

**Historic District Regulatory Board  
Minutes of May 19, 2022 Meeting**

City of Lake Wales  
201 W. Central Avenue, Lake Wales, FL 33853

A regular meeting of the Board of Historic District Regulatory Board was held on May 19, 2022 at 5:15 PM in the City Commission Chambers at the Administration Building.

Chairman Brandon Alvarado called the meeting to order at 5:12 P.M.

**Agenda Item 1. Roll Call**

Members Present: Brandon Alvarado (Chairman), Jonathan Kaufman, Scott Crews, and Larry Bossarte (Vice Chairman).

Staff Present: Mark Bennett, Director of Development Services; Autumn Cochella, Development Services Manager; Jasmine Khammany, Senior Planner and Shena Rowland, Secretary.

Megan McLaughlin from Plusurbia Design – Consultant for Historic District

Amy Groves from Dover Kohl

**Agenda Item 2. Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Alvarado asked if there were any suggestions or edits that needed to be made to the minutes from last month's meeting.

Mr. Bossarte motioned to approve the minutes and Mr. Crews seconded the motion. All four Board members voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the March 17, 2022 meeting.

**Agenda Item 3 Downtown Design Standard**

**STAFF REPORT  
Historic Business District Regulatory Board  
May 19, 2022 Agenda**

**Project:** Proposed Amendments to Land Development Regulations  
Downtown Design Standards

**Presenter:** Amy Groves, Dover Kohl via Conference Call

Mr. Bennett reads the staff report to the Board listing the proposed amendments to the following sections of Land Use Regulations:

Staff proposes amendments to the following sections of the Land Development Regulations (LDRs) (Chapter 23, Lake Wales Code of Ordinances):

Section 23-303 Sidewalks

Section 23-306 Off-street and vehicular areas

Section 23-307 Landscaping

Section 23-342 Alcoholic Beverage Sales and Services

Section 23-353 Outdoor Seating Areas

Section 23-401 District Classifications

Table 23-405 Correspondence of Zoning Districts to Comprehensive Plan Land Uses

Section 23-421 Permitted Uses

Table 23-422B Dimensional and Area Standards – Nonresidential Districts

Section 23-423 Downtown Mixed-Use Design Standards (NEW)

Section 23-545.3 Signage Design

Table 23-545 Location, Area, and Height Requirements for Signs for Nonresidential Uses

Section 23-802 Definitions

Mr. Bennett then introduces Amy Groves from Dover Kohl and explains she is joining the meeting via conference call to present to the Board. Megan McLaughlin is also present for questions and comments.

Ms. Groves then begins the presentation with Ms. Rowland controlling the slides.

Ms. Grove concludes the presentation and opens it up for questions.

Mr. Bennett asks for questions for Staff.

Mr. Alvarado then asks a question regarding the permitted use chart. He asks if single family is being added to the overly.

Ms. McLaughlin replies that right now, single family is permitted. What is being added is single family attached dwelling, like a townhome.

Mr. Alvarado confirms he understands.

There is open discussion with the Board.

Mr. Bossarte then states this is his second time hearing the presentation because he was present at the Public Forum previously held. He doesn't have any questions, he is relying on the expertise of Dover Kohl and staff. He states that what was brought up prior is the subject of bars, he asks if this is similar to Coral Gables. He states he has not been affected negatively with the presence of bars and feels that handled properly and policed correctly would be an asset to the area. He is curious as the input from the Board on this subject.

Mr. Alvarado mentions the issue of Bars in Winter Haven and the issues they had previously that he feels they have brought under control. He feels what is missing from the Lake Wales area is affordable living for the 20's and 30's age group with accessibility to everything that is needed in one area. He feels that having bars, restaurants and coffee shops is needed to keep revenue in Lake Wales.

Mr. Bennett states the intent of the Bars is too activate the downtown area.

Mr. Alvarado clarifies that now, it is permitted with restaurant use only an that will change to allow just a bar?

Mr. Bennett clarifies this. It will open the door to Bars in the downtown area, if it does become an issue, this can be changed.

Mr. Bossarte states that Mr. Gibson's comment in the public forum that this was not for everyone was a good comment. This will not reach all generations.

Mr. Bennett states he took the comment that if you do not want to follow our standards of development in this area then you can develop in other areas of the City.

Mr. Alvarado asks how this plan compares to other cities?

Open discussion regarding this.

Mr. Alvarado understands from this discussion that we are not breaking mold but in fact an exception because we are not allowing Bars.

