

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**  
**PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS**  
**FEBRUARY 23, 2015**  
**NRD-2015-0009**  
**422 Congress Avenue/101 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Congress Avenue**

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**PROPOSAL**

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Construct a 3,268-square foot rooftop deck addition.

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**PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS**

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The applicant proposes to construct a large rooftop deck addition to the building adjacent to the old Southern Union Gas Company building at the southwest corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Congress Avenue. The proposed addition will be on 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and will have cedar siding, a standing seam metal roof, and steel guardrails with “cattle panel” inserts. The roof of the proposed deck will be 5.5 feet back from the 5<sup>th</sup> Street parapet of the building. It appears that the steel guardrail will be at the building edge.

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**STANDARDS FOR REVIEW**

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The Congress Avenue National Register Historic District has no design guidelines for rooftop decks; however, the Sixth Street National Register Historic District and the Downtown Austin Plan specify that rooftop uses must be set back at least 15 feet from the wall of the building.

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Recommend that the applicant conform with the setbacks set forth in the Downtown Austin Plan and the general philosophy of the Sixth Street Architectural Standards regarding rooftop uses, and set the proposed deck back at least 15 feet from the wall of the building. The old Southern Union Gas Company building already has a rooftop use that is too close to the wall; this additional use will compound the visual intrusion of these rooftop uses in the historic district. While neither building is historic, or even contributing to the Congress Avenue Historic District, allowing rooftop uses that do not comport with the set standards for downtown sets a dangerous precedent within the downtown historic districts and detracts from the overall character of the district.



## LOCATION MAP

