

- The Draft Housing Element update has been submitted to the HCD and the City will hear back within the next 30 days or so. There will then be a review period to make adjustments.
- The First Street project should come back to the DRB in the first or second meeting of October.

The Board asked questions of Associate Planner Jay.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA: None.

6. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: None.

7. REGULAR AGENDA:

A. FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT EXTENSIONS

- a. 127 North Main Street – Tombe Realty
154 North Main Street – Global Village

Associate Planner Jay presented the staff report.

The Board had no questions for Associate Planner Jay.

The Board discussed the application as follows:

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

I’m inclined to limit the extension. I don’t think that we should be taking money away from future applicants, and we should try to spend the money that’s been allocated this year. We all work in construction and know what materials are; it’s not going to take them until next year to do these improvements, so let’s put it as a December deadline and get it done this year.

Chair Luthin opened public comment. Seeing none, Chair Luthin closed public comment.

Board Member Hanley moved to deny the façade improvement extension as proposed, and to approve a façade improvement extension with a deadline of December 31, 2022.

Christine Level, Board Member

What is the date that the applicants are trying to get to?

John Jay, Associate Planner

The façade improvement programs run on the fiscal year, so they are required by the program to finish by June 30, 2023 for this new fiscal year. Since they were approved under the last fiscal year, obviously those funds have already been washed away, so there are no funds that we can allocate for them for the 2021-22 year. The new fund amount would be \$20,000 of the fiscal year 2022-23, and as Board Member Hanley has put on the motion, rather than granting them the full fiscal year it’s to extend this deadline to December 31, 2022.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

Basically a six-month extension. I don’t want to wrap up money that other people might use this year. We want lots of people to take advantage of this.

Christine Level, Board Member

There's \$20,000 available for this year, starting now, so these applicants are going to tap into this \$20,000 regardless of whether or not their deadline is December 31st or the end of next June, so it doesn't really matter. They're getting their approved amount of the \$20,000 that's approved for this new fiscal year, is that correct?

John Jay, Associate Planner

Correct.

Christine Level, Board Member

I want to be perfectly clear on this. We have \$20,000 to hand out. We've already approved a certain amount of that money to these applicants that are asking for an extension. So whatever we have left to give out is the balance from that \$20,000.

John Jay, Associate Planner

Correct.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

The issue with that though is that's a use-it-or-lose-it amount of money, so we have a certain amount that we're allowed to give to people for a fiscal year. Last year we had \$20,000. These folks took a portion of that allocation with their applications, which were approved, so that ate into our \$20,000. They didn't use it, we lost the money to be able to give to somebody else, they're asking to use it this year, so I'm saying get on with it or we're going to give it to somebody else.

Lars Langberg, Vice Chair

So if they don't use it by December we could allocate it to someone else, whereas we've lost that money we allocated them from last year.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

Yes, we didn't carry over the money that we gave them last year. That money didn't go into our community, it just evaporated, so I don't want to see this show up in June of 2023 and they didn't do their stuff and we didn't give that money to somebody else.

Ted Luthin, Chair

When was this originally approved?

John Jay, Associate Planner

These were approved at our May 6th meeting, I believe.

Ted Luthin, Chair

I guess what this does is if we approve an extension that goes all the way to June, then basically we've locked up that money, and if they still can't get their act together by June we've designated that money to them for the entire year, so if spring rolls around and we get \$20,000 worth of applicants and these people twiddle their thumbs and they don't use their money, we have to deny somebody because there are funds being held up by this extension.

Christine Level, Board Member

This is an interesting problem, because going on this fiscal year way of doling out this money, if you get approved, let's say, at the end of May, you have a month, and that's not reasonable. I don't understand why if we dole out the money we can't start with a

new \$20,000. Like we lost the amount we gave them now by them not using it? This is kind of a weird way to do things.

John Jay, Associate Planner

We have moved the deadlines up further in the year so they're not in May like they were this last fiscal year, they're at the beginning of April, so they have a little bit more time to get those projects done.

