

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

October 21, 2015

Agenda Item No: 16

HDRC CASE NO: 2015-386
ADDRESS: 1617 E COMMERCE ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 593 BLK A LOT 1 THRU 18
ZONING: IDZ HS
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 2
LANDMARK: Friedrich Refrigeration Complex
APPLICANT: James McKnight/Brown & Ortiz, P.C.
OWNER: Friedrich Lofts, Ltd
TYPE OF WORK: Recommendation to Zoning Commission for Removal of Historic Designation
REQUEST:

The applicant is seeking HDRC recommendation to remove historic designation for the majority of the property at 1617 E Commerce (Friedrich Refrigeration Complex). The applicant proposes to maintain historic designation for the three buildings closest to E Commerce.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Sec. 35-606. - Designation Process for Historic Landmarks.

(g)Removal of Designation. Upon recommendation of the historic and design review commission based upon new and compelling evidence and negative evaluation according to the same criteria and following the same procedures set forth herein for designation, a designation made under subsection (a) of this section may be removed by city council following recommendation by the historic and design review commission.

FINDINGS:

- a) The Friedrich Refrigeration Complex is a local historic landmark and is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The earliest part of the complex was constructed in 1923 for the Edward Friedrich Refrigeration Company, which was founded in 1883. In 1925, this location became the consolidated operations for the business when the old plant nearby burned down. Architect Harvey P. Smith was hired to design a new showroom and office space. The plant was expanded over the next 30 years and remained in operation until its closure in 1990. The complex remains a prominent and important landmark on the City's East Side.
- b) The Friedrich Complex consists of 14 buildings located on the property at 1617 E Commerce. Of these buildings, 11 are found by both the Office of Historic Preservation to be contributing. The entire property at 1617 E Commerce features a historic zoning overlay.
- c) A request to demolish 8 contributing buildings within the Friedrich Complex was reviewed by the HDRC on September 17, 2014. The HDRC approved demolition for 4 of the requested buildings which were found to either be on the interior of the structure or to be of less significance. Prior to HDRC action, a task force met with the owner of three separate occasions to review the details of the request and thoroughly explore the claim for economic hardship. The applicant currently wishes to remove historic designation for the 8 buildings which were previously requested for demolition. In accordance with UDC Section 35-606, a zoning request to remove historic designation must first be recommended by the HDRC.
- d) UDC Section 35-606 requires that new and compelling evidence and a negative evaluation according to the same criteria under which the property was designated is required for the HDRC to consider removal of designation. No new evidence has been provided by the applicant, and staff finds that no loss of significance as occurred which would result in ineligibility for designation.
- e) Local historic designation necessitates HDRC review of demolition and places design controls for infill construction and additions. If an owner wishes to seek demolition, information supporting an economic hardship or loss of significance must be presented to the HDRC. Staff strongly encourages the owner of this property to continue to make applications to the HDRC through this established process.
- f) The applicant has indicated that the current request for removal of historic designation is for "marketing" purposes. The Friedrich Complex is an excellent candidate for adaptive reuse using local, state, and federal historic tax

incentives. However, utilization of the incentives is contingent on the retention of its contributing structures. Removal of local designation not only removes the property's candidacy for local tax incentives, it also releases a potential developer from any design-review requirements. The historic and design review process is put in place for historic landmarks and districts to ensure quality, compatible development in relation to the places the community wishes to protect. Removal of historic designation is a negative approach to economic development which undermines community efforts of the past.

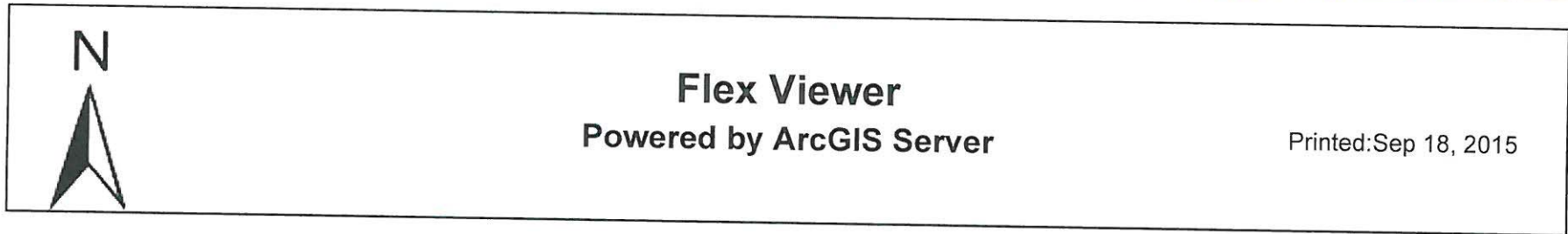
RECOMMENDATION:

Local historic designation is an important tool which protects historical and community resources from demolition, provides incentives for rehabilitation which spurs economic development, and places design review requirements on the property which ensure quality and compatible construction. Staff does not recommend approval to remove the historic zoning overlay from any portion of this property.

