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To: Urban Design Committee  
From: Planning and Preservation Division  
Date: January 10, 2019  
RE: **Final location, character, and extent review of electrical enclosures at 17<sup>th</sup> Street Market, 50 North 17th St.; UDC 2018-52**

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**I. APPLICANT**

Jeannie Welliver, Department of Economic and Community Development

**II. LOCATION**

50 N 17th Street

**Property Owner:**

City of Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities

**III. PURPOSE**

The application is for final location, character and extent review of a public structure located within the 17th Street Market Plaza Renovation.

**IV. SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

This proposal is for a component of the 17<sup>th</sup> St. Market Renovations regarding the final design of the electrical enclosures/ information kiosks being constructed on the site. The electrical enclosures will serve as informational kiosks which will aid in the dissemination of information about local events and services.

Staff finds that the applicant's design meets the requirements of the Urban Design Guidelines, and is a creative way to develop an informative and engaging structure in the new open space. Blending into the overall aesthetic of the renovated 17<sup>th</sup> Street Market, the final design is both utilitarian and attractive.

Therefore, it is Staff's position that the Urban Design Committee recommend that the Planning Commission grant final approval of the design with the following conditions:

- That the applicant consider a lighter warm grey for the body of the kiosks.

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**V. FINDINGS OF FACT**

**a. Site Description and Surrounding Context**

The larger project area is bound by East Main Street on the south, North 17<sup>th</sup> Street on the east, East Franklin Street on the north, and North 17<sup>th</sup> Street on the west, and includes both the rights-of-way and the parcel on which the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Market sits. The area is primarily zoned M-1 (Light Industrial), but portions of the rights-of-way are also zoned B-5 (Central Business). This specific project is located closer to the intersection of East Franklin Street and North 17<sup>th</sup> Street.

The project area is located in the Shockoe Valley and Tobacco Row National Register Historic District. The National Register nomination form notes that the General Assembly act of 1780 established a public market on a site “below the hill” on the same side of the creek, and that the original structure was a wooden shed supported on locust posts. In 1794 it was replaced by a brick building, the second floor of which was used as a theater. Eighteen years later it was re-arranged to house the courtroom for the Hustings Court. The area dedicated to the market was later expanded up to Grace Street, and another structure was constructed in 1854 that stood until 1913. Subsequently located on this site were a series of shelters consisting of green metal roofs atop thick wooden beams mounted in concrete pillars, which were constructed in 1989.

**b. Scope of Review**

The improvements associated with this project are subject to location, character, and extent review as a “public building or structure” in accordance with Section 17.07 of the Richmond City Charter.

**c. UDC Review History**

In December 2018, this application was placed on the UDC agenda for final location, character, and extent review; however, the applicant requested withdrawal. The UDC voted in favor of that request.

In April 2017, the Planning Commission approved the application with recommendations from the UDC as part of their consent agenda.

Previously, in February 2017, the UDC deferred their decision until the applicant could re-submit a more detailed, illustrative plan-set showing the modifications to the previously approved final plans.

In February 2016, the UDC recommended, and the Planning Commission approved, a final design for the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Market with the following conditions by the Urban Design Committee:

- That the applicant consider the addition of two trees to add visual interest towards the Main Street and Franklin Street ends of the site.
- That the applicant consider providing umbrellas on site for shade before the tree canopy comes to maturity.
- That the applicant provide a conduit to the Main Street location designated for public art.

In 2014, the UDC and Planning Commission reviewed a conceptual plan for the 17<sup>th</sup> St Market redesign and approved it with a series of conditions:

- That, prior to final review, the applicant provides evidence that the plans meet all applicable zoning regulations.
- That the applicant considers going through the ordinance process to close North and South 17th Streets prior to submitting for final UDC review.
- That information is provided in the applicant’s report detailing how many on-street parking spaces will be removed through this proposal, and what measures can be taken to mitigate the loss.
- That information is provided in the applicant’s report detailing how services such as delivery and trash pickup will be handled for the businesses affected by the proposed closing of North and South 17th Streets.

- That the applicant considers having the City provide vendor tents and outdoor dining furniture and enclosures, or that a set of design standards is established for such amenities specific to this space.
- That the final plans detail how stormwater drainage will be accommodated for the site.
- That the final plans include a photometric lighting diagram.
- That the applicant provides details on the proposed kiosk, including dimensions and exterior materials.
- That the final plans include a landscaping schedule, to include plant species, quantity, and size at the time of installation.
- That the understory landscaping be kept low as to not obscure sight lines.
- That the applicant provides details on all proposed hardscaping, to include material samples.
- That the applicant provides details on the proposed masonry benches, including dimensions and materials, and that the applicant considers designing the benches to discourage overnight sleeping.
- That the applicant provides details on the proposed bollards and bike racks.
- That the applicant considers providing two additional trash receptacles, one at each end of the plaza.
- That the applicant considers using angled granite curb for the curb cut on East Main Street, in place of the proposed mountable concrete curb.

#### **d. Project Description**

This project involves the electrical building enclosures and kiosk information that have been previously approved. The applicant is returning to UDC since the roof material and building clad systems have been formalized. The roof is a standing seam metal hipped roof (matching the Main Street Station roof with a lower seam profile). The building clad system is comprised of flat lock panels. Color: Warm Charcoal Grey.

