

18 May 2015

Olympia Planning Commission, Public Hearing Re: Expansion of Design Review

1. We feel this proposal as written should not be approved, there are a number of items that need further work and consideration
 - a. Design Review Process is not a simple, quick or inexpensive. The projects you are proposing to include were previously left out because they were smaller and less expensive and would have been unfairly burdened with the additional expense, time and work involved in the design review.
 - b. Going thru Formal Review costs a minimum of \$7-8,000 to prepare the required documents, drawings, information and attend the hearings. If any additional information is deemed necessary it can quickly go into the \$10,000.00 15,000.00 range and take 5 to 8 weeks to finally obtain approval.
 - c. Additional costs and time of this magnitude are frequently enough to make a feasible project no longer feasible.
 - d. These costs will have to be made up somewhere, things like the cost of doing the project "GREEN", doing a nice job of landscaping instead of the bare minimum, and or removing design features etc.
 - e. On a residential project this represents more than the entire appliance or plumbing budgets.
2. If you feel this ordinance must be approved then could you please amend it to make all these new entities subject to the simplest form of Design Review done by Staff, without Public hearings.
3. There are two other issues I would like to comment on.
 - a. The issue of View Corridors still has poorly defined and quite ambiguous language. This issue needs to be worked on to come up with clear definitions of what a view is and who has what rights to these views The use of adjectives instead of nouns in definitions doesn't work.
 - b. There should also be a way to appeal a staff decision, if it could be further reviewed by a senior staff person or such prior to having to go to a full D.R. hearing.

Thank you.

Mort James III AIA
For Thurston County Chamber