



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:14-2980

Agenda Item Number: 17.

Agenda Date: 11/19/2014

In Control: Historic and Design Review Commission

HDRC CASE NO: 2013-283
ADDRESS: 408 E. Houston
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 416 BLK 23 LOT 22 (SAT HOUSTON SUBD)
ZONING: D H HS RIO-3
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: Alamo Plaza Historic District
LANDMARK: Yes - Alterman's and United Cigar Building
APPLICANT: Nick Naik
OWNER: SA Hou Alamo LLC
TYPE OF WORK: Revisions to previously-approved scope
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval of the following revisions to the hotel design at 408 E Houston:

1. Construct front (north) façade to include a 1'-9" setback beyond the adjacent Maverick Building;
2. Reduce the building height;
3. Change pillars and canopy at rooftop terrace area; and
4. Implement minor changes to the fenestrations.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 4, Guidelines for New Construction

1. Building and Entrance Orientation

A. FAÇADE ORIENTATION

- i. *Setbacks*-Align front facades of new buildings with front facades of adjacent buildings where a consistent setback has been established along the street frontage. Use the median setback of buildings along the street frontage where a variety of setbacks exist. Refer to UDC Article 3, Division 2. Base Zoning Districts for applicable setback requirements.
- ii. *Orientation*-Orient the front façade of new buildings to be consistent with the predominant orientation of historic buildings along the street frontage.

B. ENTRANCES

- i. *Orientation*-Orient primary building entrances, porches, and landings to be consistent with those historically found along the street

A. SCALE AND MASS

- i. *Similar height and scale*-Design new construction so that its height and overall scale are consistent with nearby historic buildings. In residential districts, the height and scale of new construction should not exceed that of the majority of historic buildings by more than one-story. In commercial districts, building height shall conform to the established pattern. If there is no more than a 50% variation in the scale of buildings on the adjacent block faces, then the height of the new building shall not exceed the tallest building on the adjacent block face by more than 10%.
- ii. *Transitions*-Utilize step-downs in building height, wall-plane offsets, and other variations in building massing to provide a visual transition when the height of new construction exceeds that of adjacent historic buildings by more than one-half story.
- iii. *Foundation and floor heights*-Align foundation and floor-to-floor heights (including porches and balconies) within one foot of floor-to-floor heights on adjacent historic structures.

B. ROOF FORM

- i. *Similar roof forms*-Incorporate roof forms-pitch, overhangs, and orientation-that are consistent with those predominantly found on the block. Roof forms on residential building types are typically sloped, while roof forms on non-residential building types are more typically flat and screened by an ornamental parapet wall.

C. RELATIONSHIP OF SOLIDS TO VOIDS

- i. *Window and door openings*-Incorporate window and door openings with a similar proportion of wall to window space as typical with nearby historic facades. Windows, doors, porches, entryways, dormers, bays, and pediments shall be considered similar if they are no larger than 25% in size and vary no more than 10% in height to width ratio from adjacent historic facades.
- ii. *Façade configuration*- The primary façade of new commercial buildings should be in keeping with established patterns. Maintaining horizontal elements within adjacent cap, middle, and base precedents will establish a consistent street wall through the alignment of horizontal parts. Avoid blank walls, particularly on elevations visible from the street. No new façade should exceed 40 linear feet without being penetrated by windows, entryways, or other defined bays.

3. Materials and Textures

A. NEW MATERIALS

- i. *Complementary materials*-Use materials that complement the type, color, and texture of materials traditionally found in the district. Materials should not be so dissimilar as to distract from the historic interpretation of the district. For example, corrugated metal siding would not be appropriate for a new structure in a district comprised of homes with wood siding.

B. REUSE OF HISTORIC MATERIALS

Salvaged materials-Incorporate salvaged historic materials where possible within the context of the overall design of the new structure.

6. Mechanical Equipment and Roof Appurtenances

B. SCREENING

- iii. *Roof-mounted equipment*-Screen and set back devices mounted on the roof to avoid view from public right-of-way.

FINDINGS:

- a. A Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of the hotel was approved on October 15, 2013, with the stipulation that the vehicular entry off of Houston Street be reduced to a single lane. The current proposal meets this

requirement. Other revisions have been made to the design and have been submitted to HDRC review.

- b. These requests were reviewed by the Design Review Committee on November 13, 2014. The applicant noted that while the design of the building footprint has not been altered, it was previously unknown that the proposed hotel would extend slightly beyond the Maverick Building. The Maverick building is not aligned with the property line, resulting in the offset condition. The hotel will follow the property line and align with the building immediately to the east which is also located at the property line. The applicant clarified that the cornice of the Maverick Building, which extends over the property line, will terminate into the new building. The committee noted that the cornice of the Maverick was damaged at this corner and that the proposed offset was acceptable. The other changes were noted to not have any significant impacts.
- c. According to the Guidelines for New Construction 1.A.i., the front facades of new buildings should be aligned with the front facades of the adjacent buildings where there is a consistent setback. Staff finds that there is a consistent setback at this location, and generally along Houston Street. A survey by staff indicates that only the Vouge Building at Houston and Navarro extends beyond an adjacent building. The currently requested design indicates that the front façade will project approximately 1'-9" beyond the adjacent Maverick Building. This is not consistent with the Guidelines. However, given the irregularity of the buildings at this location, staff finds the offset to be acceptable.
- d. The reduction in building height has minimal impact to the approved design and the overall height remains consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 1.A.i.
- e. The proposed changes to the rooftop terrace design also has minimal impact to the approved design and continues to provide an articulated "cap" consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 1.C.ii.
- f. The changes to the fenestrations maintain traditional window alignment patterns consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 1.C.i.

RECOMMENDATION:

1-4. Staff recommends approval as submitted based on findings b through f.

CASE COMMENTS:

The applicant shall complete all requirements for archaeology in accordance with a 2008 plat approval.

CASE MANAGER:

Adriana Ziga