

AESTHETIC DESIGN AND SITE PLAN REVIEW BOARD
Monday, September 14, 2020

The Aesthetic Design and Site Plan Review Board meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairperson Mark Lake in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 421 Michigan Street.

Roll Call: Members Dave Augustson, Cindy Weber, Mark Lake, Dennis Statz, Jon Burk, and Mark Struck were present. Excused: Member Cheryl Frank. Also present were City Administrator Josh VanLieshout, Community Development Director Marty Olejniczak, Planner/Zoning Administrator Christopher Sullivan-Robinson, and Community Development Secretary Cheryl Nault.

Adoption of Agenda: Moved by Mr. Burk, seconded by Mr. Struck to adopt the following agenda by moving item #4 to item #6:

1. Roll call.
2. Adoption of agenda.
3. Approval of minutes from August 24, 2020.
4. Consideration of: South Yard construction plans for Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding, located at 605 N. 3rd Avenue.
5. Consideration of: New construction for Peninsula Title, located at 512 S. Lansing Avenue.
6. Consideration of: Second floor addition for Marcus Trana, located at 43 S. 2nd Avenue.
7. Chairman approvals.
8. Adjourn.

All ayes. Carried.

Approval of minutes from August 24, 2020: Moved by Ms. Weber, seconded by Mr. Burk to approve the minutes from August 24, 2020, with removal of a repeated sentence on the bottom of page 1. All ayes. Carried.

Consideration of: New construction for Peninsula Title, located at 512 S. Lansing Avenue: Portside Builders representative Paul Shefchik presented plans for the new Peninsula Title building. The owners of the property are John and Julie May. There will be a 4 – 5 inch stone exterior, with brown wood LP Smartside siding. The siding has a stonebase paint that gives it its' hardness, along with a 30-year warranty against any fading or deterioration. There will be a pitched roof in the center, along with flatter roofs with a pitch on both ends, which is a standing seam metal roofing in a dark grayish color. As far as the site, it will be less impervious than its existing condition. The existing parking lot will be used, but some grades will be changed and some re-blacktopping will be done. Landscaped islands will be added in the parking area to add more green space. There is an approximate 15-foot tall pole light located in the parking lot that they would agree to facing the lights face downward, if necessary. In front of the doorways there is an overhang roof where recessed can lights could be added that would shine down onto the entranceways and sidewalks, if requested. An easement was given to Marchants, the property next door, for use of the parking area behind their building.

Mr. Struck wondered if it was necessary to have such a high pole light in the parking lot. Most of their business is conducted during the day.

Ms. Weber pointed out that the light covered the whole big parking area.

Mr. Shefchik stated that they were hoping not to install another light.

Mr. Sullivan-Robinson stated lighting requirements are listed in the aesthetic guidelines. They need to be night sky friendly, efficient LED, and full cut-offs.

Mr. Shefchik stated that the parking lot lighting could be switched out to LED if requested by the Board.

Mr. Burk mentioned that their business is only a daytime operation. He wondered why they should have to change the lighting.

Ms. Weber complimented the design of the building, as well as the landscaping.

Mr. Shefchik stated that there will be employee parking on the lower level in the southwest corner. There is a 12-foot grade difference from the high to the low. Water will drain into the existing culvert. The existing entrances into the property will remain and no new ones will be added.

Mr. Sullivan-Robinson stated there are no landscape requirements since they are not increasing the parking area.

Mr. Shefchik stated that plant beds will be installed around the whole building. A sign will be placed in a landscaped island on the north side of property. They will come back to the Board for signage approval.

A short discussion was held. Moved by Ms. Weber, seconded by Mr. Burk to issue a certificate of appropriateness as presented. All ayes. Carried.

Consideration of: Second floor addition for Marcus Trana, located at 43 S. 2nd Avenue: Marcus Trana, owner of the property at 43 S. 2nd Avenue, stated that this has been a project in the making for a long time. He will be adding a second floor and white double-hung windows to his existing garage. The roof will be reused. The purpose of the second floor is for a recording studio, art gallery, and storage. He will keep the first floor car garage for parking. The existing metal siding will be replaced with a green, vertical vinyl siding to closely match the color of the house. He hopes this will be adding another property to the Arts District. He also provided letters of recommendation from the neighbors.

The Board decided that the final color of the siding should be approved by the Chair.

Mr. Trana mentioned that a future project is to remove the lap siding on the house, which contains asbestos, and to expose the original siding.

Mr. Sullivan-Robinson stated that Mr. Trana is working with the building inspector on handicap accessibility.

Mr. Trana said he is not changing any landscaping. He intends to use the yard to play concerts for family and friends. There will be no changes to the back door. The existing garage doors will remain. Nothing will be done to the footprint of the building.

