

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

June 21, 2017

HDRC CASE NO: 2016-523
ADDRESS: 1401 N HAMILTON ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 6040 BLK 6 LOT 28 (FRANK GARRETT CENTER & WEST END PARK)
ZONING: MF-33
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
APPLICANT: Google Fiber Texas, LLC
OWNER: City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department
TYPE OF WORK: Landscaping and fencing to screen a telecommunications hut
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to construct fencing and landscaping for the purpose of screening a utility structure for telecommunications at 1401 N Hamilton Street, Commonly known as West End Park.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

UDC Section 35-640. Public Property and Rights-of-Way

- (a) Public Property. Generally, the historic and design review commission will consider applications for actions affecting the exterior of public properties except in the case of building interiors that are the sites of major public assemblies or public lobbies. The historic and design review commission will also consider applications for actions affecting public properties such as city parks, open spaces, plazas, parking lots, signs and appurtenances.
- (b) Public Rights-of-Way. Generally, the historic and design review commission will consider applications for actions affecting public rights-of-way whose construction or reconstruction exceeds in quality of design or materials standards of the design manual of the public works department.

Sec. 35-641. - Design Considerations for Historic and Design Review Commission Recommendations.

In reviewing an application, the historic and design review commission shall be aware of the importance of attempting to find a way to meet the current needs of the City of San Antonio, lessee or licensee of public property. The historic and design review commission shall also recognize the importance of recommending approval of plans that will be reasonable to implement. The best urban design standards possible can and should be employed with public property including buildings and facilities, parks and open spaces, and the public right-of-way. Design and construction on public property should employ such standards because the use of public monies for design and construction is a public trust. Public commitment to quality design should encourage better design by the private sector. Finally, using such design standards for public property improves the identity and the quality of life of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Sec. 35-642. - New Construction of Buildings and Facilities.

In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of a certificate, the historic and design review commission shall be guided by the following design considerations. These are not intended to restrict imagination, innovation or variety, but rather to assist in focusing on design principles, which can result in creative solutions that will enhance the city and its neighborhoods. Good and original design solutions that meet the individual requirements of a specific site or neighborhood are encouraged and welcomed.

(a) Site and Setting.

(1) Building sites should be planned to take into consideration existing natural climatic and topographical features. The intrusive leveling of the site should be avoided. Climatic factors such as sun, wind, and temperature should become an integral part of the design to encourage design of site-specific facilities which reinforces the individual identity of a neighborhood and promotes energy efficient facilities.

(2) Special consideration should be given to maintain existing urban design characteristics, such as setbacks, building heights, streetscapes, pedestrian movement, and traffic flow. Building placement should enhance or create focal points and views. Continuity of scale and orientation shall be emphasized.

(3) Accessibility from streets should be designed to accommodate safe pedestrian movement as well as vehicular traffic. Where possible, parking areas should be screened from view from the public right-of-way by attractive fences, berms, plantings or other means.

(4) Historically significant aspects of the site shall be identified and if possible incorporated into the site design. Historic relationships between buildings, such as plazas or open spaces, boulevards or axial relationships should be maintained.

(b) Building Design.

(1) Buildings for the public should maintain the highest quality standards of design integrity. They should elicit a pride of ownership for all citizens. Public buildings should reflect the unique and diverse character of San Antonio and should be responsive to the time and place in which they were constructed.

(2) Buildings shall be in scale with their adjoining surroundings and shall be in harmonious conformance to the identifying quality and characteristics of the neighborhood. They shall be compatible in design, style and materials. Reproductions of styles and designs from a different time period are not encouraged, consistent with the secretary of the interior's standards. Major horizontal and vertical elements in adjoining sites should be respected.

(3) Materials shall be suitable to the type of building and design in which they are used. They shall be durable and easily maintained. Materials and designs at pedestrian level shall be at human scale, that is they shall be designed to be understood and appreciated by someone on foot. Materials should be selected that respect the historic character of the surrounding area in texture, size and color.

(4) Building components such as doors, windows, overhangs, awnings, roof shapes and decorative elements shall all be designed to contribute to the proportions and scale of their surrounding context. Established mass/void relationships shall be maintained. Patterns and rhythms in the streetscape shall be continued.

(5) Colors shall be harmonious with the surrounding environment, but should not be dull. Choice of color should reflect the local and regional character. Nearby historic colors shall be respected.