The information panels have yet to be designed. The information panels are intended to adhere to the doors magnetically. The doors will be painted black and will have louvers in the bottom for venting and vents at the ridge and soffit. The building's size is due to what it houses/hides and the height of the backflow preventer (set very high due to the floodplain). The IT cabinet for the lighting on the Market as well as the 800 amp electrical equipment is housed in the building. The required flood-proof (submersible) NEMA 6P cabinet that includes the power shut-off switch is mounted on the outside of the building for emergency access in a flood.

This project further fulfills the Shockoe Bottom Revitalization Strategy to develop the 17th St. Market into an improved open public space that will accommodate markets, special events, and day-to-day programs; and to remove the existing sheds to open the space for flexible programming.

#### Project budget and funding sources:

CIP Budget, Shockoe Revitalization Implementation Strategy Proj. 500407 Award 101767 and Main Street Station Multimodal Transportation Center (the bike connector to the Virginia Capital Trail includes this market square).

Funding allocated:

\$3,564,000 plus \$700,000 from the Main Street Station project, \$4,264,000

Construction program and start date:

Construction underway, full completion spring 2019

**e. Master Plan**

The 2017 Pulse Corridor Plan recommends this area, as part of the Main Street Station Area Vision, to consist of Nodal Mixed-Uses near Main Street Station to allow for intense development with active ground-floor uses near the multi-modal heart of the Richmond Region; Corridor Mixed-Uses along E. Broad and E. Main Streets to encourage the redevelopment of surface parking lots and underutilized buildings into higher-density buildings that focus on creating walkable environments with active ground floors, appropriate streetscape, and minimal driveway entrances; and Neighborhood Mixed-Uses in the surrounding area to help maintain the existing residential and mixed-uses found in the area, mainly in the form of repurposed warehouses, and to allow for appropriate infill development (page 104).

Specifically in the Thriving & Equitable section of the Main Street Area Vision, it calls for continued efforts to commemorate, memorialize, and interpret sites of historical and cultural significance in Shockoe Bottom (page 104).

The subject property is located in the Shockoe Focus Area, as defined by the 2008 Downtown Master Plan, and is placed in the Urban Center character area. One of the recommendations for this area is to “remove the clutter of overhead utility lines and equipment from the visible public right-of-way to enhance the streetscape” (page 4.58). The Plan also contains extensive language on the Farmers’ Market itself:

*“The 17th Street Farmers’ Market is one of the oldest markets in the United States, and has served as an essential center of trade since Richmond’s founding. The market was a center for trade in produce, livestock, and flour. The existing Farmers’ Market on Main Street is a modern, unremarkable structure that is located one block south of the original Farmers’ Market. While it remains a popular destination for locals and visitors, the Market is underutilized and inadequately laid-out for Market shopping, with limited sight lines for goods on display and barriers to multiple uses of the space.*

*While changes in management could improve the Market’s performance, the design and location of the building should be reconsidered to better accommodate vendors and shoppers. The Farmers’ Market could be built on a site one block north of the existing building. The historic market was a long open-air pavilion supported by a colonnade and protected with a gable roof. The re-creation of this building would not only enhance the cultural experience of Shockoe Bottom, but would also provide a flexible, more efficient space for selling market goods. The site of the existing Farmers’ Market could be reused as an open plaza that complements the restored Farmers’ Market. This plaza could be used for overflow market uses, or for outdoor dining and community gatherings. The placement of a linear plaza in front of the Farmers’ Market will increase its visibility from Main Street and will improve accessibility for shoppers” (page 4.61).*

The City's Department of Economic and Community Development undertook an economic revitalization strategy for Shockoe in 2011 which contained the following statements regarding the Farmers' market:

*"The current farmers' market is widely considered to be more of a detriment than an asset to the neighborhood, but the potential to re-position it into a more diverse, year-round public market has been studied and could follow the success of other urban public markets in becoming a popular destination" (page 20).*

*"A new public market... would be a combination of spaces that includes a permanent structure housing a year round public market of food, crafts and other items; outdoor or open areas serving as expansion area for seasonal markets (farmers' market, holiday market), programmed activities and events; and space for any administrative or small business development activities associated with the market. If executed effectively, it can: 1) be a flexible, dynamic gathering space, implemented for relatively low cost; 2) help anchor a "food destination" identity for the area which can be supported by restaurants and bars; 3) recognize and serve as a legacy to the long history of market operations in the area; 4) incorporate a small or micro business development component; and 5) act as an amenity for local residents as well as a regional draw" (page 27).*

#### **f. Urban Design Guidelines**

The Urban Design Guidelines note that successful public parks "share certain qualities, which include the ability to attract and entertain visitors, access and connectivity to surrounding areas, and safety and comfort" and that "the quality, design, and condition of all public facilities sets the image of the City, and sends a message about the values placed upon the services provided" (page 13). The Public Facilities section also contains relevant suggestions on sustainable practices when it comes to public facilities. "Green building practices, which minimize the environmental impact of buildings both in the construction phase and throughout the life of the building, should be considered in the construction of new public facilities as well as in the adaptation of existing public facilities. In general, public facilities should be designed to promote street activity and interaction with surrounding uses." (page 13).

The Community Character section of the Urban Design Guidelines notes "site furnishings should be conveniently located for the pedestrian, but should not obstruct pedestrian circulation. Furnishings should be located where people congregate, such as at bus stops, in front of major attractions, and in parks and plazas. The placement of furnishings should not create visual clutter on the streetscape. Furnishings may be grouped together, where appropriate. However, trash receptacles should be placed in the vicinity of bench groupings, but not directly adjacent, because of wasps and other insects in summer months." (page 25).

## **VII. ATTACHMENTS**

- a. Vicinity Map**
- b. Application**
- c. Plans**