

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD FAQ

Q: What is the function of the Design Review Board (DRB)?

A: The DRB is a five-member board established by City Council to review concept and final design proposals for development site plans and development site plans with a special use permit within the CDD#1, CDD#2, and CDD#11 districts. The Board also reviews requests for signs and additions/alterations to building exteriors visible from publicly accessible areas surrounding the building. Certain building proposals within the CDD#1, CDD#2, and CDD#11 districts may not be subject to DRB review. DRB applications are reviewed for compliance with applicable policies and design guidelines, with a primary focus on architectural and urban design.

The DRB generally meets on the third Thursday of every other month at 7:00 pm in the Sister Cities Conference Room 1101. The Department of Planning & Zoning provides staff support for the DRB, providing staff reports and administrative management of cases and the hearing docket.

Q: What types of cases are heard by the Design Review Board?

A: The DRB reviews concept and final design proposals for buildings, signs proposals, and additions/alterations to building exteriors visible from publicly accessible areas surrounding the building. The purview of the DRB is limited to within the CDD#1, CDD#2, and CDD#11 districts; however, certain proposals within these districts may not be subject to DRB review.

Q: Who do I contact if I have a question about whether or not my proposal needs to be approved by the Design Review Board?

A: You will need to contact Natalie Sun (natalie.sun@alexandriava.gov), Urban Planner, or Katie Parker, Urban Planner (katie.parker@alexandriava.gov) in the Department of Planning and Zoning at (703) 838-4666. The Department of Planning & Zoning provides staff support for the DRB, providing staff reports and administrative management of cases and the hearing docket.

Q: How can I view staff reports on existing cases?

A: Staff reports are generally available for public viewing the Monday before the case hearing. They are available online at:
<http://alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=6802>

Q: What should I expect at a Design Review Board public hearing?

A: After DRB staff has announced your case, the Chairman will ask the applicant if they would like to make a presentation or answer questions. The applicant is not required to make a presentation but is required to be present at the hearing. It is highly recommended that applicants read and become familiar with the recommendations in the staff report prior to the discussion of a case. Staff reports are generally available online the Monday before the case hearing. Additional paper copies are available at the DRB public hearing.

Q: What is the consent agenda?

A: The consent agenda consists of docket items considered by staff as non-controversial and recommended by staff to be approved without discussion. The agenda items are read at the beginning of the hearing. The agenda is approved by the DRB all at one time, and usually quickly. However, anyone - citizen, developer, staff, or Planning Commissioner - can request that an item be taken off the consent agenda for discussion. Items removed for discussion are considered immediately after the consent docket is approved. If your item remains on the docket, you may leave once the Board has made a motion on the agenda. If your application is removed, a full hearing will be held on the application. *Your attendance at the DRB hearing is still required if your item is listed on the consent agenda.*

Q: How far in advance do I need to file and where can I obtain a Design Review Board application and checklist?

A: Generally, filing deadlines are at least 1 month prior to the scheduled DRB hearing. A schedule of hearing dates, corresponding filing deadlines, and the DRB application is available online at:

<http://alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=6802>

Q: What happens after I receive approval by the Design Review Board?

A: Within a week of the DRB hearing, City staff will e-mail the action staff report to the applicant's email address provided on the application.

Q: Who are the Design Review Board members?

A: The Design Review Board consists of five members. The current Board members are:

- Farroll Hamer, Director of Planning and Zoning
- Roger Lewis, Design board member
- Ed McKinney, Citizen board member
- Lee Quill, Design board member
- City Council board member (TBD)

Q: Where and how often does the Design Review Board meet?

A: The DRB meets bimonthly, in City Hall, in the Sister Cities Conference Room 1101. A schedule of the hearing dates is available online at:

<http://alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=6802>