

**CITY OF KENT  
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
June 1, 2021**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**     Howard Boyle  
                                  Kevin Koogle  
                                  Bridget Tipton  
                                  David Basista  
                                  Dennis Saxe

**STAFF PRESENT:**       Eric Fink, Assistant Law Director  
                                  Bridget Susel, Community Development Director  
                                  Heather Heckman, Development Planner  
                                  Tim Sahr, Development Engineer

**I.     CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Boyle at 3:00 p.m.

**II.    ROLL CALL**

Howard Boyle, Bridget Tipton, Dennis Saxe, Kevin Koogle, and David Basista were present.

**III.   ADMINISTRATION OF OATH**

Mr. Fink instructed members of the audience wishing to be heard on any of the cases presented at this meeting to raise their right hand. Mr. Fink administered the oath, "Do you swear or affirm that the testimony that you are about to give this evening is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God? Please say "I do". The participants responded, "I do".

**IV.    PROJECT REVIEW**

**A.     ARB21-008 GARAGE 108 / VALERIE LANDIS  
                                  108 WEST COLLEGE STREET**

**Continued review of exterior façade and signs.**

Kevin Robinette, architect, stated that he would like to address the issue of the paint color of all three buildings and the conditions of the three buildings prior to the painting. He stated that in his opinion, these three building that sit on the edge of the downtown area are not distinctive individually. He stated that Ms. Landis has entered into lease agreements for use of the second floor space with all three buildings, which was the basis for the decision to paint and brand all three buildings the same; all building owners were agreeable.

Valerie Landis, business owner, shared before and after photos of all three buildings. She described the previous colors of each building and the condition of the exterior surfaces that needed repairs. She explained that the new paint colors are the branding colors. Ms. Landis stated that the front sign will be unlit white letters and she presented three options for the back sign. She stated that her preference would be for the back sign to be is minimally internally lit white

letters. She explained that both signs will have letters that are mounted on tracks that will blend into the building.

Mr. Boyle stated that although they painted without approvals, it gives the Board a chance to see the end result as opposed to renderings. Mr. Boyle stated that he does not have an issue with the front sign as it was presented today. He questioned if the back sign was allowable.

Ms. Susel stated that there is a copy of the invoice for the removal of the signs on April 19, 2021 in the Board's packets; this falls within the 180 days and therefore the sign is allowed to be reinstalled (non-conforming use for the 2 signs).

Mr. Boyle stated that he doesn't feel that the back internally lit sign is objectionable. He stated that the sign is on the edge of downtown and across the parkway from the internally lit signs for Walgreens. He stated that he has come around to the point that the new paint color is not objectionable for the building; the color doesn't detract from the old condition of the building. He stated that it disturbs him that the Kent Canadian Club has been painted because it was still in its original yellow brick color and it has some architectural detail. He stated that in the past they have insisted that the buildings appear separate and have architectural character. He stated that he feels that painting all three buildings one color destroys that. He stated that this property is in the historic district and is something that the ARB needs to look at. He stated that from a historical standpoint, he would have liked to see the Kent Canadian Club just cleaned and maintained.

Mr. Koogle thanked the applicant for cleaning up the three buildings and is glad that they are occupied. He stated that there are three separate buildings, each with its own patterns and massing, and he feels that they need to be treated as such; one single color for three buildings goes against what the ARB is trying to do. He stated that he would not have been in favor of the color if it was presented prior to being applied.

Mr. Saxe stated that he agrees that he would also have preferred to see the Kent Canadian Club just cleaned. He stated that the new paint color is the same as the colors of the florist shop and McDonald's on S. Water St

Ms. Tipton stated that she is still in favor of the color and feels that it is a massive improvement. She stated that the hotel also uses this color. She stated that they have retroactively approved other projects in the past, such as the Historical Society sign, and The Pub; it is not unprecedented to retroactively approve something. She stated that the lit sign on the back of the building and the unlit sign on the front make sense.

Mr. Basista stated that it would have been nice for the buildings to maintain their own identity but it is an improvement. He stated that the color seems to be fairly common lately with newer buildings. He agreed that the presented signage on the back is not an issue.

The Board asked the applicant which option she prefers for the rear sign.

Ms. Landis stated that she prefers option three for the rear sign, which is mounted on a track rather than a painted board or metal material. She stated that the front sign is the same in all three options.

Mr. Boyle stated that the color is not an unusual color in the downtown and it has kind of grown on him. Mr. Boyle questioned if the Board is going to accept the Canadian Club as is or are they going to request that they do something different in light of the historic architectural detail of the building.

Scott McPherson, a Trustee for the Kent Canadian Club, apologized and stated that they were unaware that approval was needed prior to painting. He stated that they were just trying to participate and improve the block. He added that it would be a burden to repaint or remove paint.

