MINUTES
DOWNTOWN LAWTON ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Downtown Lawton Architectural Review Committee meeting held September 15, 2020 in the 2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall, 212 SW 9th Street, Lawton, Oklahoma.

The meeting was called to order at 1:23 p.m. by Chairman Ernest Sheppard.

Notice of the meeting and agenda were posted on the City Hall bulletin board as required by State law.

1. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Ernest Sheppard Joe Abshere John Purcell, Jr. Jesse Cross
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Jacob Brox
OTHERS PRESENT:	Richard Rogalski, Planning Director Greg Gibson, Assistant City Attorney Charlotte Brown, Planning and Subdivision Administrator Cindy Augustine, Planning and Subdivision Administrator Kristin Herr, Library Director

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2. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 21, 2020 MEETING OF THE DOWNTOWN LAWTON ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE.

MOTION by Abshere, SECOND by Cross, to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2020 meeting of the Downtown Lawton Architectural Review Committee.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYES: Sheppard, Cross, Abshere, Purcell. NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED 4 – 0.

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3. CONSIDER APPROVING A CERTIFICATE OF ARCHITECTURAL CONFORMANCE FOR A MURAL TO BE LOCATED ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE LAWTON PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNEX LOCATED AT 110 SW 4TH STREET.

An application for a Certificate of Architectural Conformance in accordance with the Downtown Lawton Overlay District (DLOD) has been submitted for a mural to be located on the west side of the Lawton Public Library annex. The property is located at 110 SW 4th Street and is within the Mixed Use Sub-district. The proposed mural is sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

The existing building is a red brick structure with a standing seam metal roof and is located on the north side of the alley. The building is connected to the main library with a roof structure over the alley. The mural will be painted directly on the brick. The applicant states that the mural will cover the entire west wall of the annex and will be approximately 120 feet long by 18 feet tall.

Herr said the idea for the mural arose from a conversation she was having with a group of people about livening up the library. She said staff was unsure exactly what they wanted to do, and the Friends of the Library got with the Shaw brothers to come up with the mural design. Herr said this mural would be placed on the library's storage building and would be visible from both SW 4th Street and Gore Boulevard. She thinks it will be a great addition to the area, especially with the new Farmer's Market coming to the area. Herr said the mural was brought before the Lawton Enhancement Trust Authority last week.

Rogalski said although there was not a quorum at last week's LETA meeting, all of the members present were in favor of the mural.

Brown said LETA members will vote on the mural at the next meeting, which will be held on September 23rd.

Purcell asked if the picture of the mural provided to DLARC members is an actual representation of what would be painted on the building.

Herr said for the most part. However, there are a few minor changes that will be made. For instance, the picture of the mural shows James Bond holding a gun, but Herr said staff would prefer the gun be removed from the design.

Purcell agreed that it would be a good idea to remove the gun.

Herr said staff has placed the design concept for the mural on display at the library for two months to solicit community feedback.

Rogalski clarified that the layout of the mural will remain the same but some of the characters may change slightly.

Cross inquired about the cost of this mural. He asked if any sort of landscaping will be added to the area.

Herr said the mural will cost approximately $7,500 and will be paid for by the Friends of the Library. Herr said no additional landscaping would be added at this time.

Rogalski said additional landscaping could not be done by the mural because there's no where to place it.

Sheppard inquired about the purpose of the mural.

Herr said it would help people know where the library is while adding beautification to the community at the same time.

Abshere said he doesn't have an issue with the mural, and he knows murals have been popular lately. However, he asked if approval of this mural would set the precedent for similar requests in the future.

Herr said she loves seeing murals throughout the community.

Sheppard said this mural is basically a sign.

Rogalski said murals are exempt from the sign ordinance. He said it needs to be determined whether the proposed mural is art or more of a sign. Rogalski said he had been looking at it as art, but he can see the rationale of calling the mural a sign.

Gibson noted that the mural simply says "library" and not "Lawton Public Library." He said his opinion is that the mural is not a sign.

Herr said her next task is to get a Lawton Public Library sign. She said the intent of the mural was not to serve as a sign.

Sheppard said he is trying to think ahead, as Abshere mentioned. He is concerned about setting a precedent.

Gibson said he needs a definition of a sign.

Rogalski said a sign communicates a message.

Abshere asked if the Downtown Overlay District has any direction for murals.

Brown said murals are not covered in laws governing the Downtown Overlay District.

Sheppard said he thinks it's great to advertise reading. However, painting a mural on top of brick contradicts DLARCS original intent and vision for the downtown area. Sheppard said he is also concerned this mural may solicit graffiti in the area.

Rogalski said graffiti issues would have to be dealt with as they arise, and the property owners would have to remove it.

Herr said initially she didn't realize these sorts of restrictions existed in the downtown area.

Rogalski said staff has generated a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the Friends of the Library stating that the Friends of the Library are to keep up with the maintenance of the mural.

Gibson asked if the Committee is open to allowing murals in the downtown area.

Sheppard said that's something that needs to be addressed. Sheppard said he doesn't see the difference between a mural and a sign in this situation.

Abshere noted it was the Shaw brothers who came up with the design and it just so happened to be a design that included wording. Herr's initial intent was to beautify the area.

Purcell said the Committee needs to address the use of murals and fences within the Downtown Overlay District to prevent confusion regarding future requests.

Rogalski said the Committee has the authority to determine whether this is a sign or a mural.

Abshere asked if all murals are to come before the committee before they're painted.

Rogalski said they should.

Brown said many murals have been done without notifying the City. However, it is preferred that the City be notified.

Rogalski said legal would need to address what is required to come before the Committee and to what extent DLARC can have influence over the Downtown Overlay District.

Gibson said he will investigate this.

Sheppard said it was his understanding that painting or anything that would change the outside appearance of a building would need to be brought before the Committee.

Purcell noted that many items denied by DLARC end up getting approved through an appeal to the Board of Adjustment.

Abshere asked if this item should be tabled.

MOTION by Cross to table this item until further research is done by the City Attorney's office.

Hearing no second to Cross's motion, Sheppard said the motion fails due to lack of second.

Purcell asked Herr if she'd be open to designing a mural without the word "library."
Herr said probably. She said she will get with the Friends of the Library to discuss an alternative mural design to be brought back to the Committee.

ITEM FAILS FOR LACK OF MOTION

4. COMMENTS

Brown said she spoke with Francis Solar and they plan on building a brick architectural panel to surround their equipment at the Hilton Garden Inn. Francis Solar will be submitting drawings for this design soon.

5. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Cross, SECOND by Purcell, to adjourn. AYES: Unanimous.
MOTION CARRIED.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

Ernest Sheppard, Chairman

Jacob Brox, Secretary

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