

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

November 02, 2016

Agenda Item No: 13

HDRC CASE NO: 2016-427
ADDRESS: 723 DONALDSON AVE
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 6758 BLK 8 LOT 23 (JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL III)
ZONING: R-6
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 7
DISTRICT: Monticello Park Historic District
LANDMARK: Jefferson High School
APPLICANT: Kamal Elhabr/SAISD
OWNER: SAISD
TYPE OF WORK: Tile replacement, foundation repair
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to renovate the existing fountain located in the Student Council Courtyard at Thomas Jefferson High School. Renovations would include the following:

1. Replace existing historic tiles with new tiles recreated by ceramic artist to match in-kind
2. Remove existing non-original clay wall cap on outer tier and install architectural precast concrete cap
3. Remove existing non-original blue pool tiles in the outer ring and re-install green pool tiles on the pool floor and sides of the outer tier
4. Raise the bottom of the pool of the outer tier from 3' deep to 4" deep
5. Reconstruct 3 water spouts and install frog fountain heads
6. Install a new water infiltration and recirculation system.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property shall be used for its intended historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken. [7-9] Porches and canvas awnings provide shade and keep interiors cool in historic residential and commercial buildings.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in

the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 2, Exterior Maintenance and Alteration

2. Materials: Masonry and Stucco

A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- i. *Paint*—Avoid painting historically unpainted surfaces. Exceptions may be made for severely deteriorated material where other consolidation or stabilization methods are not appropriate. When painting is acceptable, utilize a water permeable paint to avoid trapping water within the masonry.
- ii. *Clear area*—Keep the area where masonry or stucco meets the ground clear of water, moisture, and vegetation.
- iii. *Vegetation*—Avoid allowing ivy or other vegetation to grow on masonry or stucco walls, as it may loosen mortar and stucco and increase trapped moisture.
- iv. *Cleaning*—Use the gentlest means possible to clean masonry and stucco when needed, as improper cleaning can damage the surface. Avoid the use of any abrasive, strong chemical, sandblasting, or high-pressure cleaning method.

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- i. *Patching*—Repair masonry or stucco by patching or replacing it with in-kind materials whenever possible. Utilize similar materials that are compatible with the original in terms of composition, texture, application technique, color, and detail, when in-kind replacement is not possible. EIFS is not an appropriate patching or replacement material for stucco.
- ii. *Repointing*—The removal of old or deteriorated mortar should be done carefully by a professional to ensure that masonry units are not damaged in the process. Use mortar that matches the original in color, profile, and composition when repointing. Incompatible mortar can exceed the strength of historic masonry and results in deterioration. Ensure that the new joint matches the profile of the old joint when viewed in section. It is recommended that a test panel is prepared to ensure the mortar is the right strength and color.
- iii. *Removing paint*—Take care when removing paint from masonry as the paint may be providing a protectant layer or hiding modifications to the building. Use the gentlest means possible, such as alkaline poultice cleaners and strippers, to remove paint from masonry.
- iv. *Removing stucco*—Remove stucco from masonry surfaces where it is historically inappropriate. Prepare a test panel to ensure that underlying masonry has not been irreversibly damaged before proceeding.

10. Commercial Facades

A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- i. *Character-defining features*—Preserve character-defining features such as cornice molding, upper-story windows, transoms, display windows, kickplates, entryways, tiled paving at entryways, parapet walls, bulkheads, and other features that contribute to the character of the building.

FINDINGS:

- a. The Thomas Jefferson High School is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Registered Texas Historic Landmark.
- b. The existing fountain is located in the Student Council Courtyard at Thomas Jefferson High School. The fountain consists of two tiers, an outer pool and an inner pool. Originally, the inner tier had 3 fountain heads, but those have been removed.
- c. The applicant is proposing to remove all of the existing historic tiles with new tiles recreated by ceramic artist to match in-kind. According to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence. Staff finds the tiles should be repaired if possible. Staff made a site visit on October 21, 2016, and found that some tile is chipped and damaged, but that some are intact. Staff finds this proposal to replace all tiles no consistent with these standards and recommends a salvaging plan be made and submitted to staff.
- d. The applicant is proposing to remove the existing non-original clay wall cap on outer tier and install architectural precast concrete cap. According to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved or missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence. Staff finds the clay cap is not seen in the historic

photographs submitted. Staff finds the replacement of the cap with a precast concrete cap appropriate.

