



# City of Colorado Springs

City Hall  
107 N. Nevada Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO  
80903

## Meeting Minutes - Draft Downtown Review Board

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Wednesday, May 8, 2019

8:30 AM

City Council Chambers

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**Rescheduled from May 1**

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

**Present:** 6 - Doug Hahn, Aaron Briggs, Stuart Coppedge, Kristen Heggem, Shawn Gullixson and Darsey Nicklasson

**Excused:** 3 - Tiffany Colvert, Randy Case and Jim Raughton

### **2. Approval of the Minutes**

**Minutes were postponed to the next Downtown Review Board meeting.**

#### **2.A. [DRB 19-267](#) February 6, 2019 Downtown Review Board Minutes**

Presenter:

Stuart Coppedge, Chair, Downtown Review Board

**Postponed**

#### **2.B. [DRB 18-0555](#) Minutes for the October 2, 2018 Downtown Review Board Meeting**

Presenter:

Stuart Coppedge, Chair, Downtown Review Board

**Postponed**

#### **2.C. [DRB 19-268](#) Minutes for the October 31, 2018 Downtown Review Board Meeting**

Presenter:

Stuart Coppedge, Chair, Downtown Review Board

**Postponed**

### **3. Communications**

Ryan Tefertiller - Urban Planning Manager

Mr. Tefertiller said there might not be any items for the June meeting, but to keep it on the calendar for a possible work session on code scrubs.

Board Members Darsey Nicklasson and Shawn Gullixson shared information from the Regional Leaders Trip in Pittsburgh.

#### **4. CONSENT CALENDAR - None**

**These items will be acted upon as a whole, unless a specific item is called for discussion by a Commissioner/Board Member or a citizen wishing to address the Commission or Board. (Any items called up for separate consideration shall be acted upon following the Consent Vote.)**

#### **5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None**

#### **6. NEW BUSINESS CALENDAR**

- 6.A. [CPC NV 19-00037](#) A warrant allowing signage that exceeds code requirements. The site is zoned FBZ-CEN CU (Form-Based Zone, Conditional Use), and consists of 9,500 square feet and is located at 15 North Nevada Avenue.

(Quasi-Judicial)

Presenter:

Matthew Fitzsimmons, Planner II, Planning & Community Development

**Staff presentation:**

**Matthew Fitzsimmons** presented a PowerPoint with the scope and intent of the project.

- Allow a sign that is 169% of size allowed by city sign standards
  - City Sign Standards
    - 1.5 square feet per 1 linear foot (50 feet wide)
    - 75 square feet
      - 25 square feet lettering
      - 50 square feet logo
  - Applicant's Proposed sign
    - 2.54 square feet per 1 linear foot
    - 169% of City Code
    - 127 square feet
      - 25 square feet lettering
      - 102 square feet logo
  - City Sign Standard + Administrative Relief
    - 86.5 square feet
    - 115% of City Code
      - 25 square feet lettering
      - 61.5 square feet logo

**Applicant Presentation:**

**Ryan Lloyd**, Echo Architecture

Mr. Lloyd explained the background of the building and how they came to the final sign design and consider it an architectural feature, which is encouraged in the FBZ.

Board Member Coppedge asked how far the sign extended from the face of the building. Mr. Lloyd said it was about eight inches from the face of the building.

Mr. Lloyd went on to show in his presentation there were several signs downtown that were not in compliance with the current code only to show that they enhance the downtown fabrics.

Board Member Heggem asked how they came to the decision to use wood for the sign. Mr. Lloyd said the decision was made based on available materials, costs, and attachment to the building. The sign is being built out of reclaimed barn wood that has already been weathered for 80 to 100 years.

**Jim Smith**, owner of Mountain Chalet, shared the history of Mountain Chalet and why they decided to move the store to Nevada Avenue.

**Kurt Schmitt**, City Sign Specialist

Mr. Schmitt gave a presentation on how the sign measurements are calculated and shared several different examples and designs.

**Questions of Staff:**

Board Member **Coppedge** asked Mr. Fitzsimmons if the logo had been incorporated into a rebuilt parapet would that be considered a building feature or a sign.

- Mr. Fitzsimmons said it would still be a sign because it is the logo

Board Member **Nicklasson** asked about lighting on the sign, and Mr. Schmitt said he believed they were gooseneck lighting.

Board Member **Nicklasson** asked Mr. Tefertiller about the parking lot to the south of the building and if it was required to be built on.