(6) Mechanical equipment or other utility hardware should be screened from public view with materials compatible with the building design. Where possible, rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened, even from above. Where feasible, overhead utilities should also be underground or attractively screened. Exterior lighting shall be an integral part of the design. Interior lighting shall be controlled so that the spillover lighting onto public walkways is not annoying to pedestrians.

(7) Signs which are out of keeping with the character of the environment in question should not be used. Excessive size and inappropriate placement on buildings results in visual clutter. Signs should be designed to relate harmoniously to exterior building materials and colors. Signs should express a simple clear message with wording kept to a minimum.

(8) Auxiliary design. The site should take into account the compatibility of landscaping, parking facilities, utility and service areas, walkways and appurtenances. These should be designed with the overall environment in mind and should be in visual keeping with related buildings, structures and places.

(c) Multiple Facades. In making recommendations affecting new buildings or structures which will have more than one

(1) important facade, such as those which will face two (2) streets or a street and the San Antonio River, the historic and design review commission shall consider the above visual compatibility standards with respect to each important facade.

FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant has proposed to construct fencing and screening for a utility structure on the public property located at 1401 Hamilton, commonly known as West End Park. The structure is to house equipment for Google Fiber. This request was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on December 13, 2016, and then by the Historic and Design Review Commission on December 22, 2016, where it was referred to the Design Review Committee. This request was heard a second time by the DRC on March 7, 2016.
- b. Since last attending the Historic and Design Review Commission, the previously installed barbed wire has been removed.
- c. Per the UDC Section 35-640, the Historic and Design Review Commission will consider application affecting public properties such as city parks, open spaces, plazas, parking lots, signs and appurtenances.
- d. The applicant has installed a utility structure that features a footprint of 12'x30', an overall height of 10' – 11" and materials that consist of wood paneling and a gabled roof form. The utility structure is located on a concrete foundation and is surrounded by an eight (8) foot tall chain link fence. Located within this fencing is additional mechanical equipment including a generator and gas meter. The utility structure is located fourteen (14) feet from the public right of way.
- e. The applicant worked closely with the Council office and neighborhood association representatives to agree on the design of the fencing and screening. At the request of the neighborhood association, a public art component

has been incorporated into the proposed fencing. The proposed art component will consist of metal tabs that will be custom fabricated for installation. The applicant has noted that the design will be approved by Public Art San Antonio prior to fabrication and installation. Staff finds the proposed art component to be appropriate; however, the art component should screen all mechanical equipment from view.

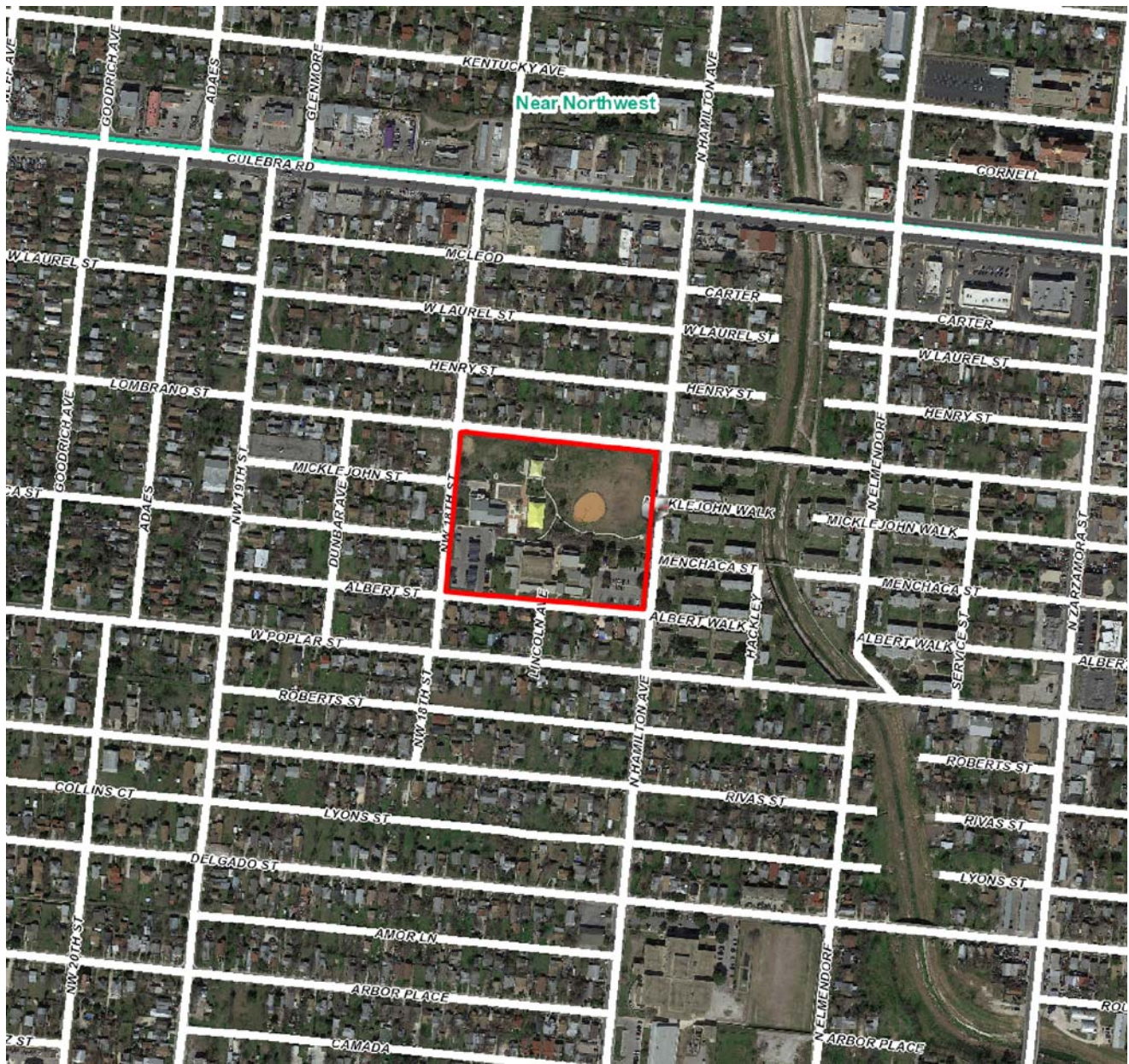
- f. ARCHAEOLOGY- The development project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval based on findings a through f with the stipulation that the project comply with all federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations regarding archaeology.

