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## Design Review

### Burten Bell Carr Business Revitalization District

#### *A Guide for Applicants*

*The information presented in this pamphlet explains the design review process and offers suggestions to make it as speedy as possible for applicants.*

- 1. What is a Business Revitalization District (BRD)?** A BRD is a neighborhood business district that has been designated on Cleveland's Zoning Map as a district in which all ***new construction and exterior property alterations are subject to "design review" prior to issuance of a Building Permit.***
- 2. What is not subject to Design Review in a BRD?** One-family and two-family houses are exempt from design review in BRD's. Also, projects involving only interior work or routine exterior maintenance are not subject to design review.
- 3. What is Design Review?** "Design review" is a process in which new buildings, building renovation, and property improvements (such as parking, fencing, landscaping and site lighting) are reviewed to ensure that their design is compatible with the character of surrounding buildings and with the special architectural character of the area. Design review considers such elements as architectural style, building placement, color, materials, landscaping, signage, driveway locations, etc.

Although it is true that design review represents an extra step for the applicant seeking a Building Permit, design review:

- often results in a project which better meets the long-term needs of the applicant, and
  - protects the applicant's investment by preventing incompatible development on neighboring properties.
- 4. Who conducts the Design Review process?** The Burten Bell Carr Design Review Advisory Committee is nominated by Burten Bell Carr Development Corporation and appointed by the City Planning Commission. The committee's 5 to 7 members are composed of community leaders and design professionals (architects, landscape architects, graphic artists, etc.). The Burten Bell Carr Design Review Advisory Committee reviews each project and makes a recommendation to the City Planning Commission. Final project approval is made by the Cleveland City Planning Commission (or by the Commission's Director on behalf of the Commission) on the basis of the recommendation made by the Burten Bell Carr Design Review Advisory Committee.
  - 5. How do I have my project reviewed?** After submitting plans to Building & Housing (City Hall Room 505), your project is referred to the City Planning Commission. You will be scheduled to present your plan to the Burten Bell Carr Design Review Advisory Committee. ***In order to save time and money on detailed final drawings, applicants are encouraged to present a preliminary concept plan to the Burten Bell Carr Design Review Committee for feedback and guidance before making a formal Building Permit application.*** A review can be scheduled by calling Burten Bell Carr Development Corporation at (216) 341-1455 or the City Planning Commission office at 664-3465.
  - 6. When do meetings take place?** The Burten Bell Carr design review meetings are held on the ex. 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month (when necessary) from 5:00 – 7:00 p. m. at the

Woodland Branch Library office, 5806 Woodland Avenue. The meetings are scheduled a minimum of one week in advance.

**7. How much time will design review add to a project?** Design review can be conducted concurrently with the required Building Permit review coordinated by the Department of Building & Housing. Design review typically adds no more than two weeks to the entire approval process.

**8. What should be included in a typical design review materials package that you will be submitting to Burten Bell Carr Development Corporation and City Planning Commission?**

- **Site Plan** indicating (existing and proposed) buildings, lot lines, parking spaces, driveways, landscaping, lighting, fences, sidewalks, signs, surrounding buildings, curb cuts and pavement drawn to scale and showing all relevant dimensions and noting such information as landscaping types, paving materials, etc.
- **Building Elevation Drawings** (all four sides where applicable) indicating façade materials and colors, lighting, signage, awnings, windows, doors, etc.
- **Color Photos** of the subject property in context of adjoining properties within approximately 250 feet.
- **Samples of Materials and Colors** if such changes are proposed.
- **Brief written description** of the work proposed, including a description of materials and installation methods.

**For Demolitions** – in addition to the above you must also include a written request describing the following:

- Reason for demolition;
- Method of demolition and debris removal;
- How the land will be treated following demolition – fill type, grading/surface preparation, etc.;
- Final surface treatment if new construction will not begin immediately – seeding, landscaping, security bollards, fencing, etc.; and
- Description of proposed future use.

Note: If plans are in place for a proposed future use, you may schedule those for preliminary or final review at the same time as your demolition request. Additionally, all demolition proposals must be reviewed by the Cleveland City Planning Commission at City Hall.