Christine Level, Board Member

This is something we need to consider, because I don't think that these two applicants that we're discussing right now, Tombe Realty and Global Village, are going to have any problem making this December deadline, and I don't have a problem with that deadline, just to make it clear. But I see a problem with the way this is funded if people are thinking they're going to do the project if they get the funding, and then they have a month or two to do a project; that's not reasonable, so this will just keep happening. I'm happy to put the deadlines for these two people, because I know they're going to make it by the end of December anyway. It is ridiculous that we just lost a bunch of money that we had designated for the fund by not having reasonable deadlines for these people to get the money from the last year, and that shouldn't happen. I'm with Commissioner Hanley, we want to give out as much of this as we can. Downtown needs a lot of work; there's a lot of façade wear and tear on Main Street.

Ted Luthin, Chair

I totally agree, and the good news is that we didn't have to deny anybody last year because these funds were held up, but the other side of this is the Façade Improvement Program is becoming much more popular, people are more aware of it and utilizing it more, so I anticipate if the same trend holds, then this year we will allocate all of that money.

Chair Luthin asked for a second to the motion.

Board Member Balfe seconded the motion.

Chair Luthin asked for further DRB discussion.

Christine Level, Board Member

We need to think about what is a reasonable cutoff, because it is hard at this time to get construction materials, labor, etc., so our cutoff should be reasonably planned for the façade improvements. I think April is even a little shy if you're going to have something done by the end of June.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

What is the process for advising this? Is it a City Council declaration? How would we revise the way in which this works?

John Jay, Associate Planner

As far as the funds go, it would have to go through City Council. We are a little flexible with changing the deadline dates. Like I said, I did move those dates up earlier in the calendar year so that we don't run into this again, because I felt that an April deadline for a May meeting is unrealistic.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

Totally. Could it be six months from the date of approval? That way it's not tied to the applicant's date to application, it's tied to when we get around to approving it.

John Jay, Associate Planner

With it being tied to the fiscal year, those funds have to be rectified and done before the fiscal year's books are closed by the Finance Department. They can't do the project beforehand and then come back and request the Façade Improvement Program rebate, so the work has to be done and then they send in their final notice of completion, and that's when we award the money to the applicants.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

Is there a reason we wouldn't just open it up July 1st and let people continually apply?

Ted Luthin, Chair

I think it opens July 1st and then closes March or April, so they can then get on our agenda, because it would probably take a couple of weeks to get on our agenda, and then they get approval, say, mid-April, and now you've got April, May, June, you got 75 days to get it done.

Ted Luthin, Chair

Right now the application deadline is rolled back to when, John?

John Jay, Associate Planner

The current agenda that I have for this year is August 15th being the first deadline for the September 7th meeting today. The next deadline is October 10th for the November 2nd meeting, January 9th deadline for the February 1st meeting, and then March 13th deadline for the April 5th meeting, and after that April 5th meeting they would have until June 30th to complete their project.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

Forgive me for not knowing this. Can we allocate all \$20,000 in September? Could we do it all today if we had enough applications, or are we restricted?

John Jay, Associate Planner

It's until we run out of funds, and we can't exceed those funds. So if last year we came into a process where we had a bunch right at the end of the year, we were over the \$20,000 limit and to kick one application out or reduce the cost, so that does come up. But the next deadline we could dole out the remaining \$12,500, and then the other two meetings throughout the year we have, because we wouldn't have any funds available anymore, if they're able to provide the proof of completion before then.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

Then I think I'm probably a little less sympathetic to people missing deadlines if they can wait and come up under a July or a September meeting.

Cary Bush, Board Member

We've seen one instance where we an applicant applied and couldn't procure the door and windows that he needed in a timely fashion due to supply chain issues.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

It would seem like we should be able to pay like a certain amount on materials ordered or warehoused and not installed. We do that on projects, right? Maybe there's a way for us to do something along those lines.

John Jay, Associate Planner

That's a possibility that we could look at. I can review it a little bit more.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

Cary, you're totally right. You could have a window take 24 weeks unexpectedly, so yes, there should be some provision for that.

Chair Luthin asked for further DRB comments. Seeing none, Chair Luthin called for a vote on the motion.

AYES: Chair Luthin, Vice Chair Langberg, and Board Members Balfe, Bush, Hanley, and Level

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

B. FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

a. 126 North Main Street – Lunch Box

Associate Planner Jay presented the staff report.

Chair Luthin asked for Board questions of staff.

Marshall Balfe, Board Member

The color might be a bit stark and blasts out at you along that streetscape.

Chair Luthin invited the applicant to speak and answer DRB questions.

