

City of Takoma Park -- Façade Advisory Board
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2016

The City of Takoma Park Façade Advisory Board met on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park Maryland.

Members Present: William Fischer, Lucy Moore, Lorraine Pearsall,
Members Absent: Darsie Cahall, Jim DiLuigi, Anne Fothergill, Eric Sepler, Rick Leonard
Staff Present: Roz Grigsby
Visitors: Luke Vawter, Susan Robb, Django Broer-Hellermann

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Project Review – Westmoreland signage, Luke Vawter

Luke Vawter presented a mock-up of signage for the corner of the wall with mosaics on Westmoreland, intended to highlight the businesses that set back and above the street level: House of Musical Traditions, Roda Movements, Takoma Radio, Airshow Mastering and Allyworld. The design is of five rectangular mosaic signs, each one 3 foot wide by 1.5 foot tall, with an arrow sign pointing in the direction of the shops which will be about 3.5 feet tall and 2 feet wide. The materials will be the same as the other mosaics were on the Westmoreland wall -- exterior cement board and exterior adhesive and grout. They will be attached with Tap Con screws that are rust proof and removable, so signs could be changed individually if the businesses change. The mosaics will all be exterior grade.

The Board had concerns about the proportion of the wall covered by the signage, by the mix of signage and public art, and by the overall appearance. Because Board members had not had much time to review the design, they asked staff to circulate the most recent design and committed to providing feedback to the applicant with a week.

3. Approval of minutes of previous meeting minutes

The board reviewed and approved the minutes from meetings on July 12, August 4, September 13 and November 3 with two corrections on the November 3 minutes: the inclusion of language that the building at 7000 Carroll is iconic in Takoma Park, and correction of the meeting date.

4. Approval of 2017 FAB Meeting Dates

The board reviewed and approved the proposed meeting schedule for 2017.

5. Signage at the Takoma Junction

The Board followed up on the discussion at the September 13 Board meeting regarding signage of opaque, vinyl window decals covering the entire glass in several businesses at the Takoma Junction. Pearsall reported on her outreach efforts to Bikram Yoga, the Takoma Park Animal Clinic, and the Takoma Postal and Business Center about signage, indicating that the conversations were difficult to arrange and she met with resistance. She suggested the Board go ahead with the plan to send the letter Moore had drafted to businesses in the historic district, outlining the requirements for signage.

Susan Robb reported that the vinyl sign at the Takoma Park Animal Clinic had been removed and it appeared they were ordering blinds for their front windows. The Takoma Business and Postal Center had cleaned up many of their signs as well. The Bikram Yoga vinyl sign had been altered with a cut-out with visibility into the space, but the change isn't sufficient.

The Board agreed to review the letter through email and propose edits in the next week or two and then staff will send it out.

6. City Code Review

The Board discussed the confusion of guidelines and information for historic preservation: the Approved and Adopted Amendments to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation: Takoma Park Historic District; the City code; the City-developed Design Guidelines; the Montgomery County code. Questions were posed about the Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation which references dated City ordinances and details; how code enforcement works regarding historic preservation in the City and the County; how the County permitting process could be reformed to emphasize the historic preservation requirements more clearly. The Board will discuss the intersection of the various guiding documents again at a future FAB meeting. Moore requested that Scott Whipple, Montgomery County Historic Preservation Office, be invited to attend a meeting to help clarify what documents the County uses in reviewing HAWPs.

The Board added consideration for changing the permitting process and the by-laws to the January meeting.

7. Adjourn

A motion was made, seconded and passed to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted:

Approved:

Rosalind Grigsby, staff

William Fischer, Chair