

Murray City Center District Review Committee Meeting
4646 South 500 West
Murray, UT 84123

Meeting Date: July 28, 2022
Meeting Place: Public Services Conference Room
Meeting Time: 5:46 p.m.

Present: Ray Beck,
Kiersten Davis
Dan Hayes,
Jared Hall, Community & Economic Development Director
Zachary Smallwood, Senior Planner
Excused: Andy Hulka, Chair
David Hunter, Vice Chair
Public in attendance: Darrin Rasmussen,
Kim Sorenson, Parks & Recreation Director
Zach Heslop,
Diana Baun

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Davis motioned to approve the minutes from the April 28, 2022, MCCD meeting, Seconded by Mr. Hayes.

DESIGN REVIEW – Murray City Theater – 4959-4963 South State Street – Project #22-122

Mr. Hall introduced this item, regarding the proposed renovation of the Murray Theater. Kim Sorenson, head of Murray's Parks and Rec Department, is here; that department will be programming the building and running it as part of their cultural arts programming. This is a simple renovation, attempting to bring the building back to the way it used to be. The city has owned the building for a number of years. There was a part of the building that been given a separate address in the past when there was a different business venture operating out of it at the time. The building takes up most of the parcel itself and he discussed access around the building, as well as specific measurement details included in the staff report. This normally would have been considered a minor alteration based on the plans, however any change to historic buildings is considered a major alteration according to the city code. As a result, this has to be brought before the design review committee and the planning commission for approval. The review committee makes a recommendation to the planning commission, and then the planning commission will grant the final design review approval based on this committee's recommendation. Most changes are interior with a few changes to the façade. He shared images from the staff report of the layout inside the theater and noted that it has been altered over the years to have an open floor to allow standing room only.

Mr. Hayes asked if this floor area was elevated.

Mr. Hall responded that it does have two levels right now, however it used to have auditorium seating and the plan is to return to that. The plan is to add fixed seats to the theater, as it originally was, and make some stage improvements with a subfloor and additional restroom space; none of that space is considered usable, so it doesn't generate a need for more parking. They will also be bringing back some of the original lobby and he shared more images from the

staff report to show what they are hoping to do. There will be film projection capabilities after the renovation, along with the ability to do live theater and music performances on the stage. They will be restoring the marquee and the sign to be more like they were originally. The exterior will have ground floor windows to allow a connection to the street. The marquee will hang out over the public sidewalk, which is allowed in the MCCD zone. The goal in this zone is to have a nice area to walk in, and this currently has the 12 feet required. They are hoping to have a setup like the one pictured in the staff report with a furnishing zone and a thoroughway for the pedestrians to walk on. From the perspective of street trees, this project is a little different. They generally like trees at 30 feet here for people to have an enjoyable pedestrian experience, but this is unique because they do not want to cover up the historic sign. Staff instead recommends planters with landscaping, along with the lights that are already there. People can sit on the planters, without blocking the walkway for pedestrians or the sign.

Ms. Davis said the staff report notes this will trigger requirements for public improvement and asked if that included the benches being discussed and if they will choose a specific style that would continue down State Street.

Mr. Hall said they already have specs set up for these benches, so when they have projects like this they can purchase the same thing from the manufacturer. There is only 63 feet of street presence here, and they want to soften things. UDOT at some point gave a deceleration lane and entrance to someone for the Jiffy Lube that is very close to Vine Street. That means, when standing in front of the theater, cars are veering over towards you for that deceleration lane to turn on Vine Street or into the Jiffy Lube.

Ms. Davis asked if the benches facing towards the theater would give those in the area a bit of a barrier.

Mr. Hall said he is not sure if the benches are even the best idea, as ideally there would be on-street parking there. The planters will soften the effect of the cars whizzing right by on State Street, and they will be designed the correct height and depth to allow people to sit on them. The benches will be installed facing the theater, not the street.

Mr. Beck noted that the front of the building was described as 63 feet wide, and he asked if that includes the storefronts in addition to the entrance.

Mr. Hall said the storefronts are a part of the theater, and it's all part of that 63-foot measurement.

Mr. Hayes asked if the neighboring buildings are still privately owned.

Mr. Hall said yes, they are privately owned and include Jerk's Bike Shop. He said he would suggest the planters over benches, as this is not a great pedestrian environment as it is, and they definitely need to do something but can't use trees.

Ms. Davis asked how those planters will be watered.

