

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEETING**  
**CIVIC CENTER MULTIPURPOSE ROOM, BASEMENT LEVEL**  
440 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond, CA  
May 26, 2010  
6:00 p.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Michael Woldemar, Chair	Eileen Whitty, Vice Chair
Diane Bloom	Andrew Butt
Otheree Christian	Raymond Welter
Don Woodrow	

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chair Woldemar and Boardmembers Butt, Christian, Welter and Woodrow

**Absent:** Boardmembers Bloom and Vice Chair Whitty

**INTRODUCTIONS**

**Staff Present:** Jonelyn Whales, Richard Mitchell, Carlos Privat, Hector Rojas and Tony Norris

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

April 28, 2010

Chair Woldemar had the following corrections:

Page 8, in the motion, 6 lines down, "including the requirement for them to be metal halide lighting".

2<sup>nd</sup> to the last line in Item 10; "parking spaces be defined as 16 feet with a 2 foot overhang", as opposed to 16.5 feet.

**ACTION: It was M/S (Christian/Butt) to approve the minutes of April 28, 2010, as amended; unanimously approved (Woodrow abstained)**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Woldemar requested reversing the order of Agenda Items 1 and 2.

**ACTION: It was M/S (Duncan/Butt) to approve the agenda, as amended; unanimously approved.**

**Public Forum** – No speakers.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

Chair Woldemar reviewed the procedure for speakers and noted any decision approved may be appealed in writing to the City Clerk within ten (10) days, or by Monday, June 7, 2010 by 5:00 p.m. and he read the appeal procedure after each affected item.

Chair Woldemar said the Consent Calendar consisted of Item 1. Ms. Whales asked to add an additional condition of approval which would read, "The sign area proposed for the wall sign shall not exceed 33% of the building." Boardmember Woodrow questioned and confirmed with staff that the company would not be allowed to put up blow-up signs.

**ACTION: It was M/S (Woodrow/Butt) to approve the Consent Calendar Item 1, as amended adding a condition; "The sign area proposed for the wall sign shall not exceed 33% of the building"; unanimously approved.**

**Items Approved:**

**CC 2. PLN10-069 VARIANCE FOR A FREE-STANDING SIGN ON AUTO PLAZA**  
Description REQUEST FOR DESIGN REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL OF VARIANCES TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 10-FEET AND MAXIMUM SIGN AREA OF 60-SQUARE FEET (PROPOSED HEIGHT OF 25-FEET AND 63-SQUARE FEET OF SIGN AREA).  
Location 3280 AUTO PLAZA  
APN 405-330-001  
Zoning C-3 (REGIONAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT)  
Owner DOUBLE BOGEY LP  
Applicant PREMIER SIGN COMPANY  
Staff Contact LAMONT THOMPSON Recommendation: **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL**

**Public Hearing**

**1. PLN09-125 PLUNGE LANDSCAPING AND RELATED SITE IMPROVEMENTS ON E. RICHMOND AVENUE**  
Description **(Held Over from 5/12/2010)** REQUEST FOR DESIGN REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FOR NEW LANDSCAPING AND RELATED SITE IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE RICHMOND MUNICIPAL NATATORIUM, A CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE TO THE POINT RICHMOND NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT.  
Location 1 E RICHMOND AVE  
APN 556-170-002  
Zoning PC (PUBLIC AND CIVIC USES)  
Owner CITY OF RICHMOND  
Applicant TODD JERSEY ARCHITECTURE  
Staff Contact HECTOR ROJAS Recommendation: **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL**

**Recusal:**

Boardmember Woodrow disclosed a conflict of interest due to residence proximity to the site, and recused himself from participating.

Mr. Rojas gave a staff presentation, introduced Todd Jersey, Todd Jersey Architecture who he said would provide an overview, and Mr. Tony Norris of the Parks and Recreation Division. A previous request to replace a couple of shields on the eastern façade wall along Girard Boulevard and medallions proposed on the lower eight windows along East Richmond Avenue has been withdrawn by the project team. The proposal was taken to the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC) who ruled that what was being proposed was not in conformance with the Secretary of Interior standards, and the staff report outlines the reasons for their ruling.

