

City of Lockhart
Historical Preservation Commission
March 7, 2018

MINUTES

Members Present: Ronda Reagan, Ron Faulstich, Kathy McCormick, Richard Thomson, Juan Alvarez, Jr., Victor Corpus

Member Absent: John Lairsen

Staff Present: Yvette Aguado, Kevin Waller, Dan Gibson

Public Present:

1. Call to Order. Vice-Chair Reagan called the Lockhart Historical Preservation Commission meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.
2. Citizen comments not related to an agenda item.

No comments made.

3. Consider the minutes of the February 7, 2018 meeting.

Commissioner McCormick moved to approve the minutes, with the amendment to identify her as the member voting no for CFA-18-01. Commissioner Alvarez seconded, and the motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

4. CFA-18-03. Consider a request by Tamara Carlisle for approval of a Certificate for Alteration to allow window and awning replacements on an existing building on Part of Lot 3, Block 17, Original Town of Lockhart, zoned CCB (Commercial Central Business District) and located at 102 South Commerce Street.

Mr. Waller approached the podium and presented Planning Staff's report. He explained that the applicant proposed exterior improvements to an existing building to include replacing the existing clerestory windows on the front façade, replacing the canopy, and repainting the front façade above the canopy for the new Franke & Franke architectural firm location. The clerestory windows are currently concealed behind plywood paneling, and will be uncovered and replaced with new clear insulated glass units of the same size as the existing. The canopy will be replaced with a new canopy of similar design and will utilize the existing support rods. The proposed canopy's depth will measure 3'6" shorter than the current canopy and will no longer extend to the end of the sidewalk. A gutter system will be utilized to prevent rainwater from spilling onto the sidewalk. Although the proposed improvements also include repainting, Section 28-10(d) of the Historic Districts and Landmarks Ordinance states that repainting shall be considered ordinary maintenance, which does not require review by the Commission. Staff recommended approval with no suggested conditions.

Tim and Elizabeth Franke of Franke & Franke Architects and Contractors, 3603 Bridle Path, Austin, TX approached the podium to respond to questions from the Commission.

Mr. Franke stated that they recommended that the owner reduce the awning depth from 9'6" to 6' so that it is better proportioned to the building. He further explained that the new awning will have a cleaner look, and that the structural engineer has completed a preliminary analysis.

Vice-Chair Reagan asked if the new canopy would abut those of the adjacent buildings. She also asked how rainwater would be channeled.

Mr. Franke said the sides of the awning would be curved, with no rainwater migration to neighboring awnings. There would be a construction joint between the awnings that would be water-proofed.

Mrs. Franke added that there would be a finish on the sides of the awning.

Vice-Chair Reagan asked where the integrated gutter system will dump out, and if it will be to the street.

Mr. Franke commented that they thought it would cause more trouble to try and add a gutter or downspout. He added that the property owner wasn't clear after discussion with City staff if it was a suggestion or requirement.

Vice-Chair Reagan stated that she had seen a building in New Braunfels where the gutters connected to posts that conveyed water down to the sidewalks without splattering. Reagan asked if the applicant had considered this option, or if they were going for a cleaner look.

Mrs. Franke mentioned that this was not discussed with the owner, and that they only discussed maintaining the awning's current appearance. They had considered the options of either conveying water to the edge of the sidewalk, or via return gutters against the building's façade.

Mr. Franke mentioned that the proposed awning will measure 180 sq. ft. and that not much water will run off.

Commissioner Faulstich stated that he had concerns about an awning ending in the middle of the sidewalk, and whether those passing below would be adequately shielded from runoff.

Mrs. Franke stated that a 6' awning will be consistent with the depth of other nearby awnings, and that this depth will be adequate to shield the public from runoff.

Commissioner Corpus asked the applicants if they planned to install the gutters.

Mr. Franke responded that they were not planning to add gutters but were informed about them by the owner.

Commissioner Corpus asked if the existing awning would be completely removed and replaced.

Mrs. Franke replied that it would be completely removed and replaced. They didn't intend to change to a canvas covering, but instead to keep a wood frame.

Commissioner McCormick inquired as to the framing material of the clerestory windows.

Mr. Franke responded that sealed glass window units would be installed within the existing frames.

Commissioner McCormick inquired about the corners of the roof and their composition.

Mrs. Franke responded that they were metal flashing corners which divert water from the roof and any pervious areas. When the awning is replaced there will be new metal flashing added to provide a form of water-proofing for the roof.

Mr. Waller explained that the City Manager has established a policy that any future awning improvements that do not span the width of the sidewalk require a gutter system installed to prevent spillage onto the sidewalk.

Vice-Chair Reagan asked if this policy stipulates that the gutter system be directed to the building's façade and then downward.