Mr. Bennett agrees with this.

Mr. Alvarado states he was not able to attend the public forum but he gets cornered about parking, he asks if there were any issues with parking. He feels it is a parking management problem, not a parking space issue.

Mr. Bennett states this was brought up in the public forum. He does not remember the specifics but what he can say is that any one coming in with development or re-development will not need to meet a minimum standard, they will need to supply a parking analysis to demonstrate how they will handle parking.

Ms. Mclaughlin comments that she doesn't think private property owners should be required to provide parking on site. This has stopped development in downtown Lake Wales. She thinks it is critical that this be changed. She thinks Dover Kohl and Mainstreet have done a great job of explaining.

Mr. Alvarado asks if there has been any feedback from business owners?

Mr. Bennett responds that is why he wanted Mainstreet to take a hard look at this to get that feed back from the business community. This was accomplished and the letter was provided.

Mr. Bossarte states it is going to be an adjustment and will not make everyone happy. He does feel it is necessary to make downtown alive. He feels that once it is explained that they are trying to make it pedestrian friendly and not vehicle friendly then it will be better understood.

Ms. McLaughlin states that ADA issues have been brought up and that a walkable downtown will be more wheelchair friendly and address a lot of these issues. She also states another comment was in regards to public bathrooms, she feels this will be addressed with this plan in that merchants will be open and have restrooms available.

Mr. Alvarado asks if any changes were made from the time this was presented a few months ago and now?

Ms. McLaughlin responds that no major changes were made.

Mr. Alvarado asks if there authority stops at the historic overlay?

Mr. Bennet confirms it does, they are responsible with the historic overlay.

Ms. McLaughlin states they will follow the same procedure with the certificate of appropriateness. This is addressed at the beginning of the code. What this code will do is make sure the development going on around the historic district and the infill in the historic district will be pre-packaged but the zoning issues will be cleaned up for them.

Mr. Alvarado asks if it will only be new development or re-development that need to comply?

Mr. Bennett confirms that yes, new development and if it is more than 50% on redevelopment.

Ms. Cochella clarifies that it is 50% of the assessed value.

Mr. Alvarado asks if staff is confident in moving forward.

Mr. Bennett responds that yes, staff has been working on this for at least a year.

Ms. Cochella updates on the sign code updates. The sign steering committee has provided comments and she is working on a draft.

Mr. Alvarado comments that he believes that will pair nicely with the proposed Downtown Design Standards. He then asks for further comments and in having none he opens it up for public comment.

Ms. Tammy James, City resident expresses concern regarding the Bars. She asks if language can be added certain amount of bars are allowable on a street or certain area so it is not just all bars on one street. It would be broken up as far as what is offered.

Mr. Bennett responds that they could mandate there is a minimum separation of bars. He is not sure of a magic number at this time.

Ms. James explains that she used to live in Atlanta and it became 3 square blocks of nothing but bars and it became an issue and just does not want to see that happen here.

Mr. Bennett asks for Ms. Groves to give some feed back on the request.

Ms. McLaughlin asks if there is a minimum separation between church and schools?

Ms. Groves responds that there is.

Mr. Bennett states his vision for the next step of the process is to take a look at chapter 5 and what would need to be done to adjust to make it work.

Ms. Cochella confirms yes, in the current LDR there is a separation.

Ms. McLaughlin thinks that may limit that to small areas or just parts of downtown. She feels that restrictions can be mandated to shape this into what works best. She also questions the space.

Mr. Bennett responds that the minimum is 1500 square feet and maximum of 6500 square feet.

Ms. McLaughlin asks if this is city wide?

Mr. Alvarado states it is in the overlay.

Ms. Grove states it applies to all wine and beer bars. She points out it is on page 4.

Mr. Bennett then reads from page 4, the wine and beer bar shall not be less than 1000 and no more than 5500 square feet.

Mr. Alvarado asks if hours of operations will be restricted?

Mr. Bossarte thinks the state may regulate.

Ms. Cochella reminds the Board that they can be more stringent than what the state allows.

Ms. McLaughlin asks if anyone knows what they currently are.

Ms. Cochella responds it is not past 2 am.

Mr. Alvarado states we should not be too hard with the restrictions. He feels that 2 am is the standard.

Ms. Cochella comments that he doesn't think it will be a big concern. She doesn't feel that businesses will come and see that bars are allowed and load up downtown.

