

**CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW SUMMARY MINUTES  
COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION  
JANUARY 24, 2007, 7:00 P.M.**

Chairperson Jonathan Whitney called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commissions attending the meeting were Mary Margaret Carroll, George Cianciolo, Chris Culbreth, Gretchen MacNair, Laura King Moore, Amy Ryan, Jonathan Whitney, Chair, and Robin Whitsell. Staff members present were Senior Planner Kay Pearlstein and Planning Technician Kay Tapp.

**1609 EAST FRANKLIN STREET (File No. 9799-04-6951)**

The Town has received a request for review of a Concept Plan which proposes to construct a 2-story commercial and office building including 18,500 square feet of floor area. The proposed development also includes 59 on-site parking spaces. Access is proposed from a new driveway on East Franklin Street. An existing curb cut on East Franklin Street is proposed to be closed. The proposed development is located on the north side of East Franklin Street between Elliott Road and the Ballet School. A portion of the site includes frontage on Velma Road (see area map on back). The 1.9-acre site is located in the Neighborhood Commercial-Conditional (NC-C) zoning district. The site is identified as Orange County Parcel Identifier Numbers 9799-04-6951 and 9799-04-7995.

**APPLICANT PRESENTATION**

Richard Gurlitz presented the application and indicated that the property had an expired Special Use Permit.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

No citizens spoke.

**COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS**

1. Commissioner Robin Whitsell stated that she liked that 2-story scale. She applauded the preservation of the specimen trees along E. Franklin St. She thought that the architecture was boxy and angular.
2. Commissioner Mary Margaret Carroll liked the architecture.
3. Communication Amy Ryan asked what uses were being proposed. The applicant replied that it would contain some retail areas, but mostly office. She agreed that fitting parking on the site was a problem. She felt that too many compact spaces were being proposed. She loved the architecture and the applicant's proposal to save the specimen trees. She thought that the infill architecture was challenging and liked the 2-story aspect of the design. She thought the tree island was too big.

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4. Commissioner Chris Culbreth thought the building would look great with the addition of window boxes and that the contemporary architecture is beautiful. He thanked the applicant for a well-done presentation.
5. Commissioner Laura King Moore liked the way the applicant had corralled the buildings in the back. She also loves the building.
6. Commissioner George Cianciolo likes the project. He believed that the sloping site offers good lighting opportunities that could created some creative options.
7. Commissioner Gretchen MacNair supported the use of the outdoor space. She recommended that the entry be spotlighted with landscaping, lighting, and architecture.
8. Commissioner Jonathan Whitney wants to see a stair connection to Velma. He thought that even though it was not supported with the last Special Use Permit it is critical to the community.

#### SUMMARY

The majority of Commissioners liked the 2-story architecture of the contemporary building and the preservation of the specimen trees along E. Franklin Street. Parking and outdoor spaces were well conceived with the substitution of additional regular parking spaces in lieu of the number of compact spaces. Window boxes and highlighting the entry were two additional suggestions. One Commissioner suggested that a connection to Velma Street.

Prepared for: Chairperson Jonathan Whitney  
Prepared by: Kay Pearlstein, Planning Dept.