If circumstances have changed and additional demolition is requested, staff recommends the applicant submit additional information to the HDRC substantiating that claim. If the HDRC does not approve a demolition request, the applicant has an opportunity for appeal through the established process.

CASE MANAGER:

Cory Edwards



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SUITE 1360
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September 18, 2015

Ms. Shanon Shea Miller
Director, Office of Historic Preservation
1901 South Alamo Street
San Antonio, Texas 78204

VIA Hand Delivery

Re: Application for Determination of Non-Contributing Status and Historic and Design Review Commission ("HDRC") Recommendation to Remove the "HS" (Historic, Significant) Overlay Zoning District on a 5.307-acre Portion of the Friedrich Complex/Building ("Complex"), an Unoccupied Commercial and Industrial Complex Comprised of Several Structures, Located at 1617 & 1631 East Commerce Street in San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas (the "Property"): *Our File No. 9589.001*

Dear Ms. Miller:

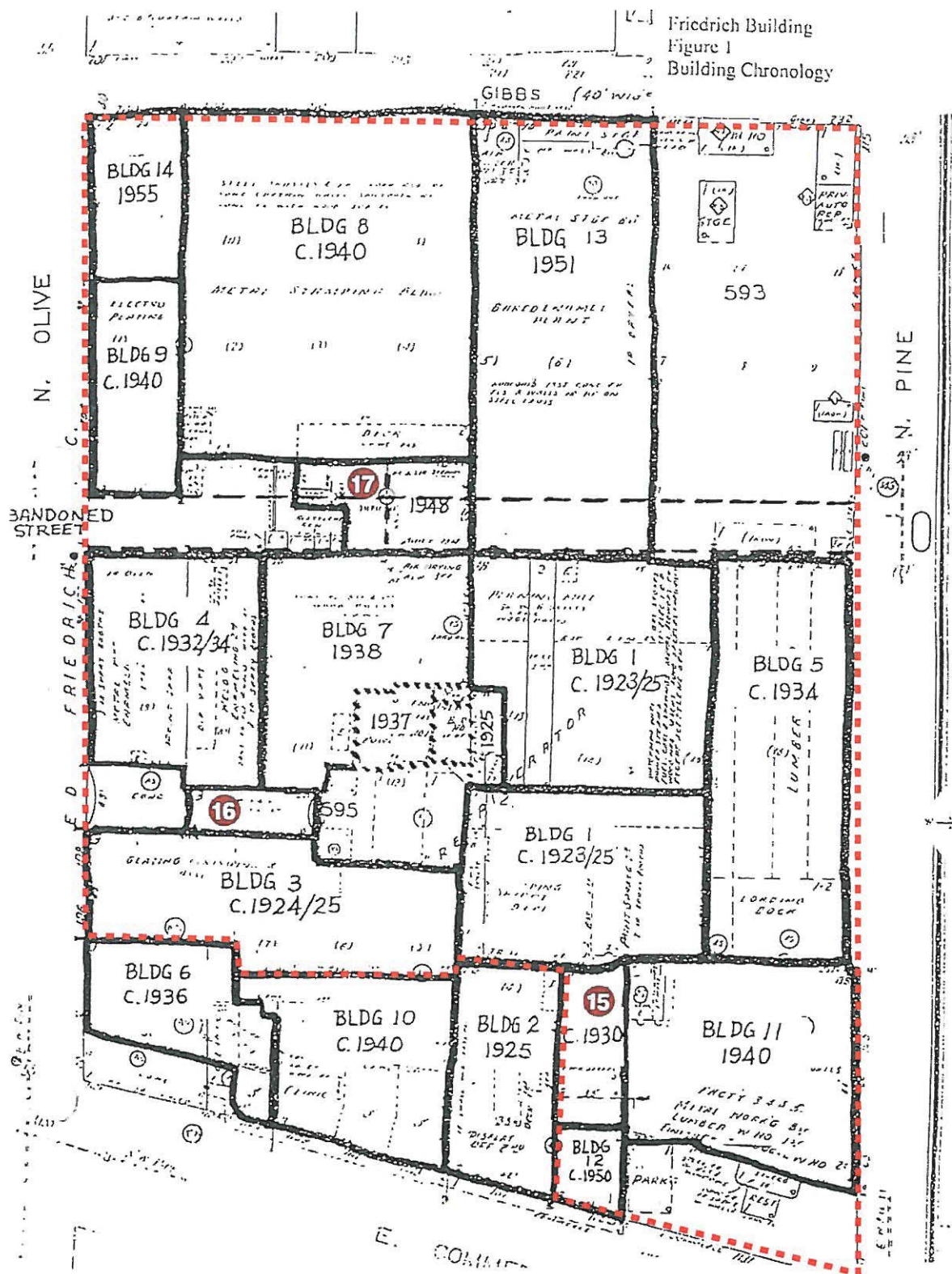
The purpose of this correspondence is to submit information for consideration by the Office of Historic Preservation and HDRC for determination of non-contributing status for the 5.307-acre Property/Complex (*see Exhibit "1"*). This request is to subsequently have the "HS" overlay zoning district removed from the Property after consideration by the San Antonio Zoning Commission and City Council, pursuant to Sec. 35-606(g) of the San Antonio Unified Development Code. The Property represents that portion of the Complex that is made up of several buildings that have deteriorated over the last 80+ years, and has lost historical significance. *For this reason, we respectfully ask for your support in recommending to the HDRC that the portion of the Complex referenced by the Property is Non-Contributing, and that the "HS" overlay zoning district should be removed.*