Mr. Alvarado asks what the recommendation for standard separation for the bars or the amount of bars that will be allowed. Is there a magic number or density?

Mr. Bennett responds that he feels it would be better to have a distance standard to allow more flexibility as opposed to saying you can only have 3, 4 or 5 bars.

Ms. Grove comments that you could do a distance or consider like no more than three in a row. There are different options to consider.

Mr. Alvarado asks if it could be worded to separate from residential use?

Mr. Bossarte states he thinks that will limit development.

There is open discussion.

Ms. Cochella states that if people choose to live downtown, they are choosing to live near the establishments.

Mr. Crews thinks her observations are excellent. He thinks this needs to be looked into further. He feels now is the time to do it.

Ms. Cochella comments she likes the idea of limiting how many can be in a row.

Mr. Alvarado states we need to be proactive rather than reactive.

Mr. Bennett asks if there is a consensus on the Board, first to further regulate bar location and second to as to what type of tool we use, either so many in a row or distance separation. This can be modified. The plan is to take to Planning and Zoning Board in July so there is time to make modifications.

Mr. Alvarado states he wants to be cautious as to how stringent it is made. He has viewed this as a way to loosen constrictions. He does not want to deter development.

Mr. Crews agrees he believes one of the two options would address the fear of these businesses coming in. He is not sure what the correct answer is but feels it needs to be further looked into.

Mr. Kaufman thinks it is a good idea to limit the amount in a row or in close proximity to each other. Otherwise if you do end up with row and row of bars that defeats the purpose of mixed use.

Mr. Bennett states he can see the consensus is to look further into the situation of how many or placements of bars.

Mr. Alvarado asks if there are any further public comment. In seeing none, he closes the public hearing and asks the board if there are any further comments. In hearing none he entertains a motion to recommend to Planning Board and City Commission.

Mr. Bossarte makes the motion.

Mr. Crews seconds.

Mr. Alvarado asks for all in favor to say aye and all respond. Mr. Alvarado asks for all opposed to respond nay and no one responds. It passes unanimously.

#### **Agenda Item 4. Other Business**

Citizen Application from Tammy James to be appointed to the Historic Board.

Mr. Alvarado asks Ms. James to please come forward and introduce herself.

Ms. James approached and gives a brief presentation of herself and why should would be a good fit for the Historic Board.

Mr. Crews comments that she also owns property downtown.

Ms. James confirms that she does.

Mr. Alvarado questions that the Mayor indicated he wanted look further into the nomination to boards. He asks if any further direction has been given or continue with current procedure.

Mr. Bennett states that no further direction has been given.

Mr. Alvarado asks for further comment from the board and in hearing none, he asks for a motion to recommend Ms. Tammy James to City Commission for approval to appoint to the Historic District Regulatory Board.

Mr. Crews makes the motion.

Mr. Bossarte seconds the motion.

Mr. Alvarado asks for all in favor to say aye and all respond. Mr. Alvarado asks for all opposed to respond nay and no one responds. It passes unanimously.

Mr. Alvarado asks for any further business.

Ms. Cochella is hopeful she will have something next month for the Sign changes.

Mr. Alvarado asks if there has been any further communication from Florida Braces?

Ms. Cochella responds that a First Step meeting was held and we are awaiting submittals.

Mr. Alvarado asks for further comment and in seeing none moves to Communication and Petitions.

**Agenda Item 5. Communications and Petitions**

Mr. Kaufman announces that as of May 9<sup>th</sup> he has enlisted in the United States Army and ships to basic on August 1<sup>st</sup>. This being said, his last meeting will be in July. He asks if he needs to submit a formal resignation?

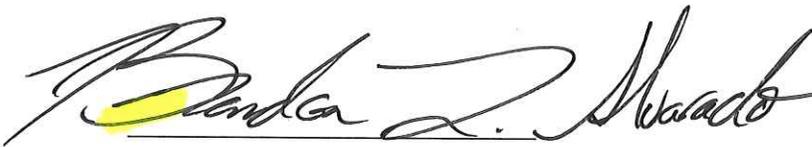
Ms. Cochella offers her congratulations and states he can send an email to Shena Rowland regarding his resignation.

There is open discussion in congratulating.

Mr. Alvarado announces the need to find someone. He then thanks Mr. Kaufman for his work.

**Agenda Item 6. Adjournment**

Mr. Alvarado then adjourns the meeting at 6:20 p.m.



Brandon Alvarado, Chairman



Attest: Recording Secretary