Mr. Rojas said the project was before the Design Review Board in October 2009 when the landscape plans were presented along with the replacement of the historic sign. The sign was approved in October, but the DRB felt certain items were missing from the landscaping plans. He provided a summary of comments and concerns, which he reviewed:

1. The Board wanted to see the design details and location for the mushroom fountain;
2. The Board wanted to see details and pictures of plants and the plant list for the landscape plan;
3. The Board wanted to see additional landscaping details of the shaded areas as outlined in the staff report. He said this specific item is not being presented tonight due to it falling out of the scope of work for the project team, as funding sources will need to be identified for these projects;
4. The Board wanted to see finish details of the trash enclosure areas, the ADA ramp grades with exception to the pathways to the trash enclosures. A condition of approval being recommended would require the final plan to have a pathway similar to concrete pathways in the court area that would facilitate trash movement from those areas;
5. The Board requested a light study to determine whether or not the amount of lighting was adequate. This is also outside the scope of work for the project.
6. The Board wanted to see the Bay Trail alignment along the Plunge perimeter, and this is outside the scope of work, it would have to be scoped out and fully funded through an alternative CIP project;
7. The Board wanted to see more benches. Staff feels the amount of benches in the plan are appropriate;
8. There were some light fixtures that were 6'6" tall. The amount of light posts on the plan is a total of 4; 2 were flanked on the side of the staircases at 6'6" tall and the other 2 were in the front court area in front of the mushroom fountain, which have been increased to 8'6" in height;
9. The Board wanted to ensure there was a drip irrigation system that would be temporary to allow for the establishment of the xeroscape plant selection proposed, which has been revised and installed upon overall installation of the landscaping.

Mr. Rojas said the original landscape plan was reviewed by the DRB and HPAC, but the plan as shown tonight was not reviewed by the HPAC. However, their determination during the previous review was that the landscaping was not historically significant as part of the Plunge, and they determined that any previous landscaping patterns would be consistent with the historic character of the building on the site. With this in mind, the plan is also compatible with this determination.

Chair Woldemar confirmed that the Board would be making findings relative to the Historic Structures Code and Design Review as part of its approval and opened the public hearing.

Boardmember Butt said this project is unique because it is far down the line but they are just now looking at landscaping. He said it seems that with regard to the Bay Trail and the strip between the sidewalk and the building along Gerrard is questionable. He asked if some compromise could be made, as it seems like the City lacks funding, and the DRB should request items be added to the project.

Mr. Mitchell said in looking at a typical development or project, things can be conditioned down to the needle, but as far as this sort of project, it works from the inside out as compared to any other project. The primary mission is how soon we are going to be able to swim at the plunge and everything else is unfortunately subordinate to that idea. Whatever City dollars are available for the project are going toward that objective. The Design Review Board is in a position to ultimately determine how the plunge looks, but as to when that will happen is when there are City dollars to be able to do it.

Boardmember Butt said it is a visible City project; it seems the Board's hands are tied, and he voiced frustration. He said he would at least like to see the one strip along Gerrard go in as part of this project.

Chair Woldemar said the Board is being put in a position to just consider what is in front of it. He thinks conditions should be added to address other items in the future, and said that it is his understanding that the Plunge is supposed to open in July. He questioned how to get into the building when site improvements have not started yet, stating there is not even a design for site improvements, and he questioned how this will happen. As Chairperson, he met with Mr. Rojas and Mr. Thompson and Mr. Davidson three weeks ago to inquire as to the project's status, and hoped to move the project forward.

Todd Jersey, Todd Jersey Architects, said they plan to landscape along Gerrard. Chair Woldemar noted that the Board does not have drawings for this, and Mr. Jersey said it can be included in the project's conditions of approval. He said Mr. Norris and he met with the landscape designer on site, reviewed all irrigation, and what is before the DRB is what was presented in the past. He described changes made to achieve a pathway which brings back the original sense of an elegant entry, so as to enter through the front door. They restored the entire entry which will be very elegant, the main entry pathway will be the same and they worked with Mr. Norris about location of the mushroom and the xeroscape work. They will plant California natives as much as possible, with low water plantings, their landscaper is very reputable, and he is confident that the plan is superior. He said he could not comment on the lighting control study, as he did not have it in his scope, but there is quite a bit of illumination from street lights, there is added illumination from the flanking on the stairway. The podium will be lit and he did not believe there would be any problems with nighttime illumination. He said there are many benches in the project now, but they would be open to placing some along the street if the Board would like more.

Tony Norris, Parks and Landscaping Superintendent, said he has budgeted into the plan two trash containers and bike racks for the frontage which is matched with those at Mechanics Bank, they identified funding for a significant irrigation system with state of the art controls. He said it can also time when the fountain comes on and off and it runs two stand alone lights in the front landscaping.