Mr. Hall said they would use water-wise options, so probably just a drip line. There is already a water manhole, there so access to water is not an issue. Staff is recommending that the review committee forward a recommendation of design approval to the commission with the conditions listed in the staff report. He reviewed the parking information in the staff report, including the

parking exemptions for existing buildings in the historic downtown area. When the city hall property is redeveloped in the future, the intent is for the city to maintain those parking spaces, and maybe even add to them.

Ms. Davis asked when the new City Hall property will be done.

Mr. Hall said they are supposed to be in there in February if things keep going smoothly, however it will take time to empty City Hall and get everyone moved over there. The city is working with a real estate firm to market the property and see what kind of interest there is in buying it.

Mr. Beck asked about the plans for the current City Hall. Who are they planning to sell it to, what type of use are they planning it to be sold for.

Mr. Hall said the city doesn't have any plans for the future of the property, they will be working with a real estate firm to see what the possibilities are.

Ms. Davis asked if the city would like the property to be sold for commercial use.

Mr. Hall said the city hall property is actually in the downtown zone, in the MCCD currently. It could go either residential or commercial, or both as mixed use. If it went residential, it would have a significant commercial requirement as retail/commercial is required when doing residential in a mixed-use zone. For the purposes of the theater renovation, he is only involving City Hall to provide additional parking that is needed.

Mr. Hayes had concerns about the parking, but those have been addressed. He then asked about ADA parking and those requirements.

Mr. Hall explained that technically, there are no requirements for ADA parking since the parking requirement is zero. However, they are trying to provide some parking behind the theater, and they are working to purchase the land to make that possible. The property there has been vacant for a while, and if they are able to purchase it, there would be at least three ADA spaces, along with some regular parking.

Ms. Davis asked if there would be any bike racks.

Mr. Hall said yes, there will be bike racks. Ideally, they would like to have bike racks out in front, but with the limited space they may only be able to install one rack in the front between planters, and then the rest in the back if they are able to secure the additional parking space. He assumed that in the past when the theater was running, it was during times when the post office had no business and people probably parked there. They can't count on those spaces, and the post office (federal government) doesn't do parking agreements for things like this.

Mr. Beck noted that there are signs that indicate those spaces are for postal employees/patrons only and wondered if that will make a difference.

Mr. Hall said that after hours, people will park there and there is nothing the city can do about that. Since the theater and post office will be busy at opposite times, any major theater parking would be done outside of the post office's normal business hours.

Mr. Hayes asked if there are any plans to buy the Jerk's building.

Mr. Hall said no. There is a tattoo place right there as well with studio space they rent out to photographers and others who want to use it for photoshoots.

Mr. Hayes asked if they are planning on any Movies in the Park type events in this building.

Mr. Sorenson said there will be a variety of options. They have already hired a company to do a feasibility study on what should go into the theater. They are already thinking about having live plays, movies, concerts, and some local arts. The theater will also be available to the public to rent. He added that the owner of Desert Star, Michael Todd, believes that what is being done here will impact his facility in a positive way. It will bring people into the area for arts and they will discover his theater.

Mr. Hall added that small theaters like this are like restaurants, they are not in competition and want to draw people in because they'll see what else is around there and visit those places in the future. He spoke to someone with The Alamo Draft House Cinema, down in Las Vegas at the shopping center convention. They said they would love to be in Utah, specifically Murray, and somewhere where there are arts and entertainment going on that are not the typical large Cineplex type theaters.

Ms. Davis asked how much it would cost to rent the theater for a night.

Mr. Sorenson said they don't have that information yet; it will be part of the feasibility study; the idea is to make it affordable.

Ms. Davis asked if those renting the space could bring in their own DVDs to play, or if they have to utilize what is already playing.

Mr. Sorenson said the idea is that those renting out the space would be able to choose what they play.

Mr. Beck asked if there will be any food service facilities.

Mr. Sorenson said no, it will just be lobby concessions. There will be an inside area, to the north of the theater, that will be available for things like pizza parties and other food centered gatherings. There will be no food preparation available on site.

Mr. Hayes asked for the seating numbers.

Mr. Hall responded there will be 300 fixed seats.

Mr. Hayes asked who they will be in competition with around the valley when they open this theater.

Mr. Rasmussen said there is a similar theater in Midvale.

Mr. Sorenson noted that the size of this theater is unique, so there really isn't anything else that fits this niche in the valley.