Megan Harn, Applicant

The building next door is white, so it would be similar white to that, the fixtures are going to be black, and then our logo is blue, so it would be kind of a blue and white situation, and then we wanted to add some potted flowers and potentially a bit of wood where it's tile right now to warm it up a little bit, planking underneath where the tile is so it's not just all white.

Ted Luthin, Chair

And the mural is stained, right?

Megan Harn, Applicant

The mural is stained, yes.

Cary Bush, Board Member

That was my big question: how is the tile going to be treated, or is it just going to be painted white?

Megan Harn, Applicant

At first we looked at just painting it, but after looking around a bit we saw that Sonoma Pizza in Forestville has some nice wood with their white and it looked really nice and warm, so we wanted to do something like that.

Ted Luthin, Chair

When are you planning on opening?

Megan Harn, Applicant

We are hoping for the end of September. We just got our ABC license approved and should have the Health Department come in in the next week or two.

Chair Luthin asked for further DRB questions of the applicant. Seeing none, Chair Luthin opened public comment. Seeing none, Chair Luthin closed public comment.

The Board discussed the application as follows:

Cary Bush, Board Member

We're excited to have a new eatery in town, and it looks great. I was a little nervous about the tile being painted over; that it could look less that desirable, so it's good to hear the suggestion regarding adding the wood has been made. In my opinion, it might give a little bit of warmth to the overall contrasting white that is next to it, which does look quite classy, even being white. Overall, I'm excited and glad to see them get some money to fix up the place.

Marshall Balfe, Board Member

I was happy with the response. I wasn't aware of the effort on the tile. Businesses that do all white, I'm generally all for it. I just thought in that context it might need to be knocked down a little, even off-white, but that's not their concept, and if they are mitigating it the way that was suggested, I'm happy.

Christine Level, Board Member

I'm perfectly happy with everything that's there, and Megan, welcome to the downtown community. We're looking forward to having you around.

Megan Harn, Applicant

Thank you so much. We appreciate it.

Marshall Balfe, Board Member

I really appreciate you saving the mural. Thank you.

Megan Harn, Applicant

That was important to us. It's been there a long time and we wanted to keep some of the original charm.

Lars Langberg, Vice Chair

Are we approving white painted tile or wood, or does that matter and we have to go with what Megan is suggesting, not necessarily what she's presenting?

Ted Luthin, Chair

I guess we could include a recommendation with our approval.

Lars Langberg, Vice Chair

That makes sense. Otherwise I think it's great the mural is still there, and the logo is nice. It looks good to me.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

I hope the white is either the same as the adjacent building or different enough to not look like a mistake. I would vote for the same, and I echo my fellow member's enthusiasm for you coming to town, Megan. This is exciting.

Megan Harn, Applicant

Thank you so much, and I definitely agree, it should be the same or very different.

Ted Luthin, Chair

I'm all for it and looking forward to the Lunch Box opening.

Board Member Hanley moved to approve the application as submitted, with a recommendation to replace the tile with wood.

Board Member Bush seconded the motion.

AYES: Chair Luthin, Vice Chair Langberg, and Board Members Balfe, Bush, Hanley, and Level

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

C. 333 NORTH MAIN STREET

- a. Proposal for the construction of 6,000 square foot new residential building and associated site and landscaping improvements on a vacant 7,286 square foot lot. The building would consist of (4) three bedrooms structured in two-story townhouses with (4) one-car garages. The entrances to the townhouses will face North Main Street. The garages will be accessed from an existing driveway at the north edge of the property. Review of the Tree Protection Plan along with proposed tree removals.

Associate Planner Jay presented the staff report.

The Board had no questions for Associate Planner Jay.

The applicant gave a presentation and was available for questions.

Chair Luthin asked for Board questions of the applicant.

Lars Langberg, Vice Chair

Cedar is just on the railing on the roof terrace, right?

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

Correct. That's the only wood element that we're incorporating there.

Lars Langberg, Vice Chair

Steve Kent had mentioned hopefully doing solar panels, but is it not required to do solar panels, right?

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

The requirement is to be solar-ready, which we certainly will be, so there will be infrastructure in place for that. As Steve alluded to, these are cost-driven projects and we're trying to keep the cost down. Obviously there are benefits for the homeowner to have solar in terms of reducing their energy bills, and that's a trade-off that we're going to have to look at as we get further into the project, but certainly the infrastructure will be there that could be added to by the homeowner in the future as well.

