
**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN
DESIGN REVIEW & PRESERVATION BOARD**

MINUTES

11-July-01

Present

J. BIANCO, CHAIRMAN
B. KRONENBERGER
P. EVANS
J. FORTUNA
N. STAMLER

Absent

D. BROWN
N. GOFF
B. PLUMLEY

Also Present

M. JOHNSON
J. WAYCOTT
J. KRAUSS
D. OLSON
P. PATTON
D. MILLER

The meeting commenced at 5:15 PM.

M. Johnson reported to the Board that the proposed letter from the Board concerning the proposed Cell Tower in Portland had been revised and sent out.

Next, M. Johnson briefed the Board on the Danforth Pewter Shop issue. S. Hill and M. Teter appear to be losing ground in their effort to acquire the Danforth Pewter Shop from its current owners. M. Johnson informed the Board that he was doing a title search on the property and, so far, knew only that the current owners received the property from the City of Middletown for a sum of \$10. The owners are asking a price in excess of \$80,000 from S. Hill and M. Teter.

J. Waycott, of Arnco Signs, presented designs for a new Mazda sign for Town & Country Auto Sales, Inc. The plan is to simply remove an existing sign and replace with a double-pylon sign with the new Mazda logo.

P. Evans moved to approve the sign as proposed. J. Fortuna seconded.
The sign was approved unanimously.

Next, Wesleyan University presented their plans for a connecting lobby between their Chapel and Theatre buildings on College Row, thereby providing barrier-free access to all levels of both buildings and connecting the two buildings. P. Patton presented an overview of the project and introduced their architectural consultant, D. Olson, who then proceeded to go through the plans in detail.

Following the presentation, the Board voiced many questions and concerns, engaging the University team in a Q & A session lasting for over an hour.

Concerns focused on the architectural approach taken to avoid obstructing the view between buildings.

The plans, as presented, called for the connecting lobby to be made of transparent glass, with stairs and an elevator shaft at the right, rear section of the structure.

J. Bianco voiced a concern that the structure would disrupt the rhythm of voids and solids and block the view between the, presently, discrete blocks of building.

D. Olson responded that they were trying to accomplish a design whereby the elevator would also serve the chapel.

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J. Bianco pointed out that the structure could wrap around the building to the rear, installing the elevator in the vicinity of the organ, in stead.

D. Olson responded that the elevator's entry at that point would be difficult given the constraints on interior space and connections to and fro.

J. Bianco voiced further concerns re: the vertical, fan-shaped posts in the structure. As they, too, would be solid, they would further obstruct the existing view corridor between the two buildings.

D. Olson responded that the point was understood. They, too, were aiming for a "porch-feel," and had attempted to maximize the light and space.

J. Bianco, returning to the issue of the elevator shaft, stated that the building's rear facade was not as aesthetically important as the front one, and that an extrusion there which allowed for the elevator shaft, could very well be worthwhile.

P. Patton stated that the rear facades of the College Row buildings are increasing in their significance in the context of the University's overall plan for the campus, as the field that these facades face is becoming a focal point for campus activity. Furthermore, the cost implications of such a proposal were outside Wesleyan's budget for the project.

P. Evans asked what the roofs would be made of.

D. Olson and P. Patton responded that they would be made of Pennsylvania Slate and that, at present, some of the slate on the Theatre building was Welsh slate.

J. Bianco asked the Wesleyan team if, perhaps, a 2-stop elevator might be preferable, and address some of the problems under discussion.

D. Olson responded that the current design made all three floors accessible with one elevator.

Here, the meeting paused, as it seemed to be headed for an impasse.

B. Kronenberger said that he liked the plan and could tell the team had spend a lot of time on it. Ideally, there would be no elevator, but that was clearly not an option. However, part of the problem seemed to be that the Board needs to see more than just their final design.

J. Fortuna noted that the elevator stood out and would be better placed in or on the building (rather than in the new structure).

N. Stamler said that she thought it a sensitive, considerate design.

P. Evans made a motion to approve the design, contingent upon (1) the team addressing the issue of making the design lighter, especially with respect to the vertical, fan-shaped posts, and (2) the team returning to the Board for another review.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Munro W. Johnson
Community Development Specialist