Sincerely,

BROWN & ORTIZ, P.C.

By: 

James McKnight

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection FIGURE Page 20

FIELD NOTES
5.307 Acres



BEING 5.307 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR LESS, BEING A PORTION OF A 5.882 ACRE TRACT OF LAND, COMPRISED OF LOTS 1 THRU 18, BLOCK A, N.C.B. 593, AND LOTS 1 THRU 17, A-17, AND A-18, BLOCK 1, N.C.B. 595, CITY OF SAN ANTONIO, BEXAR COUNTY, TEXAS. SAID 5.307 ACRE TRACT BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

BEGINNING at the intersection on the east right-of-way line of Olive Street, a 55.6 wide right of way, and the north right of way of East Commerce Street, an 83 foot wide right-of-way, said point being the southwest corner and **POINT OF BEGINNING** of the herein described tract;

Thence N. $00^{\circ}15'26''$ W., a distance of 543.56 feet with the east right-of-way line of Olive Street and the west line of this tract, to the intersection of the east right of way line of Olive Street with the south right of way line of Gibbs Street, a 38.77 wide right of way, for the northwest corner of this tract;

Thence N. $89^{\circ}44'34''$ E., a distance of 428.31 feet with the south right of way line of Gibbs Street and north line of this tract, to the intersection with the west right of way line of N. Pine Street, a 55 ft. right of way, for the northeast corner of this tract;

Thence S. $00^{\circ}15'26''$ E., a distance of 652.94 feet with the west right of way of N. Pine Street and east line of the tract, to the intersection with the north right of way of said E. Commerce Street, for the southeast corner of this tract;

Thence N. $75^{\circ}55'52''$ W., a distance of 442.06 feet along the north right of way of said E. Commerce Street and south line of this tract, to the **POINT OF BEGINNING** and containing **5.882** Acres of land, more or less. **SAVE AND EXCEPT** the 0.575 acre tract described as follows:

BEGINNING at the intersection on the east right-of-way line of Olive Street, a 55.6 wide right of way, and the north right of way of East Commerce Street, an 83 foot wide right-of-way, said point being the southwest corner and **POINT OF BEGINNING** of the herein described tract and of the fore previously described 5.882 acre tract;

Thence N. $00^{\circ}15'26''$ W., a distance of 78.72 feet with the east right-of-way line of Olive Street and the west line of this tract and of the 5.882 acre tract, to a point for the northwest corner of this tract;

Thence departing the east right of way of Olive Street along the north and east wall of an existing building, the following courses;

N. $89^{\circ}44'47''$ E., a distance of 77.74 feet for a corner of this tract;

S. $00^{\circ}15'13''$ E., a distance of 30.89 feet for a corner of this tract;

N. $89^{\circ}44'15''$ E., a distance of 124.23 feet for a corner of this tract;

N. $00^{\circ}15'54''$ W., a distance of 26.30 feet for the north east corner of this tract;

Thence S. $00^{\circ}15'13''$ E., a distance of 140.68 feet with the east line of this tract, to a point on the north right of way of E. Commerce Street, for the southeast corner of this tract;

Thence N. $75^{\circ}55'52''$ W., a distance of 269.02 feet along the north right of way of said E. Commerce Street and south line of this tract to the **POINT OF BEGINNING** and containing 0.575 Acres (25,085 Sq. Ft.) of land, more or less.



