



# DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

## MINUTES (FINAL)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2022

6:00 P.M.

ZOOM WEBINAR

**CALL TO ORDER:** Tamie Ehinger, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**PRESENT:** Tamie Ehinger, Chair; Rob DuBoff, Leslie DiCarlo; Chris Bennett; Ellen Sheehan; Tad Roemer; Jeff Gritsavage

**STAFF:** Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, City of Saratoga Springs

### **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated we will hear a short address from the newly elected Mayor Kim.

Mayor Ron Kim addressed the Board introducing himself and Deputy Mayor, Angela Rella. The mayor thanked the Board for their challenging work and volunteerism on behalf of the City of Saratoga Springs. The mayor also noted that he and his Deputy Mayor were always available, and their door was always open.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated the proceedings of this meeting are being recorded for the benefit of the secretary. Because the minutes are not a verbatim record of the proceedings, the minutes are not a word-for-word transcript of the recording.

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, stated as part of the Rules and Regulations approved by the City Council the DRC will conduct the election of Chair and Vice Chair. At this time, she will accept nominations for Chairperson.

Leslie DiCarlo nominated Tamie Ehinger for the office of Chair. Rob DuBoff seconded the nomination.

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner asked if there were any further nominations. Hearing none.

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner asked all in favor of Tamie Ehinger for DRC Chair for 2022.

### **VOTE:**

Chris Bennett, in favor; Rob DuBoff, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 6-0**

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, stated at this time she will accept nominations for Vice Chair.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, nominated Rob DuBoff for the office of Vice Chair. Jeff Gritsavage seconded the nomination.

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner asked if there were any further nominations. Hearing none.

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner stated all in favor of Rob DuBoff for DRC Vice-Chair for 2022.

**VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor;

**MOTION PASSES: 6-0**

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner welcomed Tamie Ehinger, Chair and Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair for the DRC for 2022.

**A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

Approval of meeting minutes was deferred to the January 26, 2022, meeting.

**B. POSSIBLE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:**

The intent of a consent agenda is to identify any application that appears to be “approvable” without need for further evaluation or discussion. If anyone wishes to further discuss any proposed consent agenda item, then that item would be pulled from the “consent agenda” and dealt with individually.

1. **#20211186 133 LAWRENCE TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY MODIFICATIONS**, 133 Lawrence, review of modifications to an existing telecommunications facility within a Planned Unit Development (PUD) District.
2. **#20211190 HIGH PEAKS ASSET MANAGEMENT FREESTANDING SIGN**, 451 Lake Avenue, Architectural Review of a freestanding sign, within the Rural Residential (RR) District.
3. **#20211194 STATION LANE APARTMENTS, EXTERIOR COLOR MODIFICATION**, 3 Station Lane, Architectural Review of modification of exterior colors for an approved 3-building apartment development within the Transect-5 (T-5) Neighborhood Center District.
4. **#20211199 SPRING ROOFTOP SOLAR PANELS**, 344 Lake Avenue, Architectural Review of rooftop solar panels within the Urban Residential-1 (UR-1) District.
5. **#20211115 H&R BLOCK SIGNAGE**, 250A Washington Avenue, Architectural Review of a wall sign within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.
6. **#20211227 SO FETCH DOG STYLISTS WALL SIGN**, 3 Hampstead Place, Architectural Review of a wall sign within the Transect-4 (T-4) Urban Neighborhood District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if there were any questions or comments from the Commission regarding these applications. None heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment on these consent agenda items. None heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, made a motion in the matter of 133 Lawrence Telecommunications Facility Modifications, 133 Lawrence; High Peaks Asset Management Freestanding Sign, 451 Lake Avenue; Station Lane Apartments Exterior Color

Modification, 3 Station Lane; Spring Rooftop Solar Panels, 344 Lake Avenue; So Fetch Dog Stylists Wall Sign, 3 Hampstead Place; that these applications be approved as submitted. Jeff Gritsavage seconded the motion.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if there was any further discussion. None heard.

**VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, in favor; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 7-0**

**COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, noted no new applications will begin after 10:00 P.M. If your application has not been called by that time it will be adjourned to the next meeting's agenda.

