

Historic Preservation Commission Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date	Staff Contact	
12/20/2011	JACKIE LYNCH	
Subject:		
DRC2011-00023: Consideration of a new 8,000 square foot building on the northwest corner of 11 th Street and Harris Avenue in the Fairhaven Design Review District		
Attachments:		
Staff Report		
Exhibit A	Applicant's Narrative and Site, Floor and Elevation Plans	
Exhibit B	September 27, 2011 HPC Meeting Minutes	
Exhibit C	Public Comments	
Exhibit D	Harris and Private Pathway Map	
Exhibit E	Fairhaven Design Review Code	
Exhibit F	Decision Agenda	
Category		Legislative or Quasi-judicial
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Quasi-judicial	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Information Only	
<input type="checkbox"/> Work Session		
<input type="checkbox"/> Briefing		
Clearances	Initials	Date
Kurt Nabbeled, Senior Planner	<i>Kont</i>	12-12-11
Jackie Lynch, Planner	<i>JL</i>	12/12/11
Previous Board Meeting or Actions:		
None		
Recommended Action:		
The Historic Preservation Commission should conduct a Fairhaven Design Review Meeting and provide recommendations to the Director.		

1 **Staff Report #1**

2 **Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) – Design Review Meeting**

3 **Staff Analysis**

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6 **File No.:** DRC2011-00030
7 **Project Name, Address:** Rocket Donuts; 1212 11th Street
8 **Neighborhood Name, Area #:** Fairhaven Neighborhood, Area 2B
9 **Zoning:** Commercial, Neighborhood
10 **Applicant:** Jeff McClure, 1223 Railroad Avenue, Bellingham, WA 360-738-
11 0448
12 **Project Planner:** Jackie Lynch, Planner
13 **Meeting Date & Place:** **7:00 PM, December 20, 2011**
14 City Council Chambers, City Hall
15 210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, WA 98225
16 **Applicant's Narrative:** **Exhibit A**

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19 **A. GOALS OF THE MEETING**

20
21 The applicant has applied for formal Fairhaven Design Review. The HPC should provide
22 specific recommendations to the Director for their Design Review Permit. The HPC should
23 limit its review of the project to only Fairhaven Design Review Criteria.

24
25 This proposal is subject to the applicable requirements contained in the Bellingham Municipal
26 Code (BMC), the International Building Code, and Fire Codes. It is the responsibility of the
27 proponent to ensure compliance with the various provisions contained in these codes.

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30 **B. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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32 The proposal is for a new building on the northwest corner of 11th Street and Harris Avenue in
33 the Fairhaven Design Review District. This proposal would create an approximately 39' wide
34 and 93' long, 8,000 square foot building with an approximately 5' setback off the site's
35 westerly property line to continue a pedestrian walkway. The building would have a basement
36 and appear to be two stories toward the east. Then, it would step down toward the west and
37 end as a one-story building, with roof deck, above the pedestrian walkway.

38
39 The HPC conducted a preliminary design review meeting on September 27, 2011 and made
40 comments to benefit the applicant as they finalized the design of this building. The HPC's
41 comments are included in this meeting's minutes, attached in **Exhibit B**. These comments
42 included:

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44 Integration of the one-story section with the rest of the building.

45 **Staff Comment:** The applicants have partially redesigned the one-story section to the west.

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Raise the building in height.

Staff Comment: The applicants have raised the building approximately two feet, from 32' above mean sidewalk elevation to approximately 34' above mean sidewalk elevation.

The chosen building material will work if it were mostly brick.

Staff Comment: The applicants have provided a color rendering and text that shows the easterly two-story section, and the west lower wall of the westerly one-story section, as brick.

The retaining wall should have texture and shape.

Staff Comment: The applicants have provided elevations showing the retaining walls along 11th to be plain. They have told staff that they are, at the time of this writing, considering wall colors. Staff would note that the HPC should not assume the landscaping next to this wall will be preserved because the sidewalk in this area is quite narrow.

The signs should be consistent with other buildings and conform to look like Fairhaven.

Staff Comment: The proposed signage size and location is modest. Signs are proposed to be lit from the exterior. This is similar to other signs in Fairhaven.

The HPC discussed if the design should be simpler. The applicant said that they would take a look at simplifying the design.

On November 21, 2011, the applicants submitted their formal Design Review Application **Exhibit A**. Additional information, conveyed directly from the applicant to staff and not contained in Exhibit A includes:

- The LED lighting in the tower could color-change, perhaps with the season.
- The applicants do not anticipate flashing or blinking lights.
- The retaining walls on Harris Avenue would vary from 1' 6" to 4' 6".
- The wall on the walkway leading to the Fairhaven Green would be approximately 3' 8 ½" tall. The height of this wall is based on floor elevations, the elevation of Harris Avenue, and providing grade-level entry to the A Lot of Flowers building segment.
- The white boxes on page A301 imbedded in the walkway wall are step lights.
- The brick of this wall, below A Lot of Flowers, would be the same as the brick on Fat Pie Pizza.
- The applicants will supply an openwork metal gate on the outside of the ramp down to the basement, off of the walkway. The location of this gate was not determined at the time of this staff report.
- Although the 11th and Harris corner door is shown as a window in the elevations and floor plan, the applicants will be restoring it as a functional door and eliminating the Rocket Donuts door along 11th Street.
- They are considering more awnings on this building.
- The applicants hope to make this a LEED qualified ("Green") building.
- The bike rack on this site would be lost. It is possible the City will provide a place for this rack near this site.

