

**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Design Review Board  
A Regular Meeting via Teleconference**

**Monday, March 8, 2021 at 12:30 PM**

City Manager's Conference Room  
8130 Allison Avenue, La Mesa, CA

**Approved March 22, 2021**

This meeting was conducted utilizing teleconferencing and electronic means consistent with State of California Executive Order N-29-20 dated March 17, 2020, regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Call to Order

Board member Langdon called a regular meeting of the Design Review Board to order at 12:30 p.m. in the City Manager's Conference Room at 8130 Allison Avenue, La Mesa, California.

2. Attendance

Members Attending: Board members, Kinnard, Kusiak, Langdon, Lorenz, and Robinson.

Absent: None.

Visitors:

Representing Project No. 2020-16

- Russ Haley/Rich Gustafson (CityMark Communities LLC)
- Eric Naslund/Charity Dunphy (Studio E Architects)
- Zeek Magallanes (McCullough Landscape Architecture)
- Tyler Lawson (Pasco Laret Suiter & Associates)
- John Keating (Linscott, Law & Greenspan Engineers)
- Angela Merrill/Mandy Miller (Boretto Merrill Consulting)

Representing Project No. 2021-05 (Union Bank)

- Nicole Williams

3. Deletions from the Agenda – None.

4. Urgent Additions to the Agenda/Additions to the Next Agenda – None.

5. Information Items – None.

6. Hearings – None.

7. Business

7a. Project No. 2020-16 (CityMark Communities LLC) – Consideration of design review for a 49-unit mixed-use apartment development at 5220 Wilson Street in the RB-D-MU (Residential Business / Urban Design Overlay / Mixed Use Overlay) zone

The applicant proposes to demolish an existing 5,560 square-foot clubhouse building and parking lot to redevelop the site with a 49-unit mixed-use apartment building. The project includes 1,346 square feet of ground-floor commercial retail space.

The project qualifies as a 35% density bonus project for 11%, or 4 dwelling units, restricted as very-low income affordable. The applicant has requested 5 waivers which include open space, building height, parking standards, landscaping, and pedestrian realm projections.

The State Density Bonus allows for 1 space per one bedroom and 2 spaces per two and three bedroom units. Seventy-four parking spaces are allowed for this project. The project is exempt from environmental review in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15332, which exempts projects characterized as in-fill development.

Mr. Haley of CitiMark made a brief presentation, after which the entire project team was available to answer questions.

#### Public Comments:

##### Those in opposition

- Max Gresoro - Resident
- Karen Skullerud - Resident
- Denise Stephens - Resident
- Pastor Gleason Snashall & Deaconess Doris Snashall–St. Luke’s Lutheran Church
- Mike Calandra – Member of La Mesa Mobility Commission
- Jamie Jenkins – Resident
- Group of Residents: Brianne Bugbee, Gail Bugbee, Georgia Noland, John Moscrop, Cynthia Munoz-Flores Moscrop, Val Calandra, Celia Ortiz, James Colt, Terra Colt, Joe Espinosa, Gabby Espinosa, Nate Domingo, Vanessa Domingo, Joe Turpin, Melissa Turpin, Matthew Jenkins, Jamie Jenkins, Israel Silguero, Nina Silguero
- Jennifer Killion - Resident
- St. Luke’s Lutheran Church
- Betty Lou Murray and Denise Stephens – Members of St. Luke’s Lutheran Church
- Dale Knippelmeyer - Resident
- Patti Boekamp – Member of St. Luke’s Lutheran Church
- Terra Colt – Resident
- J. Greg – Resident
- Raymond Volker – Headmaster, Warren Walker School
- Judy Kirk – Vice President, Helix Charter High School Foundation
- Felix Tinkov – Law Offices of Felix Tinkov
- Randy Engel - Resident

The Board members discussed the project. As a point of clarification, Chairman Langdon stated that the Design Review Board is not tasked with Density Bonus Waivers. That responsibility falls to the Planning Department.

Chairman Langdon liked the way the building engages the corner. He would like the corner to be something that is a focal point as he was concerned about open space. He also expressed concern over the public realm improvements on Grossmont Boulevard. He felt that they don’t comply with the prescription of public improvements in the Mixed Use Overlay Zone. Street trees are to be located in street grates in the first five feet behind curb. That’s also considered the furniture zone. The next five feet are to be designated as a pedestrian walkway. As presented, there would not be a continuous pedestrian walkway. Chairman Langdon asked that a condition be added stipulating that the guidelines for the Mixed Use Overlay Zone be adhered to.