**C. DRC APPLICATIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION:**

1. **#20211022 LASH BLVD. SIGNAGE**, 120 South Broadway, Advisory Opinion to the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding a freestanding 48" by 72" sign within the Transect-5 (T-5) Neighborhood Center District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated this application has appeared previously before the DRC. We requested the applicant provide additional details regarding comparable signage in the neighborhood along with additional details on the signage. They have provided that information and will present this information to the Commission.

Agent: Russ Hazen, Ray Sign Incorporated

Mr. Hazen provided a visual of the proposed signage downsized to a 3' x 4' sign and the original proposed signage 4' x 6'. Mr. Hazen provided comparable signage for businesses in the area for the Commission. The 4 x 6 sign is internally lit. Total height is approximately 6 ft.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, feels the signage is appropriate. Having seen the latest presentation, she feels it is compatible with the signage in the surrounding area.

Leslie DiCarlo questioned where the entrance to the property is located since it is in a portion of a larger building. If additional tenants move into the building, will they each require a monument signage as presented? This signage is lovely and fits in nicely however her concern is what happens down the road.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, reminded the Commission that there are sections of this property where the intent is demolition. This is an Advisory Opinion to the Zoning Board of Appeals and should the variance be granted it will return before this Commission for further review.

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, stated only one monument sign is allowed per property so any additional tenants would need to determine where their signage would be located or seek a variance for additional signage.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated the size is not so much an issue as is the fact that it is internally lit. We are trying to get away from an internally lit box sign. The comparables shown by Mr. Hazen show signage externally lit. This may not be part of the Advisory Opinion, but the applicant's agent should be aware.

Jeff Gritsavage questioned the lighting for the signage as well. The sign looks fine and does fit the neighborhood. He agrees with Rob the box sign is something we are trying we are trying to get away from.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated we can include our preference and language in the Advisory Opinion we present to the ZBA.

Based on what information the applicant has provided does that address your concerns Mr. DuBoff.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated he cannot support this type of signage.

Ellen Sheehan clarified the variance is simply for the size and that is what we are offering our Advisory Opinion on? She is fine with the size.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated correct and they will return before the DRC for signage approval.

Chris Bennett stated he agrees with Rob. He does not have an issue with the size, it is appropriate. The base is a little weak, it looks bare. Landscaping would help.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment on this application. None heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, made a motion in the matter of the Advisory Opinion to the Zoning Board of Appeals on the Lash Boulevard Signage, 120 South Broadway, following discussion on this matter on January 20, 2022, the Commission issues the following Favorable Opinion. The height and scale of the signage as presented is appropriate and consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. The DRC encourages details on landscaping as well as lighting. Seconded by Ellen Sheehan.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair asked if there was any further discussion. None heard.

**VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, in favor; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 7-0**

**2. #20210978 ST. PETER'S SIGNAGE**, 46 Congress Place Advisory Opinion to the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding wall signage, and two off-premises freestanding signs within the Transect-6 (T-6) District.

Applicant: St. Peter's Signage

Agent: Carl Wheeler, AJ Signs

Mr. Wheeler stated they are proposing three signs. A visual of the proposed signage was provided.

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, stated variances are required for two of these signs. There are two proposed off-premises freestanding signs meaning that the signage is not located on the same property or parcel as the actual use which requires a variance. The third sign which requires a variance is a wall sign being proposed on a façade that is not a frontage for the St. Peter's use.

Mr. Wheeler stated this is wall sign #1 single sign on the front of the plaza facing Congress Street. It is a single acrylic backed face with push through logos. The use is not on the front of the plaza but around the back of the building. This is to indicate St. Peter's is in this plaza. The second sign is a proposed acrylic backed double sided sign so only the lettering lights. This is located at the corner of Congress Place entrance. The third sign is a proposed polycarbonate sign as well. This will be a panel swap to an existing off premise sign at the corner of Congress Place and Congress Street.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated we have been requested by the ZBA for an Advisory Opinion regarding the wall signage and two off premise freestanding signs. The Chair stated regarding Sign #1 the wall sign on the façade of Congress Plaza, facing Congress Street. Under no circumstances should there be a sign on a building where there is no entrance associated with it is not appropriate. The height of the sign is also inappropriate as well. The Chair could not support this sign in this location. The monument sign #3 which simply being swapped in is appropriate. The Chair suggested directional assistance on the panel as well. The new monument sign #2 on Federal would also benefit from directional signage assistance.

