas, Planner II Nicholas Lewis, Planner I Corinna Lundgren, Administrative Coordinator Mary Bush

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

### **2. Consent Agenda**

- a. Approve the minutes of October 21, 2024.

Motion made by Vashon Sarkisian, seconded by Lucy Boudet, to approve the October 21, 2024 meeting minutes.

The motion carried unanimously by a 6-0 vote. (Emily Williams was absent from the meeting.)

### **3. Public Comments (for items not on the agenda): Three minutes allowed for each speaker**

No one from the public wished to speak. The public hearing was closed.

### **4. Discussion Item (s)**

- a.
  - Discuss updated draft of Design Standards
  - Discuss summary of the walking tour

Mrs. McGillis began discussion and noted that since the last meeting, the title of the guidelines had been changed from Design Guidelines to Design Standards, since guidelines is a loose term.

The Board then inquired about whether the changes made since the last meeting reflected any of the feedback from the walking tour. Mr. Stringfellow indicated that changes based on the walking tour feedback would be included in the next iteration of the standards.

Mr. Stringfellow noted that an additional write-up was added and the size of the map on page four of the standards was increased. He also noted that verbiage for walkability was added, the image displayed for the conservation of design section was replaced, and five broad categories of architectural style and example images for them were added. A brief discussion then ensued about architectural styles and adaptive reuse. The Board expressed that there should be two more architectural styles included, one for industrial adaptive reuse and another for classical modern. Mr. Stringfellow explained that an application for a style that does not fit into any of the five broad categories would be required to go through an architectural review and may be required to go through a conditional use review if the conditional use requirements are triggered. He noted that the language in the standards for this would be clarified. The Board inquired about how the standards could be amended in the future and Mrs. McGillis responded that an ordinance would be needed to amend the standards. Discussion ensued about creating a historical connection with architectural styles, encouraging the use of the main-street classical style along Orange Avenue, broadening the architectural categories, the reason Welbourne Avenue is indicated on the included map as a separate enclave, and the reason the Orange Avenue Overlay is not connected to the Central Business District.

Mr. Stringfellow continued discussion on the changes made to the design standards and noted that language clarifying the extent of the regulations, the process, and the applicable zones was added, a five-foot clearance space requirement for café seating was added, and an additional page regarding proportion, composition, and fenestration was added. A brief discussion ensued about signage on awnings with regard to their allowance, and the use of blade signs and wall signage. The Board requested confirmation that staff has the ability to exercise a subjective review on signs allowed on awnings. Discussion then continued on wayfinding and window signs, fenestration, ornamentation, the labels included in the standards, and reducing the bulkhead requirement for storefront walls to one foot four inches. A brief discussion regarding the use and dimensions of balconies ensued, and the Board expressed that they wanted to encourage usable balconies. Discussion then continued about reconciling existing buildings that do not conform to the design standards, creating stricter standards for Park Avenue and New England Avenue only, what determines compatibility, the approval process, how a modern building could be justified as compatible, creating a definition for acceptable modern architecture, and the properties in the Central Business District that would be subject to the design standards.

## **5. Action Items**

## **6. Board Comments**

## **7. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Committee on December 16, 2024.

ATTEST:

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/s/ Mary Bush, Recording Secretary