- e. The applicant is proposing to remove the existing non-original blue pool tiles in the outer ring and re-install green pool tiles on the pool floor and sides of the outer tier. According to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved or missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence. Staff finds the pool tiles do not match the tiles that are seen in the historic photographs and are not original to the fountain. Staff finds the new tiles to be installed will not be seen as they will be under water. Staff finds the replacement of the pool tiles and installation of new green tiles on the pool floor and sides appropriate.
- f. The applicant is proposing to raise the bottom of the pool of the outer tier from 3' deep to 4" deep in order to comply with building codes. According to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, exterior alterations shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. Staff finds that raising the pool bottom does not change the character of the fountain and is appropriate.
- g. The applicant is proposing to reconstruct 3 water spouts and install frog fountain heads in the original locations of the water spouts. According to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence. The historic photographs submitted are not clear about the fountain heads on the water spouts. The applicant informed staff that Thomas Jefferson High School alumni have said the spray heads used to be an animal, a fish or a frog. Staff finds the reconstruction of the water spouts appropriate.
- h. The applicant is proposing to install a new water infiltration and recirculation system. According to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, exterior alterations shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. Staff finds that installation of new mechanical equipment appropriate and would not destroy the historic material or character of the fountain.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval based on findings a through h with the stipulations that the applicant submit a salvaging plan for repairable historic tiles to staff.

CASE MANAGER:

Lauren Sage

CASE COMMENTS:

This property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and a Registered Texas Historic Landmark and may require review by the Texas Historical Commission. The applicant should coordinate with THC directly.



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Printed: Oct 26, 2016

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FRONT



INTERIOR COURTYARD





























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Thomas Jefferson High School Student Council Courtyard Fountain Renovation

Historic Design and Review Commission Application - Narrative
October 12, 2016

Thomas Jefferson High School is on the National Register of Historic Places, and is in the City of San Antonio Monticello Park Historic District. The school is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Donaldson Avenue and Wilson Boulevard.

The project that is subject of this application is the renovation of the fountain located in the Student Council Courtyard of the facility. The Senior Class of 1932 funded the fountain, which was the first class to graduate after the January 1932 completion of the original school campus. The fountain was not completed until 1936.

Originally designed as a "fish pond" the fountain consisted of two "tiers" of water, with the lower tier containing lily pads and fish (assumed goldfish or koi). The upper tier was clean water that recirculates through three spouts (see attached photos) that have been referred to as having different kinds of elements from which the water emanates (the TJHS Historical Society claims that the original elements were some kind of ceramic frogs). The upper portion of the fountain is clad in ceramic tile, which are decorated, with decorative tile in the Spanish motif created by Mr. Tony Lozano of Redondo Tile. The lower portion of the tile currently has a cobalt blue tile that appears to be swimming pool tile from the 1980's (no precise information available from historic or contemporary written material).