Jeff Gritsavage stated regarding the signage on South Franklin Street, he feels the field of the signage is too big and unnecessarily large. It could be tightened up with the addition of an arrow, The wall signage appears too small and almost unreadable. The swap out panel on the monument sign is fine.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, agrees with Jeff. The swap out panel on the monument sign is fine. The wall sign on Congress Plaza frontage makes no sense at all and will be confusing. Sign #3 on South Franklin Street he sees no reason for that monument sign at all. It is a residential neighborhood, and you would not want people entering from this location.

Ellen Sheehan agrees with the arguments regarding the wall signage. Concerning the monument sign without directional cueing it will be equally confusing.

Chris Bennett agrees with everyone's comments. The wall signage in Congress Plaza is completely unnecessary and confusing. The sign located in the residential neighborhood is unnecessary. The emphasis should be on Congress Street. Directional signage on all signs would be appropriate.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment on this application. None heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated what she is hearing from the Commission is that everyone agrees that the wall signage on the façade within Congress Plaza is unnecessary and confusing. The Commission agrees that the signage on Congress where the applicant is proposing to swap out the panel is in fact appropriate, and that entrance should be emphasized. On South Franklin Street, members of the Commission feels that signage may not be necessary at all. However, should that sign remain it should be smaller than proposed with directional cueing as it is a residential area.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, took a straw poll as to whether the signage on South Franklin Street should be removed in its entirety. Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, and Leslie DiCarlo both felt the signage should be removed it is entirety. The remainder of the Commission feels a smaller more concise sign in this area would be appropriate with directional cueing.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, made a motion in the matter of St. Peters Signage, 46 Congress Place, Advisory Opinion to the Zoning Board of Appeals, the DRC following discussion on this matter on January 12, 2022, the Commission issues the following opinion. The wall signage on the façade of Congress Plaza is unnecessary and confusing. The Congress Street freestanding sign is appropriate and is the entrance that should be emphasized. The South Franklin Street freestanding sign may not be necessary at all. If it should remain, it should be smaller than proposed and with a directional arrow, as it is in a residential area. Members thought that this sign could be eliminated in its entirety. Jeff Gritsavage seconded the motion.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if there was any further discussion. None heard.

**VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, in favor; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 7-0**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair stated this signage will return before the DRC for final signage approvals with details.

**3. #2021195 RAY THIRD FLOOR ADDITION, 30 Fifth Avenue, Historic Review of a third-floor addition to an existing single-family within the Urban Residential-1 (UR-1) District.**

Agent: Bob Flansberg, Dreamscapes Unlimited

Mr. Flansberg stated the applicants would like to finish the third story space in their home. A visual of what currently exists was provided to the Commission noting the current conditions and the short knee walls. They are attempting to create more

headroom and fit in with the context of the home. Photographs of 30 Fifth Avenue were provided showing the rooflines of the home and all elevations, gables, and windows. Current third floor windows do not meet egress standards. Proposed floor plans were also provided. Samantha Bosshart of the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation provided existing historic drawings of the home which show a smaller roof. An existing porch was added during the history of the home. A small gable existed over the front porch. In the views of the front elevation, we are looking to add as much headroom as possible. On the proposed north elevation, the applicants are proposing adding a small window above the front door gable of the porch roof. On the proposed east elevation alignment of the windows was important including the addition of a gable over the third-floor window for alignment purposes. A standing seam roof is proposed from the peak of the roof to the left tucking into the roofline providing a horizontal fascia as opposed to a shed roof. Mr. Flansberg provided floor plans of the third floor. A new window is proposed in bedroom #5 which does have a new window proposed in the dormer. In conversation with Ms. Bosshart, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation, she was concerned about the scale of the front dormer and suggested the applicant provide an alternate plan. This was submitted prior to this meeting.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated the new proposal shown this evening makes more sense than the proposal sent earlier last week. The stacking of the dormers, the use of varied sizes and shapes, the gables combined with the sheds, are not appropriate ways to manage dormers, regardless of historic or architectural districts, just in general. The new proposal makes more sense. The dormers, size and alignment of windows is more appropriate.