Mr. Hall noted there are concert venues up in Salt Lake that hold similar numbers of people, but they are not fixed seats, and they are not set up for this kind of arrangement.

Mr. Sorenson said there is a theater in Logan that is very similar to this.

Mr. Hall added that having the capability to do film and live performance makes this theater even more unique.

Mr. Hayes asked if this would be accessible for something like the Sundance Film Festival.

Mr. Sorenson said yes, in fact they use The Egyptian Theater in Park City for that. They have contacted Sundance to discuss those possibilities.

Mr. Beck asked if there were any more comments.

Mr. Hall said there were no comments received before the meeting to share.

Mr. Beck loves this and remembers going here when he was a kid. His sentiment is that he is very concerned about the parking situation, for a few reasons. Legally he thinks they can probably get away with the zero-parking requirement based on the circumstances, but he still wonders where people are going to park. He thinks there might still be issues with the post office and depending on the development of the old Murray City Hall property there could be additional issues. If the city property develops with parking in the back, or some kind of residential, the parking spaces will be more like 500-700 feet away from the theater which will cause a major concern. That will cause a lot more of the pull up and drop off type of situations, which is a public safety concern, along with being a traffic concern, as we do not have any type of space set up for that. Speaking as a developer, if the city is going to impose a 75-parking space imposition on the city hall property and it's residential, they are knocking out 75 apartments; if it is commercial, they will be driving down the value of the old City Hall property for development. He thinks that should be reconfigured in some other fashion, but he sees that as a major hit and a huge detriment to the developer and value of the property. He understands it has to be done, but his concern is that if this is as successful as they hope, on a regular basis they are going to have overcrowding and public safety issues in the front. People will park at the Home 2 Suites and be a burden there, and just make it feel very congested in an area designed for walking around. They will also be driving down values and having people walk from football fields away to get to the location. He doesn't have a solution, but he's looking for input on where he might be wrong.

Mr. Hall said that he's not wrong about this building having no parking. He would like to see what they did in the past, what those numbers for parking were and what they might be able to expect, but there has never been a parking stall associated with this building.

Ms. Davis asked for details on the deceleration lane leading into Jiffy Lube, and if they could have people pull in their lot to drop off and then go around their building to leave.

Mr. Hall said that kind of agreement could be possible, but Jiffy Lube would have to be on board with it.

Ms. Davis said that might be a possibility, to ask them if they would be willing to help alleviate some of the congestion on the street.

Mr. Sorenson has spoken with the post office, and they are open to us using their parking after hours. That is because we lease part of another parking lot to them for their employees. However, he spoke with them around February or March and they told him to expect things to take about a year to get that kind of agreement.

Mr. Hall agreed that demanding that parking on City Hall's property does impact the potential redevelopment of it and lowers the cost of the land.

Ms. Davis asked about subdividing the city hall property and having parking in a specific area, so they can sell the rest of the property.

The committee and Mr. Hall discussed different options for arranging the parking with potential future development.

Ms. Davis asked if parking was added, and they purchased the land behind the theater, could they create a drop off zone in the back with only ADA parking back there, and possibly a few additional spaces.

Mr. Hall said that part of the easement in the back is access to the rear doors. If they get the rear property, it will need to be site planned to handle whatever goes on and doing a drop off zone is a great idea.

Mr. Sorenson added that performers will also need space in the back to unload and move things into the theater. This parking would still be better than what is available at the Egyptian Theater, he is always parking blocks away but they do have a drop off section.

Mr. Hayes said it's a shame they couldn't have a shared parking agreement with The Vine.

Mr. Hall said that has been discussed, but they barely have enough parking for their residents. This will just be a venue that people will have to be willing to park and walk to, and that's why they want the area to look welcoming. If people are going to have to walk, we want it to look as nice as possible and feel good. As these places are renovated, it is going to get harder to provide parking right where it's needed unless they are fully redeveloping. Surveys have shown interest in renovation of these old buildings, so this is right in line with what people want to see; however, they don't realize that these buildings would require zero parking stalls, and the problems that creates.

Mr. Beck said that if they are recommending approval, he wants to have a substantial concern/caution noted regarding parking, realizing they can't solve all the problems now.

Mr. Hayes moved to forward a recommendation of design review approval to the planning commission, subject to the conditions listed in the staff report and based on the substantial parking concerns noted above. Seconded by Ms. Davis. A voice vote was made, vote was 3-0 and unanimous in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.



Jared Hall, Community & Economic Development Director