Commissioner Corpus reiterated Vice-Chair Reagan's question, and stated that brick could be placed over the gutter system along the façade, and that the gutter could extend beneath the sidewalk to the street, in a way that would not negatively impact the sidewalk.

Commissioner Faulstich stated that his building employs this type of gutter system.

Vice-Chair Reagan asked if this is a new policy, then what does the City intend to do about existing awnings that do not fully extend across the sidewalk.

Mr. Waller replied that the policy applies only to proposed, new improvements.

Mr. Gibson explained that the City Manager's policy is based upon liability concerns. Since the awnings are located over public property, that being the sidewalks, the City has a vested interest in these types of projects.

Commissioner Faulstich shared his concerns with shortening the awning, and stated that it changes the appearance of the building as well as its historical character. Many of the awnings downtown were constructed prior to adoption of the Historical ordinance, and are therefore grandfathered. It is considered ordinary maintenance if a property owner decides to replace an awning in-kind, which does not require Commission approval.

Mrs. Franke asked what the City's policy is for gutter placement.

Mr. Franke asked if the City would construct the gutter system beneath the public sidewalk. He stated that it seems there are two options at this point, one to keep the new awning at the same dimensions as the existing, or shorten the awning's depth and add the gutter system.

Commissioner McCormick asked if the awning slopes down towards the street, how do they propose to convey rainwater back up towards the façade.

Mrs. Franke responded that a downslope would be incorporated into the gutter system towards the façade, as is found in other projects.

Mr. Franke asked if the Commission could approve two possibilities; either go with the existing depth and no gutters or shorten the depth and install gutters per City Manager's requirement.

Mr. Gibson stated that per a phone call made to the City Manager moments ago, the owner will be required to install the drainage infrastructure beneath the sidewalk.

Vice-Chair Reagan responded that the Commission could approve either/or, and then have the applicant return to the Commission if the shorter-depth awning is desired.

Commissioner McCormick stated that once the clerestory windows are uncovered and replaced, it will add visual appeal that will no longer be dominated by the awning.

Mr. Franke explained that the window frames are wood, but also have metal components.

Mrs. Franke stated that the property owner will be replacing only the window glass, and that the existing wooden frames will remain.

Mr. Waller stated that there is no need for the applicant to return to the Commission if they decide to go with the shorter awning, since the planning staff could handle this administratively.

Commissioner Corpus stated that he believed the Commission would feel more comfortable if the applicant returns to the Commission for review and approval of a shorter awning.

Mr. Waller stated that returning to the Commission is certainly an option if the Commission so chooses.

Commissioner Faulstich moved to approve CFA-18-03 to include the uncovering and replacement of the clerestory windows and the replacement of the awning at the same width and depth as the existing, with the condition that if the applicant chooses to shorten the awning's depth and add the gutter system, they would need to return to the Commission for approval. Commissioner McCormick seconded, and the motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

5. CFA-18-04. Consider a request by Michelle Harmon for approval of a Certificate for Alteration to allow a wall sign on an existing building on Part of Lot 6, Block 19, Original Town of Lockhart, zoned CCB (Commercial Central Business District) and located at 117 South Main Street.

Mr. Waller approached the podium and presented Planning Staff's report. He explained that the applicant proposes a new wall sign for the existing "Lone Star Realty" business. The sign will be located above the window to the left of the front door when facing the front façade and will read "Lone Star Realty" with the State of Texas shape below in colors resembling the state flag. The vinyl sign will be affixed to the building with a heating application, which the applicant states will not damage the building and can easily be removed with the same process. A smaller version of the sign, with contact information, is currently located in the upper-central portion of the window, but according to applicant will be removed prior to placement of the new sign. A small "Open" sign is located in a narrow window to the left of the front door, and a placard identifying the building as the "Betty Jean Rundell Building" is also located to left of the door. The "Open" sign and historic placard are exempt from the requirement for a sign permit and do not need approval of a Certificate for Alteration. Staff recommended approval with no suggested conditions.

Commissioner McCormick asked what material the sign will consist of.

Mr. Waller responded that it will be a vinyl material applied with a heat gun to the wall of the building.

Commissioner Faulstich explained that the sign's material will be durable, adhere to the wall with no holes or damage to the building, and will look nice. To remove the sign, the same heating application will be used and the sign can then be peeled off with no damage to the building.

Vice-Chair Reagan asked if the sign's lettering was straight across or of an arched type.

Mr. Waller responded that the lettering will have a slight arch.

Vice-Chair Reagan asked if the applicant considered any other type of material and installation methods, such as metal and/or something that requires a more substantial method of attachment.

Applicant Michelle Harmon, 4740 E. FM 20, responded that they did consider other methods, but found that they would damage the building. Mrs. Harmon added that she consulted with her husband who has done stucco work for forty years who agreed that the proposed method was ideal.