Tad Roemer agrees with the Chair. The plans showing with the large dormers he cannot support. These dormers are not detailed with the siding surrounding the windows. A little research will help in how to detail these areas and information on historical precedence would be helpful.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated he is confused as to how you are going to join the standing seam roof to the asphalt shingles and why would you propose this in this location. Also, is the chimney is being removed?

Mr. Flansberg stated it was more the pitch of the shed portion of the dormer in this area which led to the choice for a standing seam roof. The chimney is not being used and will be removed.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated he agrees that the new proposal is much better than what was previously presented. The dormers seem a little heavy. Historically dormers were to allow light and fresh air into upper story space. Attention should not be drawn to them, and they should be minimized as much as they can be. They should be smaller than the second story. A hip roof on the dormers might help minimize the size.

Jeff Gritsavage questioned the height of the dormer windows are they the same height as the second story windows.

Mr. Flansberg stated they are smaller and narrower than the windows below. The challenge is that they must meet egress.

Ellen Sheehan echoed what other Commission members have stated. This new rendition is a huge improvement.

Chris Bennett suggested researching the hip roofs on the dormers, it might soften the dormers a bit.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment on this application.

Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation stated she had an opportunity to speak with Bob regarding the previous version of the proposed project and expressed concerns regarding the style and proportion in keeping with the house. The detailing about the gables is something to consider. The gable versus hip is more appropriate. A colonial revival house does not have gable hip dormers. The detail around the windows and the size of the windows could be tweaked. There is no issue with the rear dormer.

Jeff Gritsavage provided a suggestion regarding the cornice and the dormers to help break it up.

Mr. Flansberg spoke regarding his reasoning for the design.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated the Commission has provided suggestions and input. Everyone agrees that the second set of elevations are much more appropriate. The Commission is looking to have the size of the dormers reduced proportionately. Providing details regarding the siding and how that will detail out. More details on the venting and penetrations. We have had members suggest looking at the dormers with a hip roof over the gable. The Chair agrees with the Preservation Foundation that the gables are appropriate but reducing the mass of the protrusions will be helpful. The Chair stated as soon as the applicant's agent can provide that information to staff, we will place the application back on the agenda.

**4. #2021055 422 BROADWAY ADDITION, 422 Broadway, Historic Review of a fifth-floor addition to an existing four-story mixed-use building within the Transect-6 Urban Core District.**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated this application has appeared before the Commission previously. This is Historic Review of a 5<sup>th</sup> floor addition to an existing four-story mixed-use building in the Urban Core.

Agent: George Olsen, Olsen Architecture; Larry Novik, Bonacio Construction;  
Tony Bonacio, Bonacio Construction, General Contractor

Mr. Olsen began with a visual of the building at night noting the Commission spoke about the fenestration appearance and the request to see the building at night. On these views the glass models are as realistic as possible, while trying to group the windows better, windows have been extended down and they appear more uniform. Views from all elevations were provided. Aerial views of the building were also provided adding in the existing and the new mechanical units. All those mechanicals are going straight up. All the smaller cubes represent the smaller residential condensers. These cannot be seen from the street. Views were provided from all elevations. Samples of the color grey were provided. Views of the building were provided from separate locations, Lake Avenue and neighboring streets which show the extent of the view of the building. The applicants resubmitted the elevations to provide a view of the clustering of the windows. The cornice piece has been carried all the way around the building to keep that element continuous, and it appears more successful. Mr. Olsen noted that there is an overhang proposed on the new addition and the visual is difficult to see, latest photos were not uploaded. It is a simple 20-inch overhang. There was also a question if other materials were considered versus the cement board. They did investigate metal panels however the cost of these panels is an issue.

Mr. Novik stated their concern more than the price is the instability with the metal materials market. We are not sure we can get the materials and what the price stability is with those materials. It would be our preference to stick with the fiber cement board panels as rendered. and if the product difference could be seen from street level.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated all the information and details requested were provided. The Chair stated as presented this evening the project does seem to have a nice rhythm and flow. The mechanicals on the roof will be invisible from most pedestrian perspectives. The materials proposed are top notch and the setback of the 5<sup>th</sup> and the floating cornice overhang is appropriate. This is a great successful project.

