HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
NOVEMBER 2, 2022
HR-2022-122453
HEIERMAN BUILDING
115 E. 5TH ST.

PROPOSAL

Alterations, demolition, and new construction of an addition to the existing 3-story commercial structure.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

1) Demolish existing storefront assemblies; create a new custom storefront with metal framing and sill with new windows
2) Remove the front façade side lites and salvage entry door; create a new recessed entry with the salvaged door.
3) Remove the egress door and demolish brick infill on front façade
4) Windows are to be removed and replaced; existing openings are to remain
5) New rooftop steel frame construction with curtain wall glazing setback 20' from the front facade.
6) Partial demolition of rear courtyard walls, all windows, roof enclosure, and structure.
7) Construct and install new curtain wall windows with divided lights, exterior balcony, blackened metal panel cladding, and enclosed area on level 1 in the rear courtyard.

ARCHITECTURE

The Heierman Building was zoned Historic in 1977. It was contracted for construction circa February 1887 by Tom Smith, Sr., with materials from M. Paggi and Joseph Nalle as the builder. It is a 3-story brick building believed to have been built initially as a commercial enterprise. Three walls were made of brick and one (west wall) of stone. It opened as the Provident Hotel circa 1890 and continued to operate as a hotel until 1923 (under various names). The family that ran it the longest was the Heiermans during its first 87 years hence the landmark name. Evidence suggests that the Hotel Provident had ten guest rooms on both the second and third floors. Rooms were single or suites and supplied with gas and electricity; closets and free bathrooms were provided on each floor. The rooms likely surrounded a central hall, and at least two rooms on each floor had a fireplace with a coal grate. Research suggests the upper floor may have been converted to support the weight of a machine shop in the 1920s, and lower first-floor walls were cut through to accommodate an automobile shop and showroom. A restoration was completed in 1974. The original façade was a symmetrical 6-bay Victorian storefront in front of a masonry structure. The original roof was metal with raised seams.

DESIGN STANDARDS

The City of Austin's Historic Design Standards (March 2021) are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and are used to evaluate historic landmarks. The following standards apply to the proposed project:

Repair and alterations

1. General standards

The property has undergone many changes over the years but retains its historic shell that most recently had a restoration in 1974. Any changes to the front façade should attempt to restore the property to its 1890 period of significance via historical research and evidence if possible.

4. Exterior walls and trim

There have been many exterior wall alterations over the years, including cutting and infilling portions of the rear wall of the structure. The proposed changes to the rear walls are compatible with the design guidelines. According to photographic evidence, the front façade's storefront portion is not original but a restoration in 1974. The property is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL), and the THC should be contacted for design resources and feedback and to ensure notification requirements are met. If no further resources may be used for evidence of the 1890s storefront, then a design and materials that are compatible with the scale and style of the building are appropriate.

5. Windows, doors, and screens

It is not likely that the windows are original due to how the current windows fit within the frame, but further research should be done to confirm this. If the windows are from within the period of significance, every effort should be made to retain the windows. If the windows were part of the restoration in 1974, then replacement with a similar design and material is

compatible with the design standards.

Commercial additions

1. Location

A rooftop addition design may or may not be compatible with this RTHL due to its adjacency to a one-story building. It is compatible and appropriate if the rooftop addition can be designed to transition versus draw attention. The current color and height draw the eye and are not compatible.

UPDATE-The color has been changed to a lighter color and is now appropriate, but it is recommended that the height be lowered from 16' to 12'-13'.

1.4 Additions are not appropriate for all historic landmarks and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

2. Scale, massing, and height

It is difficult to ascertain to what extent the scale, massing, and height of the rooftop addition will impact the pedestrians' view of the historic building from the ROW below. The applicant's design team cooperated by providing renderings of this viewpoint. A change in material from dark to a light color that more closely resembles the Frost tower parking behind may help to cloak the addition visually.

UPDATE-The applicant changed the rooftop addition to a lighter color. However, it is further recommended that the height be lowered to 12-13 feet (from 16 feet) to be commensurate with the second and third stories of the historic building.

3. Design and style, and Materials

The design of the rooftop addition color has been changed to a lighter color and takes fenestration pattern cues from the historic building.

3.2 Take cues for design elements and patterns from the historic building.

5.1 If an addition will be visible from the pedestrian level, including from the opposite side of the primary street, use the exterior wall, window, and door materials that are compatible with those on the historic building in scale, proportion, material, finish, and texture

11. Storefronts

The storefront has been substantially altered over time. The applicants contacted the THC and Austin History Center for further resources on what the storefront looked like circa 1890. Documentation suggests that the storefront was originally a symmetrical 6-bay Victorian storefront. Staff has determined that the storefront design may be compatible due to the substantial changes to the storefront over time and the lack of sufficient evidence for the circa 1890 storefront. However, staff prefers historic fabric be repaired rather than replaced where possible.

Restore an altered storefront to its design during the period of significance where documentation exists.

Reconstruct missing features where documentation exists

Summary

The project meets some of the applicable standards.

COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

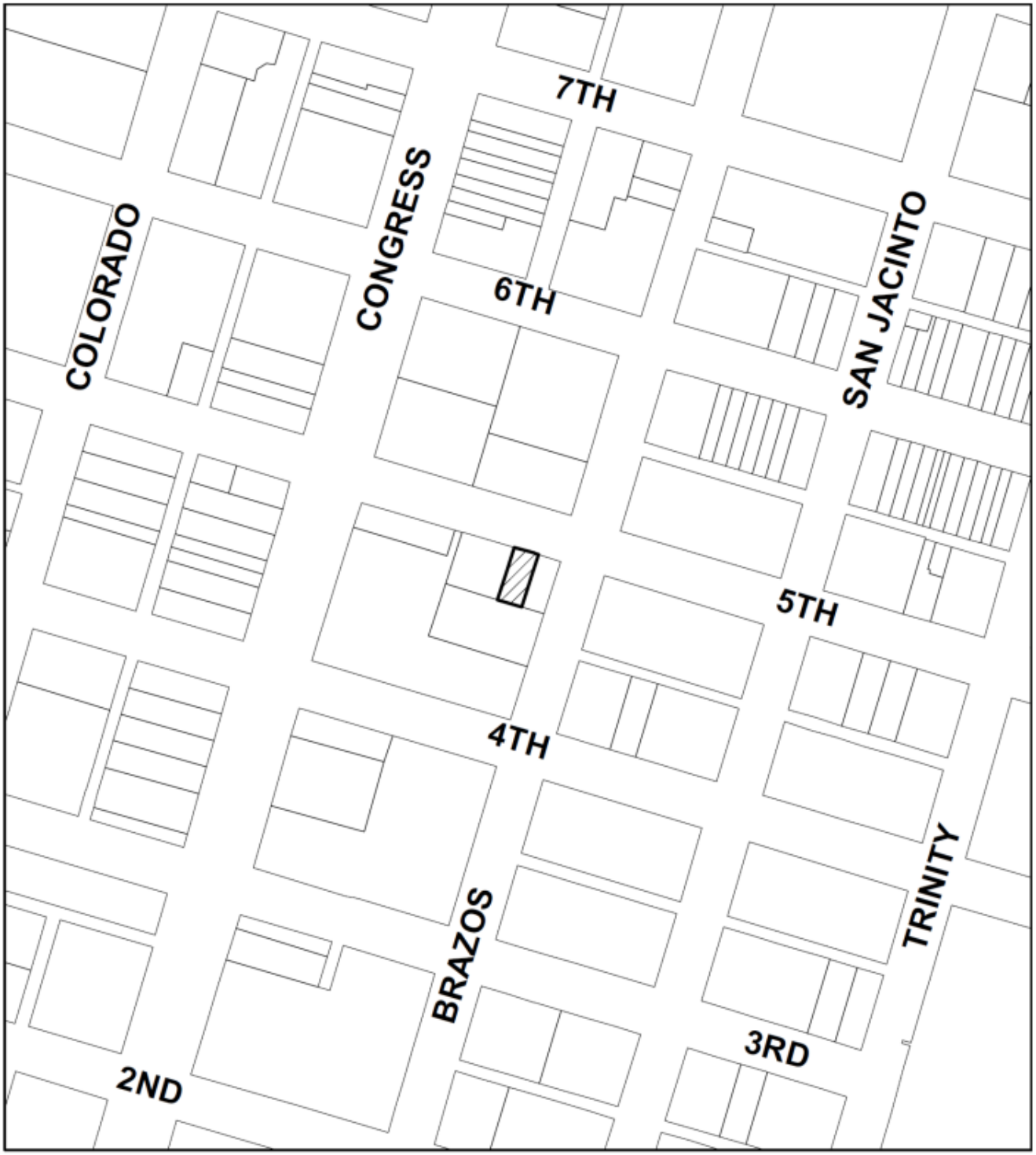
8/8/22: The ARC recommended that the applicant consult the Texas Historical Commission before the HLC as it is a Recorded Texas Historical Landmark (RTHL). The Committee had concerns about the rooftop addition being of appropriate height and compatible materials and suggested a 3D rendering to present how the addition would appear from street level. Further details on the upper-level facade windows and whether they were of historic age and, therefore, should be retained were requested. The ARC advised further research into the original appearance so that any restoration be done to the 1890 period of significance. The ARC advised against replacing something incongruous and non-historic with something incongruous and non-historic (again).

9/12/22: The ARC was pleased with the research done by the applicant. It generally felt more supportive of the top addition if it was of a lighter color that more closely resembled that of the parking structure behind it. The ARC was less supportive of a large amount of the rear wall being removed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission postpone the application to allow time for the following conditions to be met which also align with recommendations from the Texas Historical Commission: that the rooftop addition is lowered from 16’ in height to 12-13’ and integration of an alternate design that does not require the demolition of a large portion of the rear elevation.

LOCATION MAP



N

SUBJECT TRACT

PENDING CASE

ZONING BOUNDARY

1 " = 208 '

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HR 22-122453

LOCATION: 115 E 5TH STREET

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Property Information

Photos



Google Maps, 2022