



Design Review Board
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Legal Action Report – Meeting Minutes Design Review Board (DRB)

Members of the Design Review Board (DRB) held a meeting, which was open to the public on:

Date and Time: Friday, July 10, 2026, 8:30 AM

Location: Meeting was held virtually using Microsoft Teams

1. Call to Order / Roll Call, 8:32 AM

Members Present:

Rosemary Bright (Vice Chair)

Cade Hayes

Daniel Maher – Left at 9:00 AM, quorum was maintained

Grace Schau

Paige Anthony

Members Absent:

Chris Stebe (Chair), Recused

Caryl Clement

A quorum was established.

2. Review and Approval of the 6/5/2026 Draft LAR and Meeting Minutes

Action Taken

A motion was made by DRB Member Schau to approve the June 5, 2026, Meeting Minutes and Legal Action Report. The motion was duly seconded by DRB Member Hayes and passed unanimously 5-0.

3. Call to the Audience

No speakers came forward.

4. [TP-MOD-0626-000067](#) – Replacement of Sorority House

Related Activity #: [TD-DEV-0226-00038](#)

Address: [1541 E 2ND ST](#)

Parcel #: [124040770](#)

Zoning: [R-3](#)

Board of Adjustment Variance Review

Applicant's Presentation

Action

The applicant presented a proposal to demolish the existing two-story and replace it with a new three-story building to accommodate increased sorority house chapter capacity, improve ADA accessibility, and modernize the facility. As part of the variance application, the project team seeks to reduce the required ten-foot landscape buffer along Second Street to five feet.

DRB Discussion

During discussion, staff clarified that the requested variance involved the landscape border rather than the building setback. The applicant explained that the building footprint had already been reduced to minimize setback variances and that the requested landscape buffer reduction was necessary to accommodate the proposed building program while maintaining required parking, accessibility improvements, and outdoor dining space.

The Board discussed the proposed patio wall that defines an outdoor dining area along the 2nd Street frontage. Questions were raised regarding whether the wall could be relocated to preserve the full landscape buffer width. The applicant stated that moving the wall approximately 4.5 feet would significantly reduce the outdoor dining area needed for chapter operations.

Board members reviewed each of the variance findings required under UDC Section 3.10.3.K. Regarding *special circumstances*, DRB members discussed surrounding development patterns and noted that most neighboring fraternity and sorority properties are owned by the Arizona Board of Regents and are therefore exempt from City of Tucson landscape buffer requirements. Although these properties do not provide direct regulatory precedent, the Board agreed they provide context for the existing streetscape.

The most extensive discussion centered on whether the hardship was *self-imposed*. Concerns were expressed regarding whether the location of the patio wall and outdoor dining area represented a design choice rather than a site constraint. Other members noted that the outdoor dining area was a functional program requirement associated with the expanded chapter house and, together with ADA improvements, parking requirements, and the limited site dimensions, supported the requested variance.

The Board also discussed whether the variance represented the *minimum modification necessary*. Members questioned whether additional adjustments to the patio wall could reduce the requested variance. The applicant explained that relocating the wall would substantially diminish the usable outdoor dining space. Staff further explained that portions of the required landscape width can sometimes extend into adjacent right-of-way, and the applicant indicated the University of Arizona preferred to keep landscaping on private property. The Board ultimately concluded that the requested reduction represented the minimum practical variance.

The Board found that the proposal would not adversely affect public welfare, light, air, traffic, or surrounding property values. DRB members also recognized that the project would improve the streetscape through additional trees and increased shade but pointed out that different plant species could better complement the existing streetscape along 2nd Street and Cherry Avenue.

Motion

A motion was made by DRB Member Anthony to recommend the project for approval, with the following recommendation: 1) Reconsider the inclusion of palm trees and citrus trees along 2nd Street and Cherry Avenue, to be more complementary to the existing landscape borders. The motion was duly seconded by DRB Member Hayes. The motion was duly seconded by Vice Chair Rosemary Bright. Motion passed unanimously 4-0.

4. Staff Announcements

Staff indicated the Moxy Hotel in downtown has submitted a Development Package for review, but it is not clear if the Infill Incentive District (IID) will be used as a tool for development; if not, it will require DRB review for Rio Nuevo Area (RNA) approval. Also, a couple of multifamily projects are being reviewed preliminarily in the Sunshine Mile District.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.