Tad Roemer thanked the applicant for responding to all the suggestions and comments. He questioned the material for the railings.

Mr. Olsen stated the railings are the original steel railings and will remain in place.

Tad Roemer continued that the window arrangement seems nicer. The grouping of the windows or the lining up of the heights is not the only way to solve this issue. He suggested possibly either lowering the big corner windows to the height of the punched windows or raising the punched windows. The other thought is that the little bit of solid between the big store front windows and the parapets. It reads small and dainty. A beefier corner element with more volume will work in this area. This is nice.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment on this application. None heard.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, questioned the cement board panels and how will they be fastened. Are they single individual pieces as opposed to breaking them up?

Mr. Olsen stated they are individual sheets, standard size and will be broken up. They are 4ft. x 8ft. panels. They will have a ½ inch reveal painted to match the panel.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated the cement board panels as noted on the movie theatre what we thought were a permanent solution are not such a permanent solution. They almost will have to be replaced; they are not holding up. Otherwise, he supports the project which is very well done.

Ellen Sheehan stated she also supports this project. The windows have been improved. The old floating cornice had something precarious about it. Now it seems more grounded and solid and from a visual standpoint that overhang makes more sense with this addition.

Chris Bennett stated this project is well thought out. He agrees with Rob regarding the longevity of the cement board panels.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated Tad spoke about the corner elements and glass corners and they were too delicate. It is an interesting point, and a heavier corner element might read better. Is that a concern for other Commission members?

Leslie DiCarlo stated she was looking at this as well. Is the size of the corner frame the same width as the door? It looks like it from this rendering.

Mr. Olsen stated the vertical extrusion that you see around the door are 2” wide. The corner piece cannot be 2” wide it is a 4” wide system since it is a low ride. We tried to make it as minimal as possible.

Tad Roemer suggested something more substantial perhaps an 8” and would have a more solid read. This could be investigated and included as part of the motion should the applicant choose to make this choice.

Tad Roemer made a motion in the matter of the 422 Broadway Addition, 422 Broadway, Historic Review of a fifth floor addition to an existing four story mixed use building within the UR-1 District the Design Review Commission issues the following decision – to approve as shown on the attached plans with the following conditions: Eliminate new “floating entablature” along the top of the existing building at north and south “light wells”. Also eliminate pergola attached to the floating element. At the applicant’s discretion, storefront element at corner of large corner windows may be narrow as shown or larger closer to the dimension of the door frame and style up to 8”. Jeff Gritsavage seconded the motion.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if there was any further discussion. None heard.

**VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, in favor; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 7-0**

8:09 PM – The Commission recessed.

8:14 PM - The Commission reconvened.

**5. #20200483 269 BROADWAY, NEW MIXED-USE, 269 Broadway, Historic Review of a new 6 story commercial building with on-site, underground parking within the Transect-6 (T-6) Urban Core District.**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated this application has appeared before the Commission on multiple occasions. We have asked them to go back and look at a couple of issues and they have. They have brought in a new presentation, new renderings, and additional information requested.

Applicant: 269 Broadway, LLC

Agent: Mike Toohey, Attorney; Mike Roman, Architect – C2 Design Group

Mr. Toohey introduced the team and provided information to the Commission on documentation written in 1990 by two women who saved the casino. They were celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the incorporation of Saratoga Springs. This literature whose theme is change and constancy. This is a decade-by-decade progression of changes in Saratoga Springs and history of how the buildings and architecture have changed over the years. This are changes and modifications to buildings in the city because we progress and are not stagnant.

