

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

May 01, 2020

HDRC CASE NO: 2020-146
ADDRESS: 803 N CHERRY
PUBLIC PROPERTY: Future Berkley V. and Vincent M. Dawson Park
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 527 BLK 1 LOT 2 (LOOPY SUBD)
ZONING: D
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 2
DISTRICT: Dignowity Hill Historic District
APPLICANT: Sandy Jenkins/City of San Antonio
OWNER: CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
CASE MANAGER: Rachel Rettaliata
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for final approval of the development of a new park at 803 N Cherry.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Sec. 35-613. - Relocation of a Landmark or Property Located in a Historic District:

(a) In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of a certificate application to relocate a building, object or structure designated a historic landmark or located in a historic district, the historic and design review commission shall be guided by the following considerations:

- (1) The historic character and aesthetic interest the building, structure or object contributes to its present setting;
- (2) Whether there are definite plans for the area to be vacated and what the effect of those plans on the character of the surrounding area will be;
- (3) Whether the building, structure, or object can be moved without significant damage to its physical integrity;
- (4) Whether the proposed relocation area is compatible with the historical and architectural character of the building, object, or structure.
- (5) Balancing the contribution of the property to the character of the historic district with the special merit of the application.

(b) Should an application to relocate a building, object or structure be approved, the historic preservation officer shall ensure that the new location is already zoned historic or shall review whether such location should be designated.

(c) The historic preservation officer may approve applications for relocation for properties deemed noncontributing to the historic character of a historic district.

UDC 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.

UDC 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.

FINDINGS:

- a. The site currently proposed for the new Dawson Park is an existing vacant lot adjacent to the Hays Street Bridge. The site is situated with Lamar to the north, N Cherry to the east, the Hays Street Bridge to the south and the railroad tracks and a parking lot to the west. The property is contributing to the Dignowity Hill Historic District.
- b. **PARK AMENITIES** – The applicant is requesting approval to install park amenities such as playground equipment, a skate park, a restroom, bench seating, lighting, and benches. Staff finds the proposal generally consistent with UDC Sec. 35-642.
- c. **SIGNAGE** – The applicant has proposed to install signage in the proposed park. Sign panels are currently proposed outside of the entry plaza and along the walkway referred to as the Historic Timeline Walk. UDC Sec. 35-642(b)(7) stipulates that 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. Staff finds the proposal to install signage generally consistent with the UDC Sec 35-642.

- d. WALKWAYS – The applicant has proposed to install walkways throughout the proposed park. UDC Sec. 35-642(b)(8) states that 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. Staff finds the proposal generally consistent with the UDC Sec. 35-642.
- e. ARCHAEOLOGY – The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends final approval of the proposal to develop Dawson Park as a new public park at 803 N Cherry based on findings a through e with the following stipulations:

- i. That the applicant submits final permit-level drawings and specifications to staff for review and approval prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. Individual site-specific elements that align with the approved plan are eligible for administrative approval.
- ii. ARCHAEOLOGY – The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable.







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CITY OF SAN ANTONIO OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

December 18, 2019

HDRC CASE NO: 2019-702

ADDRESS: 300 ALAMO PLAZA

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 115 BLK LOT ALL OF BLK & P-100(.209AC)

HISTORIC DISTRICT: Alamo Plaza

PUBLIC PROPERTY: Yes

LANDMARK: Alamo / Alamo Plaza

APPLICANT: City of San Antonio -

OWNER: City of San Antonio -

TYPE OF WORK: ADA improvements/modifications, Exterior lighting, Landscaping/hardscaping/irrigation, Monument/plaque placement, Park improvements, Right-of-Way, Tree removal

REQUEST:

Phase 1 of Alamo Plan includes:

- Improvements to Bonham from E Houston to E Crockett Street, improvements to E Crockett from Bonham to Alamo
- Landscaping in Alamo Plaza south of historic mission footprint
- Repair and restoration of Cenotaph The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to implement Phase 1 of the Alamo Plan which includes:

STREET IMPROVEMENTS - Perform modifications and improvements to Bonham Street including the shifting of traffic lanes and the reconfiguring of the intersection of Bonham and E Crockett. Perform modifications and improvements to E Crockett Street from Bonham Street to Alamo Plaza including the installation of bollards and new paving materials. The 1974 Lady Bird Fountain will be removed.

LANDSCAPING AND HARDSCAPING - Expand the pedestrian plaza to the south by performing site and landscaping modifications south of the historic mission footprint. Create a new focused plaza for the Cenotaph including new trees, planters, and seating. The 1976 bandstand will be removed.

CENOTAPH – Positioning of the Cenotaph within the proposed plaza. Perform rehabilitative scopes of work to the Cenotaph at its new location including the development of interpretive elements and lighting.