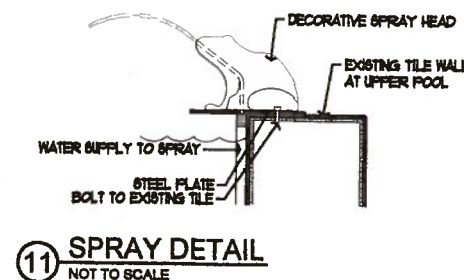
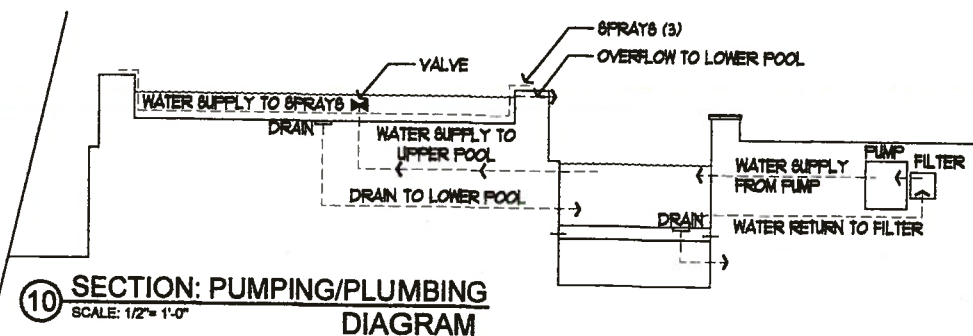
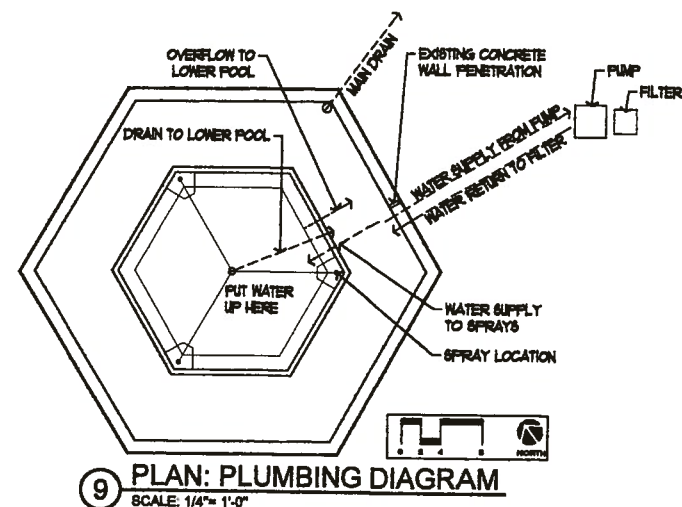
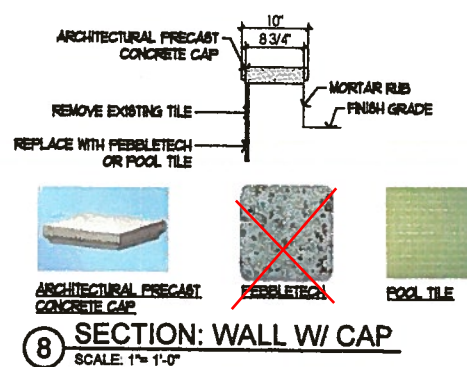
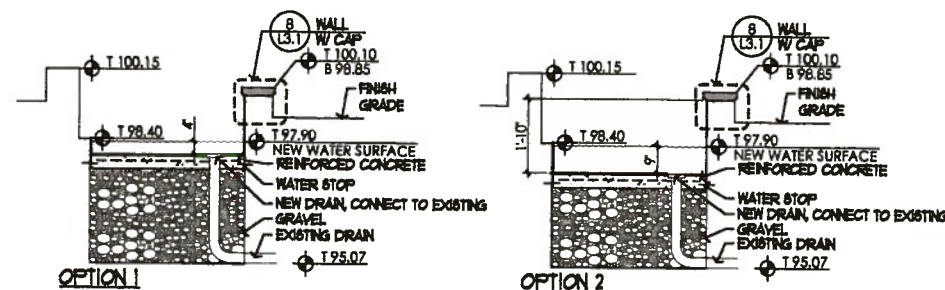
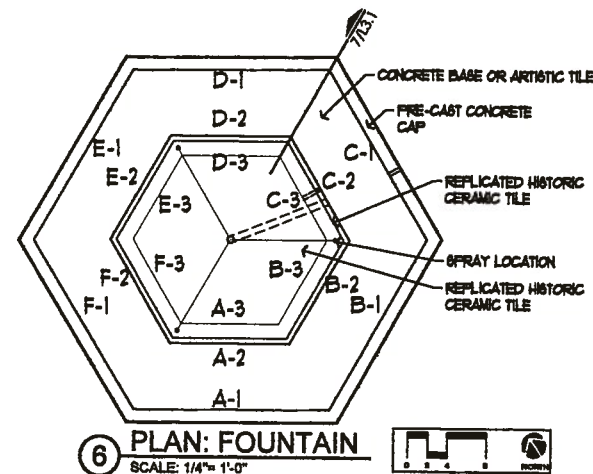
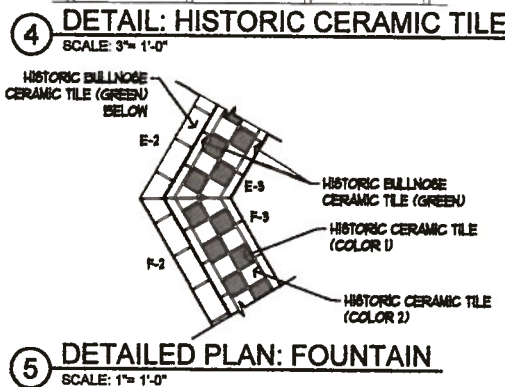
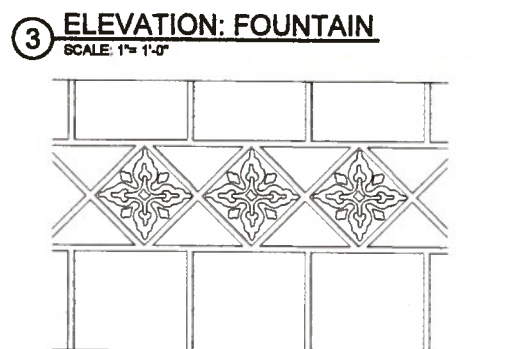
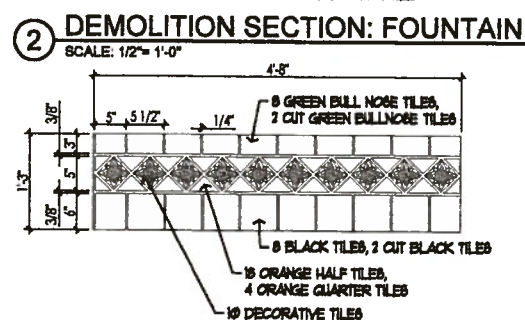
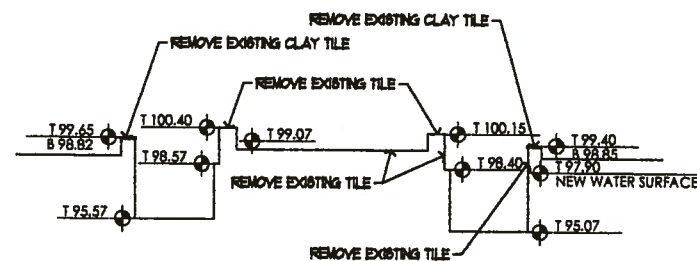
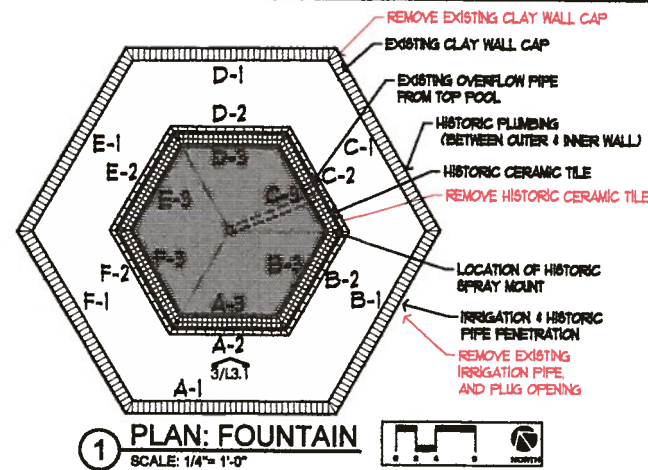
The existing ceramic tile is in very poor condition. A San Antonio ceramic artist and Instructor at the Southwest School of Art (Diana Kersey) was asked to evaluate the tile. She wrote, "it looked to me like most of the damage is from lime that was in the clay body from the beginning. When clay is mined and it has small bits of lime (limestone) in it the lime turns into dehydrated lime in the firing process and over time it absorbs water from the atmosphere. The water/lime take up more space and create tension within the clay body, resulting in those "pop-outs." There is not really a good repair that will endure harsh exterior environments and maintain the appearance of colored glass (glaze), and it looks like nearly every tile would need some kind of treatment ". Her opinion was "that it would be both more cost effective and sustainable into the future to replace the tiles with ones with the same colors and designs". Ant that "Another advantage to removing the old and replacing it with like materials is the substrate could be waterproofed and repaired, which will also extend the life of the new installation." Regarding the decorative tiles, Kersey suggested she could "recreate those (they were probably press molded with the design engraved into the mold, leaving slightly raised lines in the clay, then liquid glaze was laid in with bulb syringes. I love that the design is not completely symmetrical! An advantage of having me do this would be I would be happy to leave

the mold with the historical association along with any glaze formulas, etc. so that in the future, if more need to be made it would be easier”.

In addition to replacing the tile, the plan includes making the bottom pool shallower (it is currently over 3-feet deep) to comply with current codes that would not require that the feature comply with swimming pool codes. In swallowing the pool our proposal is to raise the pool to within 3 to 4-inches of the water surface and clad that pool with either a hand made tile in the pattern of lily pads or a more normal monochromatic color tile that would create a reflective quality to the water.

In the upper pool the proposal is to recreate the waterspouts that can be seen in the historic photographs.

A new water filtration and recirculation system will also be installed.



Jefferson High School Fountain

RIALTO
STUDIO

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