Boardmember Butt questioned and confirmed that mulch will be used in the area versus groundcover. He questioned changes in trees and plantings, and Mr. Jersey stated Mr. Norris brought up the Bay Trail issue and he realized there was no money for it. In terms of designing anything, it is not funded. Boardmember Butt questioned how long the City would wait for funding, and Mr. Norris said irrigation should be sized up to add on additional landscaping as funding comes later on for the Bay Trail connection. He said they could look at alternative opportunities to get some signage in the area on an interim basis on the Gerrard side so users will know the Bay Trail is in that direction.

Boardmember Butt said he liked native plantings, and historically there has always been lawn for people to picnic on and there is a large lawn area across the street. Conceptually, planting areas can start to look worn and he questioned maintenance over time. Mr. Norris said native plantings are much easier to maintain than lawn as well as less water consuming. It will be colorful and what might have happened with the EBMUD garden is that because of timing and staffing issues, it is hard to keep up. This site has sufficient water usage and it will incur less maintenance.

Boardmember Butt questioned concerns about lawn squirrels, and Mr. Norris did not believe this would be a problem.

Boardmember Butt referred to the impervious concrete around the fountain and thinks from a practical standpoint it needs to be pressure washed, weeds start to grow up through it, kids can get skinned up on it easily, and he questioned why this was proposed as part of the landscape/hardscape plan. Mr. Jersey concurred and said the idea was that there was rain water, but he agreed as an alternative, pavers could be used.

Boardmember Butt said the handrail is going up the stairways which he confirmed was bronze and everything else is powder coated black, which he felt was nice. He referred to a bench on Sheet 2.5 of the plans and asked whether it would match the Mechanics Bank bench. Mr. Jersey confirmed that proposed concrete on site would be similar to regular sidewalk concrete.

Boardmember Butt referred to the bike racks and said his understanding is that powder coating does not hold up well, given the wear and tear for a bike rack. Mr. Norris said powder coating is durable, and one of its advantages is that a lot of graffiti type material can be removed easily from such a surface. Boardmember Butt referred to lamps that match the historic look, but said he felt there are typical concerns involving light pollution issues. Chair Woldemar questioned if the ordinance dealt with dark sky type fixtures. Mr. Rojas said it is not in an ordinance, but just a general planning practice that they try to apply to all projects. Mr. Rojas did not know if there might be a modification to the light fixture that would allow it to look from the outside with this specific design, but at night have a mechanism or at the top dome so as not to shine out into the night. Mr. Jersey said there may be some sort of solution to achieve the look and effect without significant cost.

Boardmember Christian said he is as green as they come, but the amount of illumination is actually a very low level. He said if they did try to do something with a half globe, it would be seen at night. He was comfortable that it would not cast too much light at night to cause light pollution.

Boardmember Welter asked to clarify the handrail by the entry, stating on sheet A0.25, there is a note at the bottom that states, "change pending", and Mr. Jersey said this must be along the railroad tracks. Boardmember Welter clarified a note on bike racks. He then referred to the northwest corner and asked what would happen there. He questioned if there will be a fence to keep people from going back in the area. Mr. Jersey said there will be fencing, and Boardmember Welter voiced concern with maintenance access, trash and also aesthetics. Mr. Jersey acknowledged that the project is underfunded, and described areas within the scope. He said if funds are received, there may be an opportunity to work with TRAC on their ideas, but they do want to develop the back of the Plunge as a park.

Mr. Norris noted that the Recreation and Parks Commission is on record that the Canyon Park rock remain in place until there is a formal request to name a park.

Boardmember Christian questioned and confirmed that landscaping would harmonize with the Mechanics Bank's landscaping. He questioned whether the pathway would be concrete or gravel, and Mr. Jersey noted this is not yet determined. Chair Woldemar questioned what the Board was approving, and Mr. Jersey noted that if funds are received, they will be returning to the Board, and at this time, an asphalt path is not in the plans.

Boardmember Christian questioned the types of trees, and Mr. Norris noted there will be 8 different species of trees, one style of street tree, bark will be compatible, native oaks, and other native trees, and palms.

