



Summary of Actions
Mount Rainier Mixed-Use Town Center Design Review Committee
March 13, 2019

APPROVED April 10, 2019

The Mount Rainier Mixed-Use Town Center (MUTC) Design Review Committee held its regularly scheduled hearing on March 13, 2019 at the Gateway Media Arts Lab Gallery, 3311 Rhode Island Avenue, Mount Rainier, MD 20712.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bliss called the meeting to order at 7:25 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Robin Bliss, Brent Bolin, Justin Bost, Nathan Burtch, Nathan Cederoth, Mario Cisneros, Anthony Lee

Committee Members Absent: None

Staff Present: **M-NCPPC**
Daniel Sams, Mount Rainier MUTC Staff Liaison

CITY OF MOUNT RAINIER
Ronald Hopkins, Economic Development Director

B. INFORMATIONAL SESSION

1. Memorial Park, 3300 block Rhode Island Avenue –Jack Sullivan– preliminary designs

Mr. Jack Sullivan, PLA, FAAR, FASLA, Associate Professor in the Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture at the University of Maryland presented his students' work-in-progress project for a redesign of Memorial Park and the triangular parcel between Rhode Island Avenue and Perry Street (3308-3310 Rhode Island Avenue). He noted that Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) had viewed the project and had shown support [Rhode Island Avenue is a state highway]. He further noted that many stormwater runoff issues could be addressed as part of the redesign. The designs imagined an

extension of the sidewalk area with plantings at 33rd Street and Rhode Island Avenue, a splash park, a stage, and area for nature play with seating, and a diaper pattern laid in Perry Street, which was envisioned as a “shared street.” He noted the sidewalks are only four feet wide and should be widened. A traffic light was also proposed; however, SHA has told them there is not enough pedestrian traffic yet to warrant one. The students proposed a transitional element between 3308 and 3310 Rhode Island Avenue against the buildings that could comprise shallow steps and/or a water feature (there is not enough room for a handicapped-accessible ramp), perhaps with a sponsor name.

Professor Sullivan drew the audience’s attention to the fact that the “patio” built by the Redevelopment Authority in front of 3308 Rhode Island Avenue had enough of a [north-south] slope that dining *all’aperto* could be difficult and may require a deck of some sort to permit furniture placement. Sullivan noted that the Perry Street roadbed is very high and sheds stormwater and debris onto the sidewalk. They are considering proposing scraping down the paving and narrowing the road with a planting area where it meets 33rd Street. The diaper pattern in the road would conceal a drainage system. Another aspect of the preliminary proposal would have a stationary streetcar, perhaps for food vending, near the circle. Faux “tracks” would be laid in the sidewalk leading to it.

A discussion ensued about cycle tracks and whether they would be worth it for only a block or two.

The committee responded positively to many of the ideas and built on them with ideas of their own based on their knowledge of the community’s history and planning principles.

A discussion ensued about the patio at 3308 Rhode Island Avenue, and if what was built by the Redevelopment Authority was fully permitted (or if such permits were required of a county agency) and/or if the paved area impinged on city property.

Committee: Mr. Bolin noted that the committee had had a voice in the process when reviewing the previous two applications, acknowledging that although the committee makes recommendations to the Planning Board or [M-NCPPC] planning director on permit applicants, it also can act in an advisory capacity to the Mount Rainier City Council. He noted that all the additional impervious surfaces [concrete] are blindingly white and cause stormwater management problems on city property. The question was raised if the committee should ask for an investigation to see if as built the concrete area met all applicable codes and ordinances.

Staff: Mr. Hopkins noted the community is *very* eager to see the Pennyroyale Station restaurant open. Other members of the community noted that the opening had been delayed due to problems installing their required grease traps: they were backing up with stormwater.

Committee: Dr. Burtch asked if there was definitive proof that the “patio” is located in the right-of-way, or if this was conjecture. He questioned if it was within the committee’s purview to pursue such issues.

Committee: Chair Bliss offered that if the revitalization of Memorial Park was realized, it could remedy any permitting or stormwater problems.

Public: Mr. Jimmy Tarlau, citizen, former Maryland State Delegate and former Mount Rainier City Councilmember noted that he hoped to continue to act as a liaison between the city administration and small businesses to solve potential problems such as this.

The committee asked Mr. Hopkins to investigate if the patio was constructed to meet applicable codes, and if something needs to be corrected if this could be anticipated in any future undertakings at Memorial Park. Mr. Hopkins agreed.

C. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

1. Code Enforcement Issues

The committee agreed the first step in enforcing signage that meets the requirements and spirit of the development plan was to identify a list of properties that may have potential violations, so that these might be pursued by city and county staff. To this end they agreed to meet one hour before the next meeting, 6 P.M., in front of City Hall, and make a field visit/walking tour together.

D. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARIES

1. June 13, 2018 Meeting Summary

Motion: Mr. Lee moved to approve the summary as submitted.

Second: Mr. Bolin seconded the motion.

The motion passed in a vote of 4-0-3 (Mr. Bost, Mr. Burtch, and Mr. Cisneros abstaining.)

2. February 13, 2019 Meeting Summary

Motion: Mr. Burtch moved to approve the summary as submitted.

Second: Mr. Lee seconded the motion.

The motion passed in a vote of 7-0.

E. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business Chair Bliss asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Mr. Lee moved to adjourn the meeting.

Second: Mr. Cederoth seconded the motion.

The motion passed in a vote of 7-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Submitted by Daniel Sams, Staff Liaison

