

08 December 2020

Mr. Kevin Fleming
Square One Consultants
--- Via Email ---

Dear Mr. Fleming:

I had hoped you would contact me before the Architectural Review Committee meeting but still would like to follow up with you. I urge you to consider several options for the property that do not involve demolition. I understand that raising the building is extreme and adds cost to the project. Our cartoon was an expedient example that achieved all entitlements and met all current LDC requirements. I would certainly prefer other solutions, but realize they require compromises either in square foot development, parking, impervious cover, access or perhaps all of the above. But that is the nature of an historic neighborhood, and I would hope that any new neighbors would be coming to the area *because* they were attracted to its qualities not to change the character.

I think I speak for the majority of my commercial neighbors when I say we would support compromises on the LDC requirements if they would encourage and support the continued use of the structure in situ and development that reflected the historic character of the area. There are alternatives. Admittedly, they do not meet all of the LDC requirements but they do come close. We have variants both with and without the use of our driveway. I understand our neighborhood is in transition and is technically in the area that will come under DMU zoning in the future. That is acknowledged in both the Downtown Plan, the proposed Preservation Guidelines and in the discussion around the re-write of the development code. Our block for the most part is in DMU 4 with a 40 foot height limit, 100% impervious cover, 1:1 FAR and no required parking. Attached are options that do not max out that option, but certainly encompass the spirit of rehabilitation adaptive re-use with idea of denser development.

We certainly have not worked through the details and only offer these cartoons as proof of concept, not a finished proposal. They do demonstrate 4,400 SF without approaching the height limit (more SF could be added). At a minimum there are 7 parking spaces, (Option 1A) with an additional accessible parking place from the street to the sidewalk and level entry to the first floor of the existing building. Option 1 does show an easement or joint use of our driveway. I know that is complicated, and quite frankly don't know how it would work. However, the drive gets used by others already and if a better collective use could be designed that would be better. 1B parks 12 cars all on your property. A collective approach takes more study, but in the long run perhaps provides more opportunity, but they both work.

At a minimum, there could be federal tax credits and with a bit of work, perhaps state credits that could be sold if you couldn't use them. I understand this is not the easy approach to the project, but this is a neighborhood that has attracted owners who want to be in an historic area and we feel there are still businesses that would appreciate the existing fabric. At the very least allow the Owner the opportunity to pursue such a buyer.

Respectfully,



Donna D. Carter, FAIA
Carter Design Associates
Attachments

c Austin Historic Landmark Commission