Chair Woldemar questioned if Mr. Jersey read staff's recommended conditions 1-13 and agrees with them. Mr. Jersey asked for specifics, and Chair Woldemar noted that basically all finish and

materials shall be the same color and powder coated instead of galvanized. He also pointed out that this must be inspected by City staff based upon whatever the Board's approval is, and staff needs to know what will be in place in order to conduct the inspections. He reiterated the need to identify what the Board is approving. He said another condition talks about putting an enclosure and a roof over the trash area, and he asked if this would be done. Mr. Rojas said this stems from the conversation held at the meeting; that this is something that, although the area was not specified on the plans, they hope to have this done.

Chair Woldemar said the benches in front by the fountain are shown as curved, and he asked if they would be. Mr. Jersey said we would like them to be curved, but they will not have any budget, if funds are not received. He said this is a very complex project which is under-funded. He said the project was shelved for three years. He came in and helped with the problem-solving so that they could get on track with the pool. What he would like to accomplish tonight is only the items that are mandated for approval and he will meet them.

Chair Woldemar referred to the landscape plan; Sheet AO.22, and said south of the fountain, there is an existing spring and asked if it had been plugged up. Mr. Jersey said it has not, but they are going to put a cap on it. Chair Woldemar noted that a previous condition indicated that the Health Department needed to be involved in that, and Mr. Jersey discussed conversations with Rich Davidson regarding the testing protocol.

Chair Woldemar referred to the planting area west of the fountain. He said there are two benches, and to the north and south there are trees, but no identification of them and he asked if they were existing or new. Mr. Jersey said they the trees were taken out. Mr. Norris discussed the native Buckeye trees and problems relating to bees. Chair Woldemar referred to wording that states, "Tree option-Palm or broad left Maple" and he felt that the western side of the project would be naturally full of trees, but that the westerly side should stay fairly low, so coming to the corner of the site; you could look into the entrance of the project. He questioned whether palm trees were appropriate. He also asked why there couldn't be a mounded lawn by the center walkway so children can sit down while waiting for parents to pick them up. Mr. Norris said this was not considered because they wanted water tolerant landscape and lawns are high water consumers. They could do a meadow type of look like a low mow fescue which is not a high water demand.

Chair Woldemar questioned signage for the botanical garden, and Mr. Jersey noted that if grant funds come in, they will propose one. Chair Woldemar questioned the high water table and asked if landscaping would survive, and Mr. Norris said it would. Chair Woldemar confirmed the soil was adequate for planting, with some amendments.

Chair Woldemar referred to the plant list attached to the report, and said it had no sizes. Mr. Norris said plant box sizes would return to the Board.

Boardmember Butt referred to the parking and crosswalk and confirmed that the City would not be installing curb cuts.

Public Comments:

Patricia Pearson voiced concern about the plaque on the rock and asked for it to be preserved. When she asked about the plaque, some people indicated it would go behind the building and some people did not know which plaque. Now, there are plans for a park; she was told the plaque will be moved, but this will be in the distant future and she asked to be kept in the loop about the plaque.

Ms. Pearson briefly described the history of the plaque and its significance with the park.

Chair Woldemar questioned where the plaque was located or where it will be located. Mr. Norris said the Recreation and Parks Commission indicated the plaque should stay in its current location. Chair Woldemar suggested a condition that states that the plaque on the rock should remain in its current location adjacent to the flagpole. Ms. Pearson continued explaining the history of the plaque's location.

Bruce Beyaert, TRAC, distributed handouts, stating he took pictures this afternoon of the eastern side of the Plunge and said bicycles coming outside of the tunnel along the trail have three bad choices; riding on the sidewalk, riding down the western side on the wrong side of the street, or sweeping across in front of traffic coming out of the tunnel. He asked to close the Bay Trail gap and asked it to be included in the next phase of the project. He also asked to have the City produce a construction design in the coming year and hoped to obtain additional grant funds. He also urged the City to plant low shrubs along the eastern wall of the Plunge, and mentioned the Chevron settlement and underpayment of utility taxes, as well.

Chair Woldemar recapped Mr. Beyaert's requests that the Board has control over as being he would like low planting on the east side of the eastern planting area, as well as widening the sidewalk inward to 10 feet to develop the Bay Trail.

Mr. Privat noted that the Board can condition the project on taking some of the land that would otherwise not be in the public right-of-way, but the Board cannot widen the public right-of-way. He said there is no nexus between this project and impacts on the public right-of-way.

Chair Woldemar said if the condition stated, "Lower shrubs be required on the east side of the eastern planter area and that a provision be made for future sidewalk widening." Mr. Privat said this is somewhat unclear. Chair Woldemar said he is asking that nothing be planted there so that when something can be done, the sidewalk can be made to be wider on the parcel itself and Mr. Privat agreed with this.