BAIN MEDINA BAIN, INC.
ENGINEERS & SURVEYORS
1026 Central Parkway South
San Antonio, Texas 78232
210/494-7223

PRELIMINARY

FOR REVIEW ONLY
Not for construction,
bidding or permit purposes.

Engineer:

CARL BAIN

P.E. No. 56996

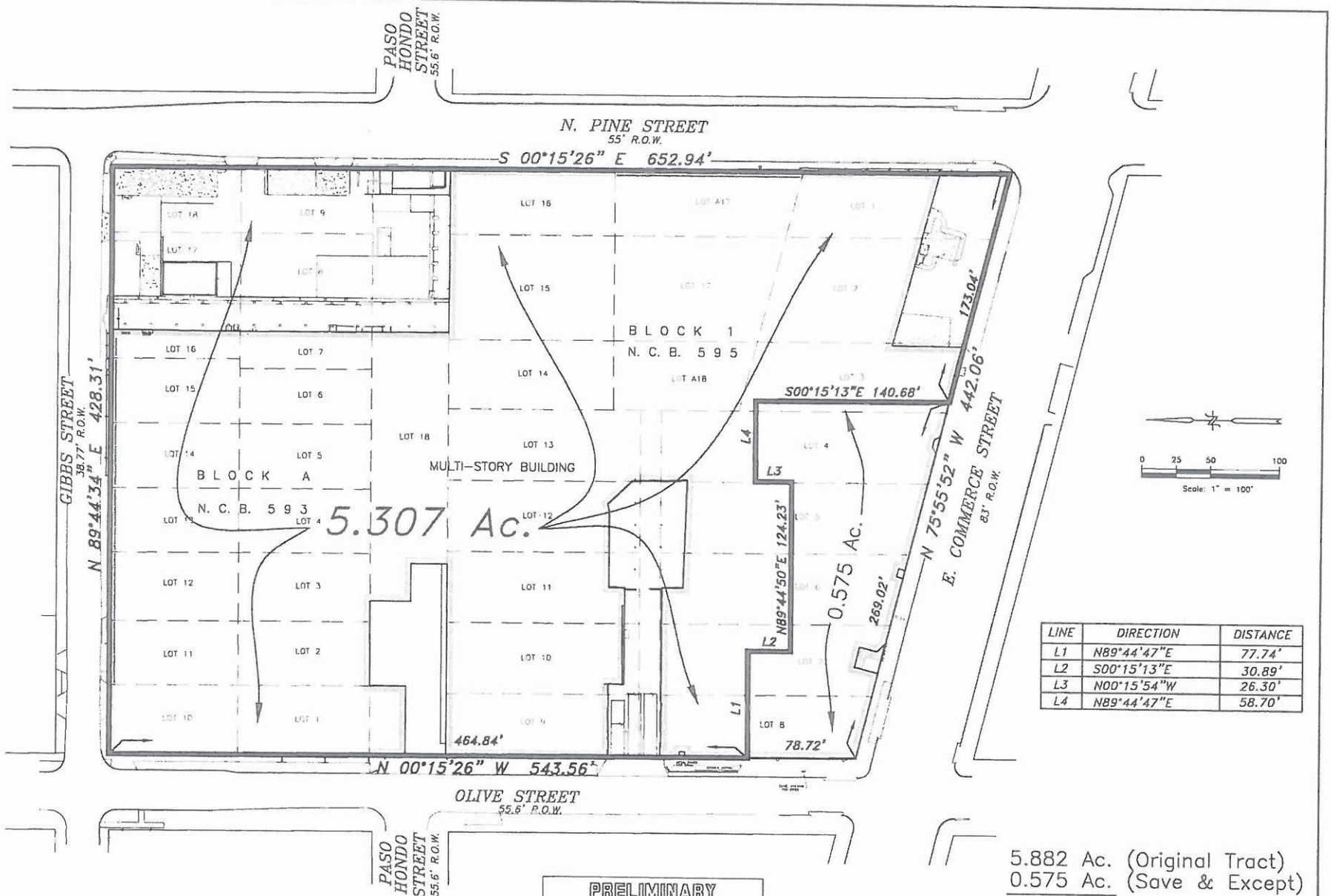
09-16-15

Date

FRIEDRICH LOFTS EXHIBIT

JOB No. S-5584 DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2015

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5.882 Ac. (Original Tract)
0.575 Ac. (Save & Except)
5.307 Ac. (To be Rezoned)

HDRC Recommendation 9-17-14

