

MINUTES

MEETING LANCASTER ARCHITECTURAL AND DESIGN COMMISSION

August 14, 2009

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Cook called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

April Bartlett led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioners Donlon, Hall, and Wiley, and Chairperson Cook.
Commissioner Buchanan arrived at 4:44 p.m.

ABSENT: Commissioner Stallworth

Also present were the following: Silvia Donovan (Principal Planner), Chris Aune (Assistant Planner), and Shirley Corder (Recording Secretary).

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes from the Regular Meeting of July 31, 2009 were approved with modification.

Commissioner Hall stated that point No. 2 under Agenda Item No. 3 should be rewritten. It was moved by Commissioner Hall and seconded by Commissioner Wiley to approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of July 31, 2009 as amended.

AYES: Commissioners Donlon, Hall, and Wiley, and Chairperson Cook.
NOES: None.
ABSTAIN: None.
ABSENT: Commissioners Buchanan and Stallworth

Chairperson Cook informed the Commissioners that Commissioner Buchanan would be joining the meeting late. The Commissioners agreed that the Minutes should reflect his time of arrival. Commissioner Buchanan joined the meeting at 4:44 p.m.

Chairperson Cook introduced newly appointed Commissioner April Bartlett who replaced Commissioner Harvey. Chairperson Cook indicated that Commissioner Harvey had been appointed to the Planning Commission. Commissioner Bartlett stated that she and her husband owned a bicycle shop and silk-screening business in town. She indicated that she always had a desire to get involved with City projects.

Principal Planner Silvia Donovan, Assistant Planner, Chris Aune and Recording Secretary Shirley Corder introduced themselves as members of staff for the City of Lancaster. Mrs. Donovan informed Commissioner Bartlett that staff would prepare materials for her which summarized the progress of the Committee to date. Mrs. Donovan stated that the City had hired a consultant with the firm of Hogle-Ireland to assist with the Design Guidelines Procedures. Once the consultant compiled the Committee's recommendations, the Design Guidelines will be distributed to staff again for further review.

Mrs. Donovan stated that Mayor Parris is requesting articulation on four sides of the building, 360° architecture, this type of architecture will drastically change the look of the City. In conjunction with the new design guidelines City ordinances will need modification. Basically, the purpose of this Committee is to establish design guidelines that will beautify the City.

Mrs. Donovan stated that several design standards from various cities were reviewed. Most standards require 360° architecture which involve designing buildings that include equal architectural treatment on all sides of the building. The guidelines will refer to the General Plan Policies that call for the implementation of these guidelines.

Chairperson Cook stated that the Commissioners have attended field trips to review various architectural styles. That experience clarified what this Committee is trying to accomplish. She further indicated that the building downturn has given the Committee time to be diligent in the guidelines it produces for future development. Chairperson Cook stated that there were examples of structures in town which displayed faux trimmed windows, pop out windows and balconies. These features are desirable because they add dimension to buildings. It was noted that houses backing up on the intersection of 30th West and Lancaster Boulevard shows stark architectural contrast where the homes on north side of the street displays architecture treatment facing the street but the south side does not.

Mrs. Donovan stated that once the Design Guidelines have staff's and the Committee's final approval, they will be presented to City Council December 9, 2009. Chairperson Cook stated that Commissioner Buchanan's architectural background has been invaluable to the Committee's task of drafting these guidelines.

Chairperson Cook and Mrs. Donovan stated that these meetings were open to the public and speakers are allowed to share their ideas and opinions.

CONTINUED ITEM**2. REVIEW AND DISCUSS THE SURVEY**

Mrs. Donovan stated that the Visual Preference Survey would be sent out via e-mail for individuals to choose their architectural preferences. Christopher Aune, Assistant Planner for the Planning Department, presented a PowerPoint presentation showing the revised Visual Preference Survey with the architectural items that survey takers would mark their preference. Preference selections for residential architecture would include: garage placement, quality of residential architecture, quality of multi-family residential, drought tolerant landscaping, paseos/trails, neighborhood entryways, sidewalks, public gathering spaces, parking lot screening methods, medians, commercial signage, perimeter walls, parking structures, and mixed used buildings.

Commissioner Bartlett asked if architectural colors were going to be regulated. She stated that in Scottsdale they have specified colors that must be maintained. Mr. Aune stated that if a homeowner did not live in a homeowners association and wanted to repaint their house he did not believe colors could be regulated by the municipal code as Chairperson Cook suggested. Mrs. Donovan indicated that she would research this item further and report back to the Committee.

Mr. Aune showed slides taken from various locations depicting desired architectural features and those that were undesirable. Chairperson Cook commented that the "big box look" or "cookie cutter" neighborhoods are not wanted.

Mrs. Donovan stated that for residential front yards, xeriscape landscaping is preferred and no more than 50% of the front yard would be allowed to be covered in concrete. The idea is to prevent the front yard from becoming a parking lot. Commissioner Donlon stated that we are trying to avoid the "concrete jungle" look.

During the discussion members concurred that it was aesthetically pleasing to have screened parking lots, wide medians with a combination of landscaping and pavers and sidewalks which are buffered from the street by a landscape planter because they are safer and more walkable.

Commissioner Hall suggested breaking the 100 questions up into 4 different sections. This would allow respondents to come back to the sections at a later time. Commissioner Cook asked about the cost of dividing the survey into sections. Mrs. Donovan stated that cost would be minimal as the survey was being sent via e-mail. However, time constraints would prevent further revisions.

Commissioner Bartlett asked if we had a need for many parking structures. Mr. Aune stated that presently we do not have parking structures; but, it is important to have in place for the future. The Commissioners asked if the City's logo and branding ideas would be incorporated into the survey. Mr. Aune stated that the City's logo is incorporated into the survey.

Chairperson Cook inquired about the process a new project goes through. Mrs. Donovan explained the step by step process and indicated that a project for a subdivision takes four to six months. Staff will provide an outline of the process at the next meeting. Commissioner Buchanan stated that if someone brings in a project it is the developer's responsibility to demonstrate to the Planning Department that the design guidelines have been met. Mrs. Donovan stated that the Committee has the right to deny projects that are not in compliance with the Design Guidelines; but, the Developer could appeal this denial with the City Council.

Mrs. Donovan explained that the process for design guidelines would be set forth before applicants submitted their projects.

Due to the beginning of the school year and the Antelope Valley Fair the Commissioners decided to forego the August 28, 2009 meeting and meet again on September 11, 2009. Mrs. Donovan also stated that it would be necessary to wait on information from the Consultant before meeting again.


Chairperson Cook stated that Cassandra Harvey had been assigned to the Planning Commission. Therefore, nominations would be taken to vote in a new Vice-Chair. This will be done at the September 11, 2009 meeting.

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR – NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS

None.

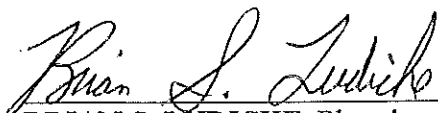
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 p.m. to Friday, September 11, 2009, at 4:00 p.m., at the Large Parks, Recreation & Arts Conference Room, Lancaster City Hall.



DIANA COOK, Chairperson
Lancaster Architectural and Design Commission

ATTEST:



BRIAN S. LUDICKE, Planning Director
City of Lancaster