Chair Woldemar discussed options to discuss the project, close the public hearing, or consider continuing the public hearing.

The public hearing was closed (Chair Woldemar voted no).

Chair Woldemar and Boardmembers voiced concern as to what the Board was actually approving, cited outdated plans and drawings, questioned actual items for approval and asked how City staff would inspect and approve items. Mr. Jersey said there will be plant changes because they will make more sense, and Mr. Norris will be on site.

Boardmember Butt expressed frustration over the project, said he would like the project approved with a list of conditions for it to open in July. Boardmember Welter questioned if the Board could write something that conditions the project on any one set of drawings, and Chair Woldemar suggested there are several things in the planting plan which need amendments, and thinks a condition to state that "all landscaping be subject to review and approval by the Parks and Landscaping Superintendent."

Boardmembers supported the oversight that Mr. Norris would provide on the planting plan.

Chair Woldemar supported the following conditions and amendments:

- A condition for project specific conditions to read, "All conditions would ultimately be subject to review and approval by the Planning and Building Services Director or his appointee."

- Amend Condition 4 regarding material finishes to read, "Materials finishes of all site furnishings, fences, and railings shall be of the same color and be powder coated instead of galvanized." Amend Condition 5; lighting, with the expectation that additional lighting would be added; "All site lighting in the forecourt shall maintain a minimum of ½ foot candle at all of the walkways and seating areas."
- Amend Condition 7; "All future landscaping and related site improvements at the rear of the Plunge shall be reviewed and approved by the Design Review Board prior to installation."

Add the following conditions:

- "All landscaping would be subject to review and approval by the Parks and Landscape Superintendent."
- "Landscaping along Girard adjacent to the building be added to the work, and that it consist of citrus planting and mulch groundcover."
- "All on-site sidewalks are to be replaced."
- "All future improvements, including right-of-way improvements, improvements to the west and south side and Bay Trail will return to the Design Review Board"
- "Pervious concrete be deleted and that color concrete, color to be selected, be substituted."
- "Benches and trash containers match those installed across the street at Mechanics Bank and circular benches be deleted from the plan and straight benches be used."
- "All on-site concrete finishes be a colored concrete, with the color to be selected by the architect."
- "Light fixtures be of a dark sky type, and that the two fixtures that straddle the stairway going up to the front door be of a historic nature." (Chair Woldemar noted there was discussion about the historic aspect of lighting, yet the forecourt does not have to incorporate historic fixtures and today's fixtures would be appropriate. Boardmember Butt suggested the two on the either side of the stairs should be historic, and Boardmembers agreed).
- "Fencing be added to close off access to the west side of the Plunge, but that the fencing not be chain link or wrought iron pickets." Chair Woldemar suggested a wire mesh fencing with jasmine plantings or other contemporary fencing be used.
- "That the plan be amended to exclude the asphalt path on the west side of the building not to be installed at this time, except the path that leads to the refuse area."
- "That the sizes of all plant materials be listed on the construction drawings submitted as part of the plan review process."
- "That the existing plaque and rock is to remain in the current location adjacent to the flagpole."
- "That lower shrubs be used along the east side of the eastern planting area and that provision be made in the planting for a future wider sidewalk on site."
- "In the mound area, three additional trees be added, with tree types to be selected by the designers, and that no tree is to be used in the eastern planter area." Chair Woldemar said the idea is to fill the forecourt area with larger, taller plant materials. He also noted that there were two trees on the plan the Board has on the western planting area west of the fountain that the architect indicated had been removed. He asked that the two trees be replaced. Therefore, his conditions read to add 5 trees and subtracting 1 tree.
- "A mounded area be implemented and for the Parks and Landscape Superintendent to review and approve a walk-able and sit-able groundcover." (Boardmember Butt agrees with adding a turf area and he suggested adding a condition that calls for this. Chair Woldemar suggested a condition that states).
- All handicapped issues be reviewed and approved by the Building Division.

ACTION: It was M/S (Butt/Woldemar) to approve PLN09-125, based upon staff's recommended conditions and with the Board's amended and added conditions as listed above; unanimously approved.

**BOARD BUSINESS**

**A. Staff reports, requests, or announcements.**

Chair Woldemar noted that on Monday night, the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee held their annual awards event, and Mr. Butt was presented with an award.

**B. Board member reports, requests, or announcements.**

There were none.

The Board adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.