- Mr. Tefertiller explained a few years ago, the property owner did come through the Downtown Review Board to gain approval of an interim use development plan in order to allow the creation of a commercial surface parking lot. The approval had a lifespan of four years after it was issued. Those four years have expired and the owner was looking to redevelop on the property

Board Member **Heggem** wanted clarification on what distinguished an architectural feature versus a piece of art versus a logo or a sign.

- Mr. Schmitt explained that if it is part of the logo, it is part of the sign.

Board Member Heggem asked why the sign did not meet the exceptional criteria cited.

- Mr. Tefertiller said that criteria was the most subjective of the criteria. It specifically asks, is it reasonable due to the project's exceptional civic or environmental design.
- Mr. Tefertiller also explained the board can come to the conclusion that the sign is in substantial compliance and the decision does not necessarily need to meet all five criteria perfectly.

**Supporters:**

Alex Armani-Munn with Downtown Partnership said they submitted a letter of support for the 15% relief. The Downtown Partnership brought the design to the DDA board for a building enhancement grant, which was approved. Mr. Armani-Munn said what they were most supportive of was the process to determine a compromise that works for both the applicant as well as staff. Mr. Armani-Munn said if the board decided to grant signage in excess of 115%, the Downtown Partnership would support that.

**Opponents:**

None.

**Rebuttal:**

None

**DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF Downtown Review Board:**

**Board Member Gullixson** said he could certainly see the argument for being an architectural component of the building and that he is very much a proponent of creating some unique character within our infrastructure downtown on our buildings. Board Member Gullixson believed the design was great but said there was a need to operate within the code and being consistent. Board Member Gullixson said it is an interesting decision between whether or not it's a part of the logo or an architectural feature.

**Board Member Nicklasson** appreciated the design and intent of the signage, and that a fair amount of signage is applicable for the location, as well as for the amount of traffic on Nevada Avenue. Design wise, Board Member Nicklasson believed the slightly larger size actually fits the building better architecturally.

**Board Member Heggem** said she appreciated this was a locally owned business and believed this kind of business could benefit from a bigger sign with tourist coming to town and not knowing a local business. Board Member

Heggem believed the application was in substantial compliance and in favor of the project.

**Board Member Coppedge** referred to the City Rock sign and how the whole vertical piece of the old movie theater operates as their sign. It tells exactly what City Rock does as a climbing facility with City Rock at the top vertical face. Even though technically, the vertical face is clearly a building feature and was there long before City Rock, the whole thing operates as a sign and it is much taller than the project building. Board Member Coppedge believed the application meets the substantial conformance criteria and was not worried about setting a precedent since most development in the future will probably be at least five stories.

**Board Member Briggs** said there were plenty of mitigating factors that prevent this from getting treated like a precedent city wide or even downtown. The speed of travel on the road and the width of the road have a big impact on the scale of that sign. In context of the buildings, Board Member Briggs agreed City Rock effectively has the benefit of having a big architectural feature that makes their sign punch a lot above its weight. The design is also something to be considered that if it were 169 square feet of big orange block letters, or something kind of gaudy and visually obtrusive, then it would be a different story. Where the signage principles talk about allowing visually pleasing signs that are harmonious in their placement and sign dimension and scale respecting the size and massing of the building and blocks, Board Member Briggs did not feel the proposed sign conflicts with those principles. Board Member Briggs said he understood why staff kept it at 115%, but as a board, there is a little more subjective leeway than staff. Board Member Briggs said he would vote to approve the project.

**Board Member Hahn** said the compliant sign gets lost in the façade as it is awkwardly proportioned and would need some kind of major architectural element to disrupt the current view. Board Member Hahn said he supports the 127 square feet and even supported the original proposal that was much larger and bolder that disrupted the existing façade character. Board Member Hahn felt the mountain and moon worked as an architectural element and was in support of the project, and would also be in support of the original proposal because the building needs something overall to improve its character.

Board Member Briggs made the motion to approve the warrant at the 169% of City Code.

**Motion by Briggs, seconded by Hahn, to approve the warrant for the proposed**

**Mountain Chalet sign, at 169% of standard allocation, based upon the finding that the sign proposal does comply with the Form-Based Code's Warrant review criteria in the Form-Based Code Section 5.4.3.**

**The motion passed by a vote of 6:0:3**

**Aye:** 6 - Hahn, Briggs, Coppedge, Heggem, Gullixson and Nicklasson

**Absent:** 3 - Colvert, Case and Raughton

## **7. Adjourn**