FINDINGS:

Aspects of the Phase 1 improvements received conceptual approval from the HDRC on October 10, 2018. This approval included the removal of the Lady Bird Fountain and existing bandstand. Final approval to “dismantle, repair, and reassemble the Cenotaph (Spirit of Sacrifice) in Alamo Plaza at the approximate location of the existing bandstand. Exact positioning and final plaza design will be considered at a future date.” was also approved unanimously in 2018. Renderings showing other aspects of the conceptual Alamo Plan, including potential

demolitions, are for reference only and are not included in this request.

STREET IMPROVEMENTS – The proposed street improvements will generally improve pedestrian access and walkability within Alamo Plaza. The designs indicate the placement of street trees and special paving treatments which are consistent with the provisions of UDC Section 35-646 for construction in the public right-of-way. Within this phase of work, the ca. 1934 stone perimeter walls of the Alamo garden will be removed. The walls are not located on City property and are not subject to approval within this request. Vehicular access through the plaza will be controlled; an updated parade route is provided as reference in this application.

LANDSCAPING AND HARDSCAPING – The applicant has proposed to expand the pedestrian plaza to the south by performing site and landscaping modifications south of the historic mission footprint. Paving materials will consist of small brick, stone, or concrete pavers in addition to sections of larger pavers. Selected materials are of high quality, complement the historic surroundings, and provide variety and interest to the pedestrian landscape consistent with UDC 35-646. The three largest, existing Live Oaks at this location will be retained and protected during construction. Additional plant selections shall further conform with recommend species for plantings in the regional climate.

CENOTAPH – The Cenotaph to the Alamo Defenders (also known as the Spirit of Sacrifice) was commissioned in 1936 by the Texas Centennial Commission. It was designed by architect Carleton Adams with sculptural elements by Pompeo Coppini. The Cenotaph was completed in 1939 and dedicated in 1940. The Cenotaph inscriptions list 182 men who died at the battle of the Alamo, compiled by Dr. Amelia W. Williams. Today, there are 189 known Defenders; some errors in the names listed have been identified.

CENOTAPH – Consistent with the October 2018 approval, the Cenotaph will be dismantled, repaired, and reconstructed at a new location within the proposed plaza located approximately 450 feet to the south of its current location. The Cenotaph will be reoriented 180 degrees so that the primary Spirit of Sacrifice sculpture may continue to address the Alamo grounds to the north. All materials conservation efforts will be consistent with the Historic Design Guidelines for Masonry. The existing marble base will be updated with additional names of verified Alamo Defenders using the most accurate information available. No revisions or alterations to the existing sculptures or the overall design of the Cenotaph are proposed.

ARCHAEOLOGY – The project area is located within the Alamo Plaza Local Historic District, Alamo Plaza National Register of Historic Places District, is partially within the RIO District, and includes the Alamo Plaza Local Historic Landmark. In addition, the designated boundary for the Alamo State Antiquities Landmark, previously recorded archaeological site 41BX6, extends into the project area. The submitted Phase 1 Limit of Work overlaps the boundary of the Cemetery on the Grounds of the Alamo, as identified on the publicly accessible Texas Historic Sites Atlas. Furthermore, the project area is traversed by the Acequia del Alamo, a Local Historic Landmark, National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, and previously recorded archaeological site 41BX8. Therefore, archaeological investigations are required. The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable. In addition, the project shall comply with the Texas Antiquities Code and Health and Safety Code of Texas. The archaeology consultant shall submit the scope of work to the Office of Historic Preservation for review and approval prior to beginning field efforts. Archaeological investigations on City of San Antonio property and right-of-way shall be coordinated with the OHP throughout the construction of the project.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of all request items as submitted. Final details regarding the interpretation plan for the Cenotaph may require additional approval by the HDRC. Final paving and material specifications that are consistent with the approved scope may be submitted to staff.

Archaeological investigations are required. The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable. Moreover, the project shall comply with the Texas Antiquities Code and Health and Safety Code of Texas. The archaeology consultant shall submit the scope of work to the Office of Historic Preservation for review and approval prior to beginning field efforts. Archaeological investigations on City of San Antonio property and right-of-way shall be coordinated with the OHP throughout the construction of the project.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Approved as submitted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shanon Shea Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shanon" being more prominent.

Shanon Shea Miller
Historic Preservation Officer

A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) serves as a record of design approval and is valid for 180 days. Work that is not completed in accordance with this certificate may be subject to correction orders and other penalties.

A COA does not take the place of any required building permits nor does it authorize the use of a property beyond what is allowed by the Unified Development Code. Prior to beginning your construction project, please contact the Development Services Department at (210) 207-1111 to ensure that all requirements have been met.

This Certificate must remain posted on the job site for the duration of your project. Modifications to an approved design or an expired approval will require a re-issue of your Certificate of Appropriateness by OHP staff. Please contact OHP Staff at (210) 207-0035 with any questions.