Lars Langberg, Vice Chair

My understanding was it's required to have solar panels now, and I think it's even in the conditions of approval that you are. I totally get the cost thing, and I wouldn't necessarily mandate it, but my sense is it's a requirement.

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

I believe that the code going into effect in January will have different requirements. Our intent is to try to get this project in prior to that, but certainly we intend to comply with all conditions of approval. It's just, as Steve said, keeping the cost of the project manageable so we can keep the costs affordable for potential homeowners.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

I'd be curious to know the details for the perforated metal that you're using on handrails.

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

It's really metal screening on these balconies that you see here, as well as around the perimeter on the patio areas, just trying to get some sense of privacy but still keeping it open and airy.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

But what is the material, and what is the perforation size?

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

We don't have a good image of it here, but the intent is to use a metal with quarter-inch openings in it, so it's probably a 40-50% opening on that. We're still sourcing the actual material, but it would be metal panels with a metal trim around the perimeter.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

And will the finish on that match your metal siding?

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

Yes.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

I had some questions about the landscaping plan. Was there any investigation into bee- and butterfly-friendly plantings?

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

We don't have our landscape architect here today. Certainly can follow up with him to see what could be done to make sure we're incorporating some plants that are friendly.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

Will the CC&RYAN SAFTY: have some sort of maintenance plan as part of this? Is that part of the HOA's contribution to maintenance? There are quite a few trees specified here that drop a lot of leaves, so how would that be handled in the future?

Steve Kent, Habitat for Humanity Sonoma County

That will have to be included somehow, because it's common property and would be the responsibility of all four homeowners. And I see at least some of those plants that Jeff has are butterfly-friendly. I'm redoing my front yard right now and I can look at our list and make sure we add some if we need to.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

A couple of sages are great, but it would be good to go a little further if we could. My final comment on this front, and I'm stepping way outside my purview as an architect into the world of landscaping, but planting an oak tree that close to a foundation seems risky.

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

That is certainly something that we're going to have to look into along with talking with our geotech about proximity to foundations and so on. Good comment, and as we refine this plant palette we'll make sure to look at that.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

What is the finish material for the patio, both front porch and rear?

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

The materials for the front porch and the rear will be concrete; these are at grade. This likely will be a raised foundation system, and then we will carry that out into the entryway and stairs.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

Are you proposing glazing in the garage doors?

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

Our intention is to incorporate small glazing in the garage doors, so this upper panel would be glass.

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

I didn't see any details about the handrails going up the front stairs.

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

We have not detailed that all out, but I would envision those being metal railings similar to what we have around the balcony.

Cary Bush, Board Member

Will the PG&E point of connection to the utility panels be located in the garage, or per unit, or where would that be?

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

We have started those conversations, and while I would like them to be on the garage side we think that's going to be a challenge with getting those meter sections facing this front elevation, so at this point it's more likely that they're going to be on the street side elevation, but again, we're still working with the utilities to see what we can do with that.

Chair Luthin asked for further DRB questions of the applicant. Seeing none, Chair Luthin opened public comment. Seeing none, Chair Luthin closed public comment.

John Jay, Associate Planner

I spoke with Kari a little bit about the trash enclosures, and we were curious if a possible trash enclosure could be constructed in the space where the retaining wall easement is located, at least for a few cans for the smaller garages, because no building would be constructed in that easement?

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

In our discussions with the company we found they don't have any ability there to do front dump, because they can't turn in there, and with a side dump they would not be able to get onto the site there, so they still would have to come out to the street, and that would be bins. I appreciate the thought, I'm just not sure that it would get us anywhere in terms of the end result needing to get down to the street.

Ted Luthin, Chair

It might also make the vehicular use of the garage easier if there were a place to store your bin to get a little more space in your garage.

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

There would also be the potential challenge of people using their neighbor's bin.

The Board discussed the application as follows:

Melissa Hanley, Board Member

I'm new to this project, but based on Board members' prior comments and suggestions I think this is an incredible evolution. I'm really excited to see this kind of modernity coming to downtown Sebastopol. I think the color scheme is responsive and the agrarian nod of the corrugated metal feels appropriate. This might be the nicest Habitat housing I've ever seen, so I'm a little nervous about your ability to buy this in our current market, so one of my big concerns would be knowing what your perceived risks are to achieving this level of design based on the project parameters. That's really my only hesitation about this kind of ambitious project; otherwise I think it would be a wonderful addition to the town.