Mr. Statz encouraged Mr. Trana to match the siding on the garage with what the future house will look like once the existing siding is removed. Mr. Trana responded that it will be years from now before that will be done. It is a cost issue, but he will look into the lap vinyl siding for the garage.

The Board also agreed that any future lighting should be facing downward, and should be approved by Mr. Sullivan-Robinson and the Chair, as well as any revisions, including signage.

Mr. Trana added that in regard to noise, he will be insulating from the outside so the noise will be controlled.

The Board discussed the request. Moved by Mr. Struck, seconded by Mr. Statz to issue a certificate of appropriateness as presented, subject to using a horizontal lap siding, with a sample of siding color to be approved before work is done. Carried, with Mr. Struck, Mr. Augustson, Mr. Lake, Mr. Burk, and Mr. Statz voting aye. Ms. Weber voted no. She didn't care whether or not Mr. Trana used horizontal or vertical siding.

Mr. Lake stated that before the Board gets to the next item, there was request for public comment.

Hans Christian, 330 N. 3rd Avenue, stated that he has a recording studio 330 for personal and professional use. He said he is deeply concerned about Fincantieri with the recent approval of variances given by the

Zoning Board of Appeals and has decided to go to Circuit Court with it. There is an appeal period that is in effect right now until September 28th, so they have due process, 30 days, to exercise their rights. He brought up the aesthetic design guidelines, as he was concerned with building 433, since the 110-foot height would severely diminish public views. He suggested to move the building southward about 50 feet, so it would be lined up with the current building 422. The building could also be rotated 90 degrees to be made parallel with building 422. The problem with the current plans is the increased traffic for steel deliveries and other heavy machinery. He wondered if it could be required that the steel be delivered by barge. That would benefit the whole neighborhood. The building design is to be aesthetically pleasing. The Schmelzer building is located right next to the 59-foot high 420 building. Their property values will be severely affected. In regard to lighting, there have been numerous complaints, mostly from people across the water, about excessive lighting, but Fincantieri has not addressed the problem. Light pollution should be addressed.

Ms. Weber asked Mr. Christian what exactly he is appealing.

Mr. Christian responded that he is appealing the decision of the Zoning Board of Appeals granting of the two variances, height variance and setback variance.

Mr. Sullivan-Robinson explained that the ZBA approved the height and setbacks, with the condition that they provide a public improvement plan within 6 months for their parking areas and landscaping along 3rd Avenue, the appearance and use of the existing Red Oak Winery and train depot buildings, as well as other temporary steel buildings in that corridor.

Consideration of: South Yard construction plans for Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding, located at 605 N. 3rd Avenue: Ryan Hoernke, representing Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding, and lives at 908 Quincy Street, gave a description of their sister shipyard contract for the Navy's future frigates, which is primarily what has driven this project called the South Yard expansion and improvement. The 60,000 square-foot addition to the 420 building, which is the building at the former 1st Avenue and Jefferson Street, will expand and continue along the edge of the current building as approved by the ZBA. A 5-foot setback from the property line will continue west toward the water. Along the property line, behind the addition, they envision the fence to continue to the water line. The roof heights are lower than the existing building. The design will be the same, as well as colors, scheme, fake windows, and overall appearance. There is landscaping along the south property line and it is envisioned that landscaping will continue along the property line to the west. This building is currently used for modular steel construction, steel cutting, and some of the work for the existing contracts that their sister shipyard has. A portion of the building will be used for cold steel storage warehouse and the north side of the building will house the blast and prime equipment. This building overall will become the steel processing center for the program.

Mr. Hoernke then discussed the 433 building. This is a new building that will be located in the middle of the South Yard parallel to Berth Two. There is an existing building there used for some of the modular painting that will be removed, along with a quonset hut. It will be about 410 feet long, 210 feet wide, and approximately 110 feet high, with a peaked roof in the middle. It would have large megadoors on both the west water side and east landward side for units moving in and out of the building. There would be crane rails that extend past the entrance for maneuvering, flipping units, and loading onto transporters if needed. The general appearance will be the same, with a gray color scheme and black windows, with a membrane roof peaked in the middle. This building will be used for the three dimensional phase of construction of the military programs. There will be multiple workstations in each bay. The entire site from 311 to the south will be paved. Everything to the west of the former 1st Avenue will be paved. The variance that was approved stated that the buildings can be located within 3 feet of the location as presented, with a condition that within 6 months a beautification and improvement plan for 3rd Avenue is to be submitted.

Mr. Hoernke added that 422 building is 54 feet tall. The 311 building is approximately 84 feet tall and the gantry crane is 176 feet tall.