Mr. Roman provided a visual of the site plan and reviewed the building plans and design considerations. Primary two-story open entry off Broadway. The primary entrance for retail is off Broadway and Hamilton. Secondary entrance off the south façade for upper floors. The green roof remains stepped back along the perimeter with photovoltaic panels. There is a stair tower, elevator tower along with the cooling tower and photovoltaic inverters. A review of the skeleton of the building sections was provided as it sits on the site in relation to the property line. Proposed building materials were reviewed brick as well as the brick detail and articulation, steel at the base along with the granite, copper, and clear fire resistant glazing. Mr. Roman provided views of the project design progression from January of 2020 through today highlighting the use materials. A view of the building frontage noting the addition of more brick along the front the punched windows with a metal panel in between. Retail is stepped down a bit but is still within the line of site along Broadway. The second story is stepped in along the entire building. A restaurant is proposed along Broadway with outdoor seating areas. The entire portion of the 6<sup>th</sup> floor steps in. The roof has been pulled in on the south and north side. We have nice seating on the sixth floor. A review of the location of the civic space elevation along with the balconies which help to break up the mass of the building. On the sixth floor we have simplified the glass for transparency while making it a lighter element on the building. An isometric view of the building noting the civic space area, the stepping back of the façade area. The step back of the sixth floor as well as a view of the roof. A view of the building across the street from Hamilton Street was provided. There are no changes to this elevation just more articulation of the materials. Mr. Roman reviewed the covered area for the transformers as well as the location of the parking garage, deliveries, and trash. The pull-off at the rear remains. A visual of the copper patinaed on all elevations was provided to the Commission. Scenes of the building during the winter were provided along with general lighting on the building. Solar shades will be installed on windows. Exterior lighting was discussed and will be maintained on the property line. There is recessed lighting on the building, as well as street lighting. Further information on lighting will be supplied to the Planning Board when the application is presented to them. Mechanical systems, electrical and ventilation were discussed and how they will be managed. Everything is internal, vertical, and up to the roof. We are collaborating with engineers and is currently being coordinated. We hope we have addressed all the Commissions concerns.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, thanked the applicant for the presentation. She emphasized that we have many attendees this evening and have received well over 75 letters of concern from community members, along with an 800-person signed petition. There is a great deal of interest here. The Chair reviewed what the DRC is tasked with when reviewing a project of this size, the mass and scale of the building, the height, the proportions, the contextual appropriateness, how the building relates to the neighboring buildings and surrounding area. We look at street orientation, articulation, step backs, setbacks, fenestrations, and the materials. What we do not look at is traffic, parking, or any water issues. Community members are concerned about the aquifer as well as traffic and parking and we do not oversee those. Those issues are important as well as the comments, but this will be issues for the Planning Board. The Planning Board has not yet approved this project. They did issue a SEQRA Negative Declaration for the project which is a State Environment Quality Assessment. The Planning Board has asked the DRC to review that and provide information to them prior to their further review of the project. The Chair stated she really likes this building. It is cool and sleek. A building should reflect the era in which it is created and this one certainly does. The materials chosen are top notch. There has been so much diligence, and it is good detail. Where we struggle and continue to struggle is with the height of this building as well as the setback. We appreciate the new rendering showing the patina of the copper overhang. It is extremely helpful. Her concern with the overhang is that it is massive, weighty and it emphasizes the height of the structure instead of minimizing it. In this case the overhang mitigates any of the gains that have been made by stepping back the sixth floor. The patina helps but it does not lighten it enough to mitigate the height issue. The rear of the building is incredibly successful. If that could be applied to the front of the building, the Chair feels it would present better. Height is not just a concern of the DRC but of the entire community. Fitting this building into our small downtown and our historic district is important. The overhang is an excellent feature and anywhere else she would

encourage it. However, because it is emphasizing the height of the building along with those vertical columns, she simply cannot support it as it presented now.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, thanked the applicant for the additional renderings. He echoed what the Chair stated, the building is successful. He feels the overhang needs to be there. It caps off the building. The materials are well done. He has issues with the front entrance. He does not have an issue with the setbacks at all. His main issue is that this building does not belong on this site. This is not the Urban Core, and this size building should go in the Urban Core of downtown. The building across the street is the same height, however they have managed the height better and it does sit on a corner lot which is the ultimate difference for him.

Tad Roemer stated he agrees with all the positive comments. It is a successful design, and he does not object to its location. He feels this is the Urban Core and we are expanding the Urban Core. He does not feel this building is overwhelming to the street. The entry door at street level was a concern and should be reviewed and has not been addressed. He does not have any issues.