Mr. Kusiak clarified that when looking at a project’s waivers and incentives, the DRB is tasked with reviewing how those designs are expressed. With respect to the land use implications, those are things that the project is entitled to. As the Design Review Board goes through their work, it can work on how those things are presented, but any

conditions, comments or revision changes discussed cannot push against the waivers or incentives that are provided to them under the Density Bonus Law. The DRB is restricted to a design purview and confirming that it conforms to the requirements of the Urban Design Program and the Mixed Use Urban Design Overlay Program.

Regarding the concerns expressed during the public comments, this is not a hearing. Public hearings require public notice, mailing and publication. This is a meeting of a board of the City that requires a posting 72 hours prior to the meeting. That was done. The agenda was posted outside City Hall and also on the City's website. This is the way notice has always been processed by the City.

Board member Lorenz asked Mr. Naslund if, because the driveway on Grossmont Boulevard will not be available for use by residents, it will be for emergency vehicles only. Mr. Naslund stated that the driveway use will be limited to those spaces closest to Grossmont Boulevard. There will be fixed screening in place beyond those spaces to prevent drive through.

Board member Robinson expressed concern regarding parking and the public realm.

Mr. Kusiak asked Mr. Naslund to address Chairman Langdon's concern regarding the placement of the trees. Mr. Naslund stated that the reason that tree grates were not included is because of the depth of the sidewalk. He stated that the sidewalk as presented is a continuation of the existing sidewalk in front of the real estate office and the clinic. They wanted to enhance the pedestrian experience and decided that additional trees on the property side would support that concept.

Chairman Langdon stated that, while he appreciated the intent, he would be asking that a condition of approval be added to require that the public realm requirements be designed and provided as they're prescribed in the Mixed Use Overlay Zone. Mr. Kusiak agreed with Chairman Langdon as the area should be where the transition to the Mixed Use Overlay occurs as opposed to waiting until you cross the block. Chairman Langdon added that, if there is a traffic study that proves that the condition would inhibit drivers or create a hazard that he would defer to the traffic study.

Chairman Langdon made a motion to approve Project No. 2020-16 with the following conditions added:

1. The public realm improvements along Grossmont Boulevard shall be provided with non-contiguous sidewalk as described and prescribed in the Design Guidelines for the Mixed Use Overlay Zone.
2. The applicant is encouraged to secure a retail tenant that will activate and engage the pedestrian realm in a way that was depicted in the rendering provided to the Board.

The motion was seconded by Board member Robinson. Motion carried as follows

Aye:	Robinson, Lorenz, Langdon, Kusiak, Kinnard
Nay:	None.
Absent:	None.
Abstain:	None.

- 7b. Project No. 2021-05 (Union Bank) – Consideration of design review for a retail bank building at 4771 Spring Street in the CD-D (Downtown Commercial / Urban Design Overlay) zone

Ms. Kinnard presented the staff report.

Union Bank proposed a redevelopment of the westerly portion of their 1.58-acre site with a single-story, 4,864 square-foot commercial bank building, similar in size to the former

building. Ms. Kinnard noted that the easterly half of the property is not included in the scope of the project. The new building is roughly located in the same place as the old building, however it will be closer to the street to enhance pedestrian area.

Parking will be located to the side and the rear. The drive-thru will not be replaced as it is not allowed in the Downtown Village Specific Plan area because it is a walkable neighborhood.

The project was reviewed and approved by the Development Advisory Board.

The DRB members discussed the project.

Chairman Langdon appreciated the fact that the building will be more engaged in the public right-of-way.

Board member Robinson appreciated that they were replacing the building. He also appreciated that public engagement is a priority.

Board member Lorenz felt the design was wonderful. He expressed an interest in adding some color to the grey tones submitted. Ms. Williams explained that Union Bank has a standard color scheme. Chairman Langdon felt that using sand colored blocks on the block wall might soften the colors. Ms. Williams said she would be providing an actual color board soon.

Chairman Langdon made a motion to approve Project No. 2021-05 with staff review of the physical color board to ensure the physical examples are comparable to the digital samples provided. The motion was seconded by Board member Lorenz. Motion carried as follows:

Aye:	Robinson, Lorenz, Langdon, Kusiak, Kinnard
Nay:	None.
Absent:	None.
Abstain:	None.

7c. Approval of the August 24, 2020 minutes

Chairman Langdon made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Board member Robinson seconded the motion. Motion carried as follows:

Aye:	Robinson, Lorenz, Langdon, Kusiak, Kinnard.
Nay:	None.
Absent:	None.
Abstain:	None.

8. Public Discussion and Audience Participation – None.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cheryl Davis  
Administrative Coordinator