CASE MANAGER:

Edward Hall



Flex Viewer

Powered by ArcGIS Server

Printed: Dec 13, 2016

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Kentucky Ave

Culebra Rd

421

421

McLeod

Carter St

W Laurel St

Henry St

Lombrano St

1401 North
Hamilton Avenue

Frank Garrett
Multi-Service Center

Menchaca St

Albert St

W Poplar St

Roberts St

Rivas St

Rivas St

Iglesia Evangelica
El Gtsmn

Lyons St

Lincoln Heights
Apartments

Menchaca St

Hackney St

W Poplar St

Roberts St

Roberts St

Lyons St

HDRC Documents

June 2017

Fiber Hut Background

- Fiber network huts house electronic equipment and serve as a key distribution point between the fiber backbone and customers' homes.
- This custom "cottage style" hut is a pre-fabricated structure that measures approximately 11' 9" W x 29' 6" L x 9' H.
- The hut sits on a concrete slab and, for security purposes, is surrounded by a 10 foot chain link fence.
 - Barbed wire was removed per HDRC guidance 12/22/16.
- Each hut is connected to power, but has a backup generator on-site that also sits on a concrete slab and runs on natural gas. Generators are tested monthly, but otherwise only run in power outage situations. The noise level with the backup generator running is roughly 76dB avg at 23ft.

Aerial View of West End Park with Structure



Site Location Pre-Construction



Photo of Structure: West End Park Hut



Google Confidential and Proprietary



Fence Art Installation

- Art will be placed on the two sides of the fence which face the park.
- The tabs take approximately two months to fabricate; therefore, installation is anticipated to occur in late summer.
- The artist team is Legge Lewis Legge based out of Austin.
- Final design is anticipated to go back to the Public Art Committee and then to the full Arts Commission for design approval before fabrication begins.

Sample Art Installation Photos



A permanent system of colorful steel tabs for chain link mesh

Above: Approximately 192 sf of mesh is covered in 2 sample arrays of approximately 1750 tab pairs.
(Fence dimension shown above is @16'W x 36'L x 8'H).

Sample Art Installation Photos

Tab design



Sample Art Installation Photos

Tab arrays

Infinitely scalable: Factors such as general aesthetics, optical effect and design as viewed from many vantage points, as well as sunlight effects and cost efficiency are all considered when determining the pattern of tab distribution within the chain link mesh. Shown below are 4 sample arrangements out of many possible arrays and designs.