Jeff Gritsavage stated he has looked at the history of Saratoga buildings, the 1888 birds eye view of the map and there were buildings downtown that had that platform stepped back with a mansard roof. It was quite a dense streetscape. This building has evolved over the past two years and has gotten better and better. He is in support of it.

Ellen Sheehan stated the applicant knows she has had concerns about this building from the start stating it looked like a cruise ship docked at Broadway. It has improved since that first rendition. The Historic Districts should not remain frozen in time and stay the same. A building downtown needs to take cues from the existing neighborhood. This is an abrupt transition. The Chair is right about the overhang. In this district the applicant is not taking a cue from anything. In another context it would look impressive. With the verticals and overhangs it emphasizes the façade and size and does not fit in with the context. She is happy to see the solar shades are to be installed to help mitigate the nighttime lights. In the nighttime rendering there are canisters in the ceiling.

Chris Bennett stated he agrees with everything Tad and Jeff have stated. This is a fantastically successful building. One of the best he has seen. He sees no issue with the height. He is in support of this project.

Leslie DiCarlo stated she agrees with Chris and feels it is a beautiful building. It has come a long way from its initial appearance before the Commission. It is exciting and it relates to the street in the same way the building across the street does. There are smaller buildings next to it. It is within the Urban Core, and she feels the Urban Core is expanding. We are fortunate to have someone who is willing to invest in such an attractive design with such quality materials. We do not often see buildings that present this well.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated she would like to open the floor to the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation for their thoughts and comments. The Chair noted that due to the number of attendees and comments we will be limiting Comments to three minutes. Please keep that in mind.

Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation stated the Urban Core begins where Congress Park and Broadway expands to four lanes. The surrounding area houses a historical landmark, a school, or St. Peter's Church and Death Wish coffee. This building does not fit within this context. This is not a space where you are going to see large urban core development. That Urban Core is relative to the two-lane street. That is an important aspect which is being lost here. The difference here is about setback. This building stands proud about 30 ft. Farther than the surroundings buildings and is not in context with the neighboring buildings. We are all about growing and changing and we have seen that in the Urban Core. Ms. Bosshart stated she has never seen in her tenure with the Preservation Foundation and commenting on larger new buildings seen the extensive comments from the community in opposition with no or little push back or support from the business community or others in the area. The silence is something to be considered. The concerns of the community are real. It is an attractive design it is about height, setback, and scale. These have yet to be fully addressed. The community is speaking to you and should be heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment on this application.

Kathleen Sonnabend had a power point presentation which would not load. She provided information on the tunnel effect this building is going to create. 269 building is closer to the street than any other building. She hopes there will not be a vote tonight to provide an opportunity to view her presentation.

Marie Fox, she summarized all the comments posted. Fifty-five private citizens had submitted comments. Specifically, the concerns are losing Saratoga Springs' unique character and tourist appeal, along with the negative visual impact on this entryway to downtown Saratoga. The Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation has posted strong concerns multiple times. A petition was submitted with 800 concerned citizens signatures who opposed the project. The concerns of the petitioners were the compatibility in scale and aesthetics with the adjacent buildings in this historic district. Must not add to the existing traffic, parking, and public safety concerns. No disturbance to the aquifer with its implications to the neighborhood.

Myles Gombert stated he is going to present Ms. Sonnabend power point presentation. He urged the Commission to defer voting on this tonight. Statistics were provided noting 269 at its entrance is 8 ft. taller than Park Place. It is closer to the center of Broadway, at ground level 260 is setback 19 ft. versus 33 ft. for Park Place. The downtown buildings are further apart due to the extra traffic lanes and wider sidewalks. This project needs a setback not a zero-lot line.

Kathleen Sonnabend stated she will provide the full presentation along with notes for the Commission to review. Again, she urged the Commission not to vote tonight.

Joan Sterling although the building interesting it certainly has massing problems. She questioned why the sixth floor must remain. The lowering of the building would help. The roadway is only a two-lane street. A joint meeting with both committees would be helpful.

Robert Sponzo stated he has been following the project from the beginning. He is not against change. The size and scale of the building are a concern as well as the location. The building is too big. It needs to be setback and is inappropriate for this location. There are other areas within the city where the building would look fine. It will have an enormous impact on the south gateway to Saratoga Springs, particularly the historic district.