**Public Comment**

None.

**MOTION:** *In case ARB21-008, Garage 108 / Valerie Landis, 108 W. College St., Ms. Tipton moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the:*

- 1. Signs - Option #3: unlit front sign and internally lit back sign as presented.*
- 2. Building paint for all three buildings – as presented.*

***Mr. Saxe seconded the motion.***

Mr. Koogle disagreed with making all three buildings one visual entity regardless of color.

**The motion carried 3-2. Ms. Tipton, Mr. Basista, and Mr. Saxe were in favor and Mr. Koogle and Mr. Boyle were opposed.**

**V. MEETING SUMMARIES**

**MOTION:** *Mr. Basista moved to approved the April 6, 2021 Meeting Summary as presented. Ms. Tipton seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0*

**MOTION:** *Mr. Koogle moved to approved the May 4, 2021 Meeting Summary as presented. Mr. Saxe seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0*

## **VI. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Proposed Draft Language Amendment to ARB exceptions for review of public art and exterior color, per Council request.**

Ms. Susel stated that while reviewing the proposed new zoning code, Council requested that public art and exterior color of buildings be brought back to Council for consideration in removing it or adding exceptions to the ARB's responsibilities. She added that Council is also reviewing the height for solar energy fixtures.

Mr. Fink stated that the original draft of the new zoning code proposed to City Council did not contain any changes to the ARB's responsibilities, authority, or jurisdiction; it was simply reordered and renumbered to be more consistent with the other Boards in the new chapter.

Ms. Susel stated that the ARB's ability to amend is located in two places: 1) making recommendations to Council to the amend Design Guidelines, and 2) making recommendations to Council to amend the Overlay District, which requires 51% of the property owner's approval; the language has not changed from the old code to the new.

Mr. Fink presented the draft language that will be presented to Council for the Board's review.

Mr. Boyle stated that this is Council's decision and Ms. Susel will present the ARB comments back to Council even though it isn't required. He encouraged the Board to contact Council directly with their concerns. He stated that his concern isn't about the art itself, but rather the architectural integrity of the buildings that the art goes on. He stated that someone needs to look at the location of the art and deem if it is appropriate. He stated that he would be fine with a City Public Arts Council to review these items after the location is approved. He feels that the ARB still has a place with these reviews even with an Art Council. Secondly, he stated that when it comes to color, he doesn't feel that the review of the integrity of the building and the color can be separated. He stated that he understands that some of their decisions are unpopular but someone needs to review the projects for the color given that the City does not have an approved limited color palette. He stated that he feels strongly about this. He stated that they should address issues regarding where art is placed on a building. He stated that he doesn't feel that you can separate the color from the building being reviewed. He stated that he feels that this shortsighted.

Mr. Saxe stated that he agrees that the color is integral with the aesthetics.

Mr. Basista agreed and stated that this is what the ARB is for.

Mr. Koogler stated that what they are describing just happened with this last review.

Ms. Tipton stated that public art is difficult because the architectural guidelines do not apply to public art; the approval process is based on opinion. She stated that she

would love to see that be reviewed by someone else. She stated that the general location of the art should still be reviewed.

Ms. Susel questioned if the location of public art could be limited by ordinance and verified by staff rather than require an applicant go to two Boards for approvals.

Ms. Tipton stated that this is also her concern.

Mr. Boyle agreed that staff should be able to indicate what is appropriate.

Ms. Susel suggested limiting the location to side and rear of buildings that are not significantly historical. She stated that she and Mr. Fink will craft some language.

Ms. Tipton stated that saying that the ARB doesn't need to look at any paint colors for the exterior of buildings is extreme. She also agrees that color and material are integral in general. She feels that removing the exterior paint color, sign color, brick color, etc. from the jurisdiction of the ARB would make the guidelines more difficult to enforce. She stated that the guidelines are very difficult to enforce as written.

Ms. Susel asked if there are certain parameters that could be suggested in the event that Council is looking for guidance; new build vs remodel?

Mr. Boyle stated that taking color out of the fabric of the building, you completely eliminate the ARB's purpose.

Ms. Tipton stated that she agrees to a point. However, if it is an issue of paint maintenance that might include a color change she is unsure.

Ms. Susel stated that maintenance without a color change can be done without ARB approval now. She reminded the Board that they can all contact the Clerk of Council to ask to be added to the Zoom meeting with Council and be a part of the public comment.

Mr. Koogle questioned how they get Planning Commission to listen to their recommendations more for cases outside of the Overlay District.

Ms. Susel stated that PC does discuss it and it is included in the staff report but whether or not they choose to support the recommendation is their purview.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** *Mr. Basista moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Koogle seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.*