Commissioner Faulstich stated that if the applicant utilizes a metal or wooden sign, they will have to drill into stucco.

Mrs. Harmon stated that the property owner did not want any type of drilling into the building.

Vice-Chair Reagan asked if any of the other building tenants or future owners wanted a sign would they be allowed.

Mr. Waller responded that the proposed sign will utilize the seven percent maximum sign area allowed in the Commercial Central Business Zoning District, and that other tenants would have to work with Lone Star Realty to add their own signage. It would be necessary to reduce the size of the proposed sign in order to allow other tenants to install signs, so as not to exceed the maximum sign area allowed.

Commissioner Thomson stated that there isn't much signage on the block in which the subject property is located, other than that on nearby awnings, and that the proposed sign seems like a sticker.

Commissioner Corpus stated that although the sign isn't particularly appealing, it is practical, since it would be easy to remove, and looks like a painting and somewhat original to a historic building.

Mrs. Harmon stated that she did not want to put up an awning for two reasons, one due to potential blockage of the view of the courthouse from her window and two, holes would need to be drilled into the building.

Vice-Chair Reagan stated that the front façade of the building is not historical and was redone a few years prior, and that the stucco is not original. Reagan expressed that she personally did not like the look of the sign, and wished there were other alternatives, such as something similar to the bronze plaque on the building or perhaps a three-dimensional sign.

Commissioner Alvarez asked Mr. Waller why Staff recommended approval, since this is a new type of sign on the Square.

Mr. Waller stated that Staff recommended approval because of the sign's simplistic design, and that it wouldn't detract from the character of the Square.

Commissioner Thomson expressed concerns about setting a precedent by approving the sign, and that it would encourage others to request what is essentially a decal or sticker.

Mrs. Harmon explained that whether the sign be painted or applied as a decal, it will look the same.

Vice-Chair Reagan suggested that a backlit sign with raised lettering, which would be highly visible, is a possible alternative.

Mrs. Harmon responded that such a sign would be costly, and that she preferred something flat against the building and visible from all sides.

Commissioner Corpus, after asking the sign company representative at the meeting if the sign background surrounding the state outline and text would be clear all around, informed

the Commission that the sign would not be a large rectangle with text and the state outline, but would contain only the outline and text.

Commissioner Corpus moved to approve CFA-18-04 as presented. Commissioner Alvarez seconded, and the motion passed by a vote of 4-2.

6. Discuss the progress on the Historic Landmarks project.

Mr. Waller reported that he and Mr. Gibson recently met with the LISD Superintendent to discuss adding the old high school building and Adams Gym on the ML Cisneros Campus to the list of potential historic landmarks. LISD expressed concern about whether landmark status would benefit the school district, as it creates another layer of regulation. The superintendent also explained that at this time, they are somewhat inundated with ongoing improvements to the high school building. They would like to hold off on historic landmark designation at this time, and once things calm down in the future, possibly revisit the idea. It just isn't an attractive option at this point.

Mr. Gibson stated that LISD, however, is seriously considering the Adams Gym for landmark designation.

Mr. Waller stated that he did provide the superintendent with a partially completed application for the Adams Gym.

Commissioner Alvarez inquired as to whether the School Board or superintendent would make a decision on submitting the application.

Mr. Gibson stated that the superintendent would check with the School Board and get back with Planning Staff after a couple of weeks, due to spring break.

Vice-Chair Reagan asked if the landmark applications were ready to be presented to the City Council.

Mr. Gibson explained that Staff preferred to wait for any submission of the Adams Gym application before presenting to the Council. Additionally, the applications will have to go before the Planning and Zoning Commission, since the Commission would need to review the zoning change component associated with landmark designation.

7. Review and discuss the flyer prepared by Staff for a future community-wide workshop on State and Federal historic preservation tax credits, and the City of Lockhart tax abatement program.

Vice-Chair Reagan indicated that this item would be tabled until the next meeting, as Staff did not provide the flyer to the Commission in their packet materials for review.

8. Discuss the date and agenda of next meeting, including Commission requests for agenda items.

Vice-Chair Reagan asked if any Commission members had any requests or if Staff had any applications submitted to add to the next agenda.

Mr. Waller explained that today was the deadline for the March 21, 2018 meeting, and Staff had not received any applications. He stated that Staff would hold off on adding the historical tax credit flyer to the next agenda until any applications are submitted.

Vice-Chair Reagan suggested that Staff email the flyer to the Commission for review.

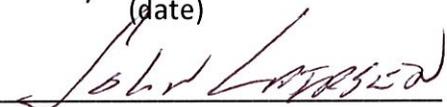
9. Adjournment.

Commissioner Faulstich moved to adjourn the meeting, and Commissioner Thomson seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0, and the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Approved: 3/21/18
(date)



Yvette Aguado, Recording Secretary



John Lairsen, Chair