Greg Larson, he agrees with the other comments as well. At the very entrance to have this tunnel effect and enormous building is a big mistake. This building would be great somewhere else.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated having heard the public comments are there any other items the Commission would like to discuss. None heard.

Tad Roemer stated the signage would be worth discussion but that is a separate issue. The setback of this building is something he would like to reconsider. I feel like both sides have shown drawings that may not be entirely accurate. In reviewing the photographs, he would support this if this building were setback further back like the north end of Park Place. He would like to take another look at a small setback.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if the Commission feels they agree with Tad's comments.

Jeff Gritsavage spoke about the canyon effect, and he does not believe that will occur with this building.

Ellen Sheehan stated she feels the setback is enough of a concern to be revisited. Needs to be looked at.

Chris Bennett stated whatever needs to be done to move this forward. It would be helpful for the architect to address these concerns. He is with Tad and Jeff on these concerns.

Mr. Roman spoke regarding the setbacks of this building and setbacks on other buildings in this area.

Mr. Toohey spoke about the Urban Core and the area surrounding it and how the Urban Core is expanding.

Tad Roemer spoke following closer examination and review of the mass and scale of the buildings in the area, he does not feel this building is that much different. He is moving back to his original endorsement of this building.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated the frontage on the condominium building is 282 ft. of frontage on Broadway while the subject property is 85 ½ ft. That is a substantial difference and why this larger building is successful. He agrees the building should be built out to the property line and that is not the issue he has. The building is just too tall. Going back in history there were hotels built out to the property line and were successful because they were only four or five stories in height and not as massive as this building. It should be built out without any setback. The issue is the height of the building.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated Tad has seems to have done a 360 and he has resolved those issues with further review. Ellen are you still interested in the applicant reviewing the setbacks.

Ellen Sheehan stated she would like to have the applicant review the setbacks, but she is in the minority.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated it seems as if Chris, Leslie, Jeff, and Tad all feel that this building is appropriate and would move this forward with an approval. It appears that Ellen and I both really like the building but are hesitant about moving it forward with approvals. Rob likes the building but has issues with the entryway and the height of the building for the size of the lot.

Tad Roemer stated he would like to see a little more detail to the main entranceway. The door needs to be moved back.

Ellen Sheehan stated she the entrance which is 8" off the property line when the door open in you will have people exit your door right out to the sidewalk. It does not seem like it will flow well.

Mr. Roman stated he is not sure what the concern is regarding the entry. The floorplan was reviewed. Whatever is allowed per NYS code to remain compliant.

Discussion ensued among the Commission with the applicant concerning the front entry doorway.

Leslie DiCarlo stated she was unaware those doors were on the property line. She assumed they were recessed a bit. Could that be an open space before entering the retail? Does this need to be decided now or later?

Mr. Roman stated those doors can be pushed back a bit. It can be done. We brought it forward to create a stronger presence.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated based on the importance of this building, it is important to review this prior to moving forward. It is what we do assure that the entryway is appropriate, prominent, and pedestrian friendly. I do not see how we can make it a condition of approval. She would want to see the re-design of recessed doorway along with a rendering which will allow us to see it more clearly.

Chris Bennett stated that in looking at this building there is a visual see through. It is a light building. This building does not read like a large scary building.

Jeff Gritsavage made a motion in the matter of the 260 Broadway New Mixed-Use Development, 269 Broadway, involving Historic Review of a 6-story commercial retail building with onsite underground parking in the T-6 District the DRC issues the following decision on January 12, 2022 - Approve with the following conditions – Approve for Mass and Scale only. The entranceway to form a portico to be submitted and approved via Administrative Action. Chris Bennett seconded the motion.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair. asked if there was any further discussion. None heard.

## **VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, opposed; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, opposed; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, opposed; Tad Roemer, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 4-3**

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:**

Design Review Commission Caravan, Wednesday, January 19, 2022, at 5:00 P.M.

Design Review Commission Meeting, Wednesday, January 26, 2022, at 6:00 P.M.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to discuss Tamie Ehinger, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 10:03 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Buzanowski  
Recording Secretary

Approved: March 25, 2022