- 1 - Roll-up doors are no longer proposed.
- 2 - The wood windows would be aluminum clad. The applicants will be bringing a sample
- 3 of this window to the HPC meeting on 12/20/2011.
- 4 - The concrete 'historic' signs will be preserved and restored to their current locations.
- 5 - The Rocket Donuts and Fat Pie Pizza spaces have shrunk, and the A Lot of Flowers
- 6 area has increased, from the September 27, 2011 design.

7
8 Staff has received public comments on this proposal, **Exhibit C**.

9
10 It seems likely that the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) determination for this site will
11 include the following:

- 12 1. Inclusion of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principals required
- 13 by the Police Department.
- 14 2. Sidewalks adjacent to the proposal shall be as wide as possible.
- 15 3. Provide a professional archaeological assessment before construction begins. The
- 16 archaeologist shall assess the project area for significant archaeological resources and
- 17 impacts of the proposal, and shall make recommendations for preservation and/or
- 18 protection of the resource and/or mitigation of adverse effects. The City, affected Tribe(s),
- 19 and the State of Washington Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation shall review
- 20 this assessment before construction begins.

21 22 23 **C. SITE INFORMATION**

24 This approximately 4,998 square foot property is currently occupied by a small commercial
25 building (A Lot of Flowers), an outdoor garden sales area, a fenced recycling/garbage facility,
26 and the east half of a private paved walkway.

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28 Four large street trees grow over this site. These trees will be pruned and preserved.

29 30 Private Walkway

31 A private walkway borders the west side of this site. (**Exhibits A and D**). The west/back
32 of the Knights of Pythias Building (immediately north) is set back approximately 8' west of
33 the center of the walkway. There are no easements that maintain this walkway.

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35 This walkway is approximately 12 feet wide to the north (with 6' on this site and 6' on the
36 site to the west). It narrows from 12' wide to approximately 8'3" wide on the steps to the
37 south, with approximately 5'10" on this site and 2'5" on the site to the west.

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39 The proposed building would further narrow this walkway to approximately 10' 10" wide to
40 the north and 7'6" feet wide (wall edge to wall edge) or 7' (handrail to handrail) on the
41 steps to the south. With shy distance (*see notes immediately below*), the width of the
42 usable center of these steps would be approximately 3' 6" wide. Staff is concerned about
43 this narrow passage.

44 *Shy Distance Notes:*

1 "... Pedestrians also avoid traveling in the 0.610 m (24 in) of the sidewalk close to buildings to
2 avoid retaining walls, street furniture, and fences (OR DOT, 1995). The sidewalk area that
3 pedestrians tend to avoid is referred to as the shy distance. Taking into account the shy
4 distance, only the center 1.830 m (6 ft) of a 3.050-m (10-ft) sidewalk is used by pedestrians for
5 travel... . Thus, the effective width of a sidewalk, not the design width, constitutes the sidewalk
6 area needed to accommodate anticipated levels of pedestrian traffic." Source:
7 <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sidewalks/chap4a.htm>. Accessed 12/6/2011.
8 The Federal Highway Administration suggests that a shy distance of is 2' preferred. Source:
9 Page 13-4 of [HTTP://SAFETY.FHWA.DOT.GOV/PED_BIKE/UNIVCOURSE/PDF/](http://SAFETY.FHWA.DOT.GOV/PED_BIKE/UNIVCOURSE/PDF/SWLESS13.PDF)
10 [SWLESS13.PDF](http://SAFETY.FHWA.DOT.GOV/PED_BIKE/UNIVCOURSE/PDF/SWLESS13.PDF) , accessed 12/6/2011.

11 12 Harris Avenue Sidewalk

13 The applicants have sought guidance on the development of the Harris Avenue sidewalk
14 (the sidewalk along 11th Street is fully developed). The Harris Avenue sidewalk is 6' wide.
15 It begins approximately 2' south of the south property line of the proposal's site.
16 Immediately south of this sidewalk is a 6'7" – 6'8" wide lawn/treed area that stretches to
17 the 6" wide curb north of the Harris Avenue's angled parking spaces. The area between
18 the sidewalk and the curb contains a utility box, light standard, two street trees, grass, and
19 muddy area approximately 18 – 24" wide adjacent to the sidewalk, where walkers move
20 when the sidewalk is crowded. (**Exhibit D**). Staff commonly recommends a minimum
21 sidewalk width of at least 10 – 12' in Fairhaven. Many sidewalks in Fairhaven are 15' 6"
22 wide, such as 11th Street immediately east of this site.

23
24 Planning staff will recommend a 12 – 13' 6" wide sidewalk in this area and a planting area
25 of no more than 2" wide north of the sidewalk. New pavement should avoid damaging the
26 fully grown street trees.