Ted Luthin, Chair

I agree.

Christine Level, Board Member

I like the project very much. I can see the transition from the last time, when I had suggested that Mr. Katz not hold back on his design concept because he thought we might approve what he had before. I really love the roof garden. I can see that this project has a lot of design issues and complications because of the site size, etc., and I'm completely impressed with Mr. Katz; I think he's a great professional and I'm totally confident that he's going to work out any of these little issues about the garbage cans or whatever. I'm just happy to see it and I applaud Mr. Katz on his design work.

Marshall Balfe, Board Member

I very much like the new design. The first thing that came to my mind talking about the garbage was as long as the Fire Department can get into the rear area, I'm happy; I know they'll work that out. I've done a dozen rebuilds in the Fountain Grove area and fire is on the top of my mind every day. I love the design.

Cary Bush, Board Member

From a kind of safe and simple design we are seeing something quite new and unique and inventive, and a little bit progressive and bold, so I'd echo a lot of my colleagues' comments that it's a great design; I'm excited to see that in such an underutilized part of downtown. It's a lovely addition and I applaud the creativity you brought. There are a couple items that may need to be taken under consideration, and they were brought up earlier. First, the notion of sewer and water penetrating from the streetfront to each unit, perhaps looking at joint trenching the sewer and the water, because I know there will be backflow preventers somewhere at the entry to those buildings, they'll be sticking out like sore thumbs; we wouldn't want to lose what I see as a great rendering here to a lot of utilities that become clutter. So really understand where the sewer would be coming from and going to, and if you can joint trench that with the water and such, that may give more opportunity with the planting plan, because there are a lot of big trees that are sitting right on top of sewer and water mains, and that could be a potential problem in the future; in fact, it more than likely will given that they're red maples. That black oak is a native tree and local favorite, but probably not suitable to anchor that corner, because they would probably want to move some things out of the way in due time. The plant material is a good palette and has a butterfly and bird friendly garden, however it will conflict with utilities over time. The applicant should look at plants for understory rather than mulch on the backside on top of the retaining wall for better erosion control.

Lars Langberg, Vice Chair

It looks great. I'm glad Jeff Katz took the Board's encouragement to be more inventive to heart, because they came back with a great proposal. With respect to the trash cans I'm imagining recycling bins that stays out there all day on trash day would be unfortunate on Main Street, but somehow that solution will happen. I don't know if the garbage truck goes up to the neighbors behind or how it would get to that site. The cedar railing is so great on the garden and I'm curious if that could come in with the building, such as on the two inset patios in the middle unit, to be a nice tie across and warm up the middle of the façade, but that's a very minor design suggestion; I also love it the way it is. With respect to Commissioner Hanley's point, really great package this time.

Ted Luthin, Chair

I agree with everything my fellow commissioners said. I love the design evolution, and most of all I love the idea that affordable housing can be stylish. It's downtown, close to transit, and fills in the gap in the streetscape and completes that part of Main Street. The rooftop garden is awesome, and the tall skinny windows in the stairwells will be really cool on the inside. This design is really thoughtful and very well done; I'm very happy about it.

Jeff Katz, Applicant/Architect

Thank you. You have all been very complimentary of my work, but to be honest, the real work here has been done by Jeff Bousfield in my office who has led the design effort, and Sophia Conti who is a Sebastopol native and has been very excited to work on this project. They're both here on the call and really deserve most of the kudos for the hard work on this, but as a firm we certainly appreciate that feedback.

Vice Chair Langberg moved to approve the application as submitted.

Board Member Level seconded the motion.

AYES: Chair Luthin, Vice Chair Langberg, and Board Members Balfe, Bush, Hanley,
and Level

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

8. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Lars Langberg, Vice Chair

The Art Committee did not meet last month. The sculpture garden is open.

Associate Planner Jay provided updates on new design review guidelines.

The Board asked questions of Associate Planner Jay.

- 9. ADJOURNMENT:** Chair Luthin adjourned the meeting at 5:22 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Tree/Design Review Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 21, 2022 at 2:30 p.m. for a walking tour of The Barlow.