
LANDMARKS COMMISSION
October 30th, 2012
Minutes

Members Present: Rick Weatherl
Michael McClellan
Pebbles Lee
Steve Butman

Members Absent: Phil Miller
Bill Minter
Robert Calk

Staff Present: Stephanie Goodrich, Historic Preservation Officer
Ben Bryner, Planning Services Manager
Kelley Messer, Assistant City Attorney
Debra Hill, Secretary II (recording)

Guests: Ruppert Rangel
Alex A Abraham
Jim McCathren

Mr. Rick Weatherl called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M. and declared a quorum present and read the opening statement.

Minutes of the September 25, 2012 meeting were submitted for approval.

Mr. Butman made a motion to table the minutes from September 25, 2012, being as Mr. Weatherl and Mrs. Lee did not attend that meeting. Mrs. Lee seconded the motion. The vote to table was unanimous (4-0).

- 3. R-2012-01**, Public hearing, discussion and possible approval of Cultural Landmark Status to be designated to the commercial property located at 209 Cottonwood Street.

Mrs. Stephanie Goodrich presented the staff report for the case. There are provisions in our Landmarks Ordinance to consider cases that may exhibit significance or value to the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the city, state, or country. This significance can be in history, archeology, or culture. The Herrera family has owned and operated a café or restaurant in this same cornerstone block of El Barrio de los Sancudos since approximately 1936. Given the fact that Historic Overlay Zoning is for architectural preservation, and this building does not have enough historic fabric to qualify, a case was explored for the cultural impact of the business and the operating family on the surrounding neighborhood and to a greater extent, the City of Abilene.

Currently there are no provisions in the Land Development code to specifically address a building or structure that may qualify under the cultural criteria for designation, but not the architectural criteria. Placing HOZ on this building is not necessary, since the building is not the most important aspect of the contributions to Abilene's heritage.

By recognizing Farolito Restaurant as a Cultural Landmark we promote civic pride in the accomplishments of the past and promote the enjoyment of our cultural heritage without requiring the Certificate of Appropriateness process for alterations on the building.

**Land Development Code
Section 2.3.4.4
Historic Overlay District
Criteria for Designation**

Properties must exhibit any one or more of the following characteristics:

- **Historical, archeological or cultural significance or value to the development, heritage or cultural, characteristics of the city, state or county.**
- **Association with events or persons of significance**
- **The building style distinctive of a type, period or method of construction or architecture**
- **Yielding or may yield historical information**
- **Unique location contributing to a familiar visual feature of a neighborhood**
- **Represents the work of a master, designer, architect, builder or craftsman**

Due to the extensive modifications to the building over time staff could not make a case for the Historic Overlay Zoning as it was originally requested. After investigating the architectural integrity of the building, staff felt that a case could not be made for the overlay zoning as it is meant to preserve architectural heritage. After explaining this to Ms. Herrera it was agreed that she would seek recognition as a Cultural Landmark since we have no mechanism in place for cultural significance when the building itself is not the important aspect of the historic impact to the community. The resolution is the first of its kind for the Landmarks Commission, and therefore no staff recommendation was made and the decision is left up to the commissioners.

Mr. Butman questioned what this recognition would provide for the property. Mrs. Goodrich stated this designation is meant to recognize their significance culturally to the area they have been serving since the early 1940's. Mr. Butman asked if there would be any financial benefits to this recognition. Mrs. Goodrich stated there would not, this designation is to recognize cultural significance to the City of Abilene and is honorary only with no additional zoning regulations or benefits.

Ms. Lee asked if this is something that is written in our ordinance and if we have ever done something like this before. Ms. Goodrich replied that it is not something written in the ordinance but that the ordinance states that one of the purposes of the Landmarks Commission is to foster civic pride in the accomplishments of the past. Since we did not have any mechanisms in place to recognize cultural contributions to the community when a building has lost architectural integrity, this was the best way of recognizing the significance of the family and the restaurant.

Mrs. Lee questioned if a plaque or other means of recognition would be implemented. Mrs. Goodrich stated she is considering this depending on the outcome of this case.