27
28 According to the Public Works Department, this pavement may be pervious and/or a grass
29 grid. The 2' wide landscaped area between the sidewalk and this site's southerly property
30 line should include 1' of grass-grid or similar multiple-use pavement closest to the
31 sidewalk. This will allow the landscaping to receive rainwater and pedestrians to move
32 closer to the proposal, as crowding requires. The Public Works Department will work with
33 the applicants to determine sidewalk slope and location.

34 35 36 **D. SPECIFIC GUIDANCE REQUESTED BY STAFF**

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38 Staff seeks the HPC's guidance for the Director. The Planning Division's design review team
39 has reviewed this proposal's design changes against Fairhaven's Design Standards and the
40 HPC's September comments.

41
42 Staff has commented on the design provisions, in **Section E** below, in relation to the
43 applicant's proposal. See "**Staff Notes:**" following each item for a specific requests for HPC
44 review and recommendation.

1 The HPC limits its review of the project to the appropriate Fairhaven Design Criteria, giving
2 specific guidance on the site and building design to the Director.

5 E. KEY DESIGN STANDARDS

7 Projects must comply with the applicable Fairhaven standards, BMC 20.26, **Exhibit D**. The
8 following design standards and Staff Notes are intended to assist this review. The HPC
9 provides recommendations to the Director on these standards. Staff seeks guidance and
10 requests the HPC make recommendations on the following:

12 BMC **20.26.050 - B. 4. Material**. "Building material should be compatible with the material
13 used in the existing buildings of primary significance in the core area."

14 **Staff Note 1:** *Tower Materials: Should the tower at 11th and Harris be metal, as
15 proposed? Would a more conservative material, such as masonry, be more
16 "compatible with the material used in the existing buildings of primary significance"?*

17 **Staff Note 2:** *The easterly two-story section is mostly brick. The applicants will be
18 submitting brick samples at the HPC hearing on 12/20/2011. Is this material
19 "compatible with the material used in the existing buildings of primary significance in
20 the core area"?*

21 **Staff Note 3:** *Does the retaining wall have texture and shape, as suggested at the
22 HPC's September meeting?*

24 BMC **20.26.050 - B. 5. Architectural Features**. "Development should mimic or achieve
25 compatibility with the architectural features of existing buildings of significance in regard to
26 such things as roof slope and pitch, window and entry treatment, cornices and other detailing,
27 and lighting fixtures."

28 **Staff Note 4:** *Does the 3' 8 ½" high wall on the west side of this proposal, next to A Lot
29 of Flowers, "achieve compatibility with the architectural features of existing buildings of
30 significance"?*

31 **Staff Note 5:** *The awning over the door at the corner of 11th and Harris (see page
32 A302, **Exhibit A**), is tilted into the building. Also, it does not wrap the corner. Does this
33 design "achieve compatibility with the architectural features of existing building of
34 significance"?*

35 **Staff Note 6:** *The lower windows of A Lot of Flowers seem to be very similar to the
36 windows in Fat Pie Pizza. Are they different enough to differentiate these two building
37 faces?*

38 **Staff Note 7:** *Has the design been appropriately simplified, as requested at the HPC's
39 September meeting?*

41 BMC **20.26.050 - B. 7. Signs**. "Generally signs which are single faced, flat surface with
42 messages painted on in relief shall be preferred. Aluminum or plastic signs are not
43 appropriate. Projecting, double faced or three dimensional signs may be allowed if
44 integrated into the building design. Symbolic, three dimensional signs illustrating a product
45 or service sold on the premise (barber poles, etc.) shall be acceptable. Signs should be

1 subdued, incandescent and front lit from the exterior rather than back lit of the fluorescent
2 type. Neon signs may be acceptable where appropriate. Signs should not flash, blink, or
3 otherwise appear to be in motion.”

4 **Staff Note 8:** *Staff would normally require all signs to be exterior lit from above.
5 Should any signage on this building be internally lit (neon, LED, etc?)*

6 **Staff Note 9:** *Staff does not normally allow up-lighting on buildings unless a building
7 projection limits glare and reduces sky lighting. Should uplighting be allowed?*

8 **Staff Note 10:** *Staff requests HPC guidance as to if LED lighting should be allowed,
9 especially to highlight elements of the tower. And, should the color be changeable?*

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12 **F. COMPLIANCE WITH FAIRHAVEN ZONING REGULATIONS**

13 The subject property is zoned Commercial, Neighborhood. The proposed project complies
14 with all regulations applicable to this zoning, with the exception(s) discussed above.

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16 As stated above, it is the responsibility of the proponent to ensure compliance with the
17 various provisions contained in the Land Use Development Ordinance.

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20 **G. EXHIBITS**

21	Exhibit A	Applicant's Narrative and Site, Floor and Elevation Plans
22	Exhibit B	September 27, 2011 HPC Meeting Minutes
23	Exhibit C	Public Comments
24	Exhibit D	Harris and Private Pathway Map
25	Exhibit E	Fairhaven Design Review Code
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