<p><b>Please send ONE set of the required design review materials to each of the following, at least 5 business days prior to the date assigned to you by the Burten Bell Carr Design Review Committee:</b></p>	
<p>Marka Fields  City Planning Commission  601 Lakeside Avenue, City Hall, Room 501  Cleveland, Ohio 44114  216-664-3465</p>	<p>Jeffrey Sugalski  Burten Bell Carr Development Corporation  3226 East 93<sup>rd</sup> Street  Cleveland, Ohio 44104  216-341-1455</p>

\*To be most efficient, please contact Burten Bell Carr Development Corporation or City Planning before preparing the submission package to confirm what items you should include.\*

## 9. What is the Formal Review Process?

The typical formal review process prior to issuance of a Building Permit includes the following steps:

**Applying for a Building Permit.** The applicant submits 4 sets of construction drawings to the Department of Building & Housing (City Hall, Room 505) and fills out a Building Permit Application.

**Beginning the Design Review Process.** The Department of Building & Housing forwards the drawings to the City Planning Commission. At that point, you will be notified of the date and time of the Burten Bell Carr Design Review Advisory Committee meeting.

**Scheduling the Committee Meeting.** Once it has been determined that your application is complete, you will be notified of the date and time of the Burten Bell Carr Design Review Advisory Committee meeting. ***Applications will be placed on the Committee's Thursday agenda only if received by no later than 5 business days before the next scheduled meeting.*** This deadline is necessary to permit proper time for review.

**The Committee Meeting.** So that the Committee can reach its decision in a single session, it is recommended: 1) that both the business or property owner and the project architect or contractor attend the meeting, and, 2) that a complete submission package be presented – including signage, parking, landscaping, etc. At the conclusion of the presentation, the Committee will recommend either approval, approval with conditions, disapproval, or the submission of revised plans for reconsideration.

**City Planning Commission Decision.** Based on the recommendation of the Design Review Advisory Committee, the City Planning Commission (or the Director acting on behalf of the Commission) makes a final decision on the proposal. In the case of a disapproval, the applicant will be told of the reasons for disapproval and be given an opportunity to submit a revised plan or may present plans to the City Planning Commission.

**City Planning Commission Design Review Fees and Application Form.** All projects in Design Review Districts are charged an application fee of \$35.00 and a review fee. The application fee is due at the time of application, and the review fee is due *when the project is approved*. The review fee is based on the *cost of exterior construction*, which includes elements such as; building facing materials, windows and doors, signs, awnings, visible roofing materials, fences, decks, patios, paving materials and landscaping. **You can calculate your review fee and fill out the application form online at the City Planning Commission's website at:**  
**<http://planning.city.cleveland.oh.us/phorm/feeform.html>.**

**Paying the Fee.** Prior to paying the design review fee at Building and Housing, please contact Marka Fields of City Planning Commission to coordinate paying the City Planning Commission design review fee in conjunction with the building department fees. You will need two separate checks, both made payable to the 'City of Cleveland'. One check pays for the City Planning Commission Design Review Fee and the second check pays for the Building & Housing Department permit fees. The Building and Housing fee is also payable by credit card.

**Issuance of a Building Permit.** The approved, signed plans will then be transmitted to the Building & Housing Department, which issues the necessary Building Permit.

## **BRD Ordinance Design Guidelines Section 303.08**

*(An excerpt from Cleveland's Business Revitalization District ordinance)*

In its review of applications subject to provisions of this chapter, the Local Design Review Advisory Committee shall follow the design guidelines set forth below as well as supplemental design guidelines specifically prepared for the District. If such guidelines have been recommended by the City Planning Commission and approved by Council. (See Section 303.09)