Mr. Olejniczak stated that he and Mr. Sullivan-Robinson met with Ross Schmelzer, the immediate property owner to the south. He had concerns regarding the 420 building.

Mr. Sullivan-Robinson explained Mr. Schmelzer's concerns. The first concern was drainage and flooding. Currently, the downspouts leading off of the existing building lead into a drainage easement between Bay Ship and Mr. Schmelzer's property. A lot of the roof water from the Bay Ship building contributes to a flooding issue in his parking area. The second concern is that there is an existing landscape line that goes between the south side of the building and his property. He wants to make sure that continues to the water, and what they use for vegetation does not shed leaves in the fall. Thirdly, the noise, dust, fumes, etc. needs to be considered. The exhaust needs to be filtered and noise regarding the construction of the building should be insulated and soundproofed. Lastly, his and his tenants view of the waterfront will be lost and wants the building aesthetically pleasing.

Mr. Olejniczak added that the primeline will be closer on a concrete surface and Mr. Schmelzer thought there might be some type of vibration that might occur that could impact his building during manufacturing.

Mr. Hoernke stated that the steel storage area will be the area to the right of the two truck doors in the back. Everything behind the existing building to the right is just for steel storage. To the left of the doors will be rollers that will feed to the east moving plates down the blast and prime and come out the east end of the addition short of where the existing building is. The blast and prime is the north side of the building. The north side of the existing building is the processing center. In terms of noise, one buffer is the wall. Then there is the steel storage area and another wall, then the blast and prime. The building has insulated panel walls.

Peter Glassen, representing Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding, stated that the drainage currently goes into a pipe that flows out to the bay from the existing roof. Everything on the north side will be channeled out away from the Schmelzer property. This is the first they have heard of Mr. Schmelzer having drainage issues.

Mr. Olejniczak stated that Mr. Schmelzer indicated that some of the drainage is because of the wall being tall. If the rain is coming from the south, it is not rain on the roof draining into the gutters, it is rain hitting the building and coming down. Mr. Olejniczak thought that with the bay water being so high, the drain could be full. Graef may have some suggestions on how to move that water away from the existing pipe. The DNR will ask for some best management practices for the quality. They will also need an air quality permit from the DNR.

Mr. Olejniczak recommended that if the Board chooses to take action that it is done with two different motions, one for each building.

Ms. Weber didn't see a problem with building 433 if it is meeting all the DNR and regulatory requirements. It is such an internal building. Aesthetically, she didn't think it will affect much outside.

Mr. Lake didn't think that there was any difference between 54 feet and 110 feet tall regarding blocking the view.

Mr. Statz asked that Fincantieri do as much as they can for the noise.

Mr. Olejniczak stated the cold steel storage itself is a buffer. The noisy part of the building is a fair distance away from the Schmelzer property.

Mr. Olejniczak added that this is not recommended to Council for approval. Also, the decision of the Board can be appealed to the Council.

Mr. Hoernke added that there will be no extra signage added and from a safety standpoint lights will be added for the door entries, along with cut-off light fixtures downward facing along the building.

Mr. Glassen stated there will be dark-sky lights installed for vessels. They will replace the lights that shine across the bay with downlights. It is still a project they are working on.

Discussion continued. Moved by Ms. Weber, seconded by Mr. Burk to issue a certificate of appropriateness as presented for building 433. All ayes. Carried.

Mr. Sullivan-Robinson wanted the Board to keep in mind that the 420 building will likely be shortened in some way on the water side since it is encroaching a setback into the navigable water. It could be shortened by 15-20 feet.

Mr. Glassen added that every time it rains and the storm sewer backs up, they have the same problem as Mr. Schmelzer. That is a very low area.

Mr. Olejniczak stated that piping the water directly into the bay seems reasonable as long as there is some kind of insurance that will work and the water won't back up.

Ms. Weber agreed with Mr. Schmelzer's concerns, but the DNR and other regulatory bodies are doing their due diligence to make sure those issues are addressed.

After further discussion, it was moved by Ms. Weber, seconded by Mr. Burk to issue a certificate of appropriateness as presented for building 420. Ms. Weber, along with Mr. Burk's second, amended the motion to include subject to all lighting is to be downward facing and that the vegetation planted along the south side of the building be preferably evergreen arborvitae type plants, and any changes are to be approved by the Chair. All ayes. Carried.

Mr. Hoernke added that this project will be continuing employment and not necessarily additional jobs. There is estimated 100,000 production hours, with up to 400,000 production hours. They would like to have building 420 completed by the end of March, 2021 and building 433 completed by the end of July, 2021.

Adjourn: Moved by Mr. Struck, seconded by Mr. Augustson to adjourn. All ayes. Carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Nault
Community Development Secretary