Mr. Butman questioned if this is the first of its kind in Abilene or the state of Texas. Mrs. Goodrich stated this was the first of its kind for Abilene but other cities in Texas have implemented this designation of Cultural Significance.

Mr. Weatherl opened the public hearing, seeing no one the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Butman made a motion to approve R-2012-01. Mrs. Lee seconded the motion. Mr. Weatherl stated for the record that this recognition carries no restrictions or benefits. The vote was unanimous (4-0).

4. **CA-2012-11**, Public hearing, discussion and possible approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for porch repair and mechanical screening modifications for the property located at 340 Beech Street.

Mrs. Stephanie Goodrich presented the staff report for this case. The William A. Minter House (1925) is a 2-1/2 story Tudor Revival style building, originally built as a residence, and is now being used as an office space. It has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its significance in association with William A. Minter, the founder of Minter's Dry Goods, a leading retailer in the early years of Abilene. The building was granted Historic Overlay Zoning by the city of Abilene in October of 1989. It is in excellent condition, with the exception of the porch on the southeast side, which is in need of repair.

Staff recommends approval based on sympathetic treatment and in kind materials of the proposed repairs and modifications. According to the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings*, it is preferable to repair existing features when feasible. The current occupant, Tittle Luther Partnership, an Architecture Firm, proposes to reuse as much of the existing fabric as possible to rebuild and restore the damaged section. Due to the failure of this part of the structure, repair work may have already begun as of the Landmarks Commission meeting to address the potential safety issues. Many of the tiles cracked when the porch began to sink and will be replaced with the closest available material match. Other repairs, such as mortar replacement, will be made as undetectable as is feasibly possible.

The owner also proposes removing the western facing fence that surrounds the rear mechanical equipment, and replacing with in kind cedar planks of the same width and height to match the existing screening. The fence will be moved approximately three feet closer to the building to provide walkway enhancements that will include flowering shrubbery.

Mr. Butman questioned the location of the porch. Mrs. Goodrich explained it was located on the southeast corner of the house that extends to the footprint of the house and is not attached to the covered porch.

Mr. Weatherl opened the public hearing.

Mr. Rupert Rangel (owner) spoke in favor of this request. Mr. Rangel described the original porch as a floating slab. He added that the porch did have some cracks but the damage that has

occurred has happened basically overnight. Mr. Rangel stated that even after Mrs. Goodrich had taken the initial photographs, the wall surrounding the porch has separated more. Mr. Rangel stated that due to the damage of the porch sinking and the wall separating, they have initiated the repair. Mr. Rangel stated that they plan to reuse as much of the limestone as possible. He added that they have found a tile that would more closely match the original tile that was anticipated. Mr. Rangel addressed the fence replacement. He described the purpose of the fence and the need of its replacement. Mr. Rangel stated the fence would be brought in toward the building and flowering shrubs would help soften the appearance.

Mr. Weatherl asked clarification of the reuse of the tile for the porch. Mr. Rangel stated that because the original tile was so securely attached to the failing cement, most of not all of it would have to be replaced and they have found a close match to the original tile that is currently on the covered porch. The original limestone features will be re-used.

Mr. Weatherl closed the public hearing.

Mr. Butman made a motion to approve CA-2012-11. Mr. McClellan seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (4-0).

5. **CA-2012-12**, Public hearing, discussion and possible approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for window restoration, door restoration, and awning modifications for the property located at 244 Pine Street.

Mrs. Goodrich presented the staff report for this case. The Minter Building (Under One Roof) was designed by the Abilene architect David Castle for commercial use and built in the Gothic Revival style in 1925. The Minter Dry Goods store is most often associated with the building's historic use. It is a three story commercial building in the Downtown National Register District. It was granted Historic Overlay Zoning by the Landmarks Commission in 1996.

Staff recommends approval based on sympathetic treatment and in kind materials of the proposed repairs and modifications. According to the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings*, it is preferable to repair existing features when feasible. The current owner, Jim McCathren, proposes to use historic photographs, architectural evidence, and existing features to restore the second floor windows that were filled in with Haydite concrete blocks in 1951. They will be cypress frames built to match the original windows and painted in the same green color as the existing windows.

During the 1951 renovation, one of the doors on the Pine street storefront that