- (a) *Design Compatibility.* Alterations, additions and new development should be compatible in scale, material, color, placement and character with the design of the subject property as well as the design of properties which are representative of the area's most valued architectural and environmental qualities. In evaluating compatibility, consideration shall also be given to the value of diversity and individuality in design.
- (b) *Contemporary Design.* All buildings are recognized as products of their own time. Alterations, additions and new developments which have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance are not required. Conversely, compatible contemporary design is encouraged except where such design would clearly detract from the architectural unity of a grouping of architecturally significant structures.
- (c) *Preservation of Features.* The distinguishing original qualities of a property should not be diminished through alteration or removal of distinctive architectural features.
- (d) *Replacement of Features.* In the event that replacement of significant architectural features is necessary (as determined by the Local Design Review Advisory Committee and City Planning Director), the new material should closely match the original material in composition, design, color, texture and all other visual qualities.
- (e) *Cleaning.* The cleaning of exterior wall surfaces should be undertaken by the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage facing materials and architectural features shall not be undertaken.
- (f) *Fences and Other Accessory Structures.* Fences, walkways, area lighting, benches, landscaping and other accessory structures should be compatible in design with adjoining buildings and with the most valued aspects of the district's overall character. Use of chain-link fences along street frontages is discouraged unless otherwise specified in adopted plans or guidelines for the district.
- (g) *Parking Lots.* Use of coniferous shrubbery and trees in combination with low fences is encouraged in screening parking lots from streets. Use of curbed, planted islands is encouraged to provide visual relief in large parking areas and to control traffic circulation. For districts characterized by buildings set along the street line, parking lots should be located behind or on the side of buildings whenever possible, with entrances located off of adjoining side streets.
- (h) *Signs.* In addition to meeting Zoning Code, and Building Code requirements for signs in applicable zoning districts, signs within Business Revitalization Districts, shall also meet the design guidelines of this chapter and, in particular, those stated below.
  - (1) *Placement.* Wall signs should be designed to fit within the architectural space intended for signage. Similarly, wall signs should never cover distinctive architectural features.
  - (2) *Compatibility.* Signs to be seen as a series should be designed with compatibility in terms of location, size, shape, style, material, illumination and color. As a general rule, uniformity should be maintained in certain characteristics while other characteristics are varied to permit individual expression and identification.
  - (3) *Color.* The color(s) of a sign should complement the color(s) of the building facade to which the sign relates.
  - (4) *Lettering and Symbols.* The lettering and symbols on a sign should be large enough to be easily read but not overly large or out of scale with the building on which the sign is displayed. An excessive amount of information on signs, creating an image of visual clutter, should be avoided. Use of distinctive symbols or logos on signs is encouraged.
  - (5) *Projecting Signs.* Where permitted, projecting signs should be no larger than necessary for readability by nearby pedestrians and should contain no internal illumination unless otherwise specified in adopted plans or guidelines for the district. Spacing between projecting signs should be sufficient to prevent an image of clutter.
  - (6) *Non-panel Signs.* For buildings lacking architectural spaces clearly designed for sign panels, it is often preferable that lettering be placed directly on the wall surface, on display windows or on the front piece of compatible awnings or canopies. Such signs are less likely to detract from a building's architectural character. However, letters placed directly on walls should be attached in a manner which will not require costly repair after removal.
  - (7) *Billboards.* Billboards or "advertising signs", as defined in Section 325.64(b) of the Zoning Code, shall not be permitted in a designated Business Revitalization District.

**CITY OF CLEVELAND  
STATEMENT OF COOPERATION  
BY  
DESIGN REVIEW PROJECT SPONSOR**

*This form must be completed, signed, detached, and submitted by the authorized project sponsor for prompt handling for any proposed project to be reviewed by the Burten Bell Carr Design Review Committee. Sponsors regularly doing business with the City should keep a blank copy of this form for recurrent photocopy and submittal.*

. . . . .

I, the undersigned, have read “Design Review by the Burten Bell Carr Design Review committee: A Guide for Applicants” (“Guide”) and agree to all terms and conditions therein as the authorized sponsor for the following project:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Project Name (print or type)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Project Address

I understand the Planning commission staff is under no obligation to place my proposal on a Design Review Committee agenda until all specified project submittal requirements are met. Further, I understand that the Design Review Committee and/or the City Planning Commission will table my project if I have not submitted all presentation (mounted) materials to the staff by the specified deadline.

I also understand that I may be subject to design review fees, as explained in the “Guide”. This includes a \$35.00 application fee in all cases where fees are charged and a review fee (based upon project cost) if the project is approved by the City Planning Commission or by the staff administratively. If fees apply to the above project, I understand that the application fee must be paid before the Planning Commission Staff is permitted to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness and/or to sign the building permit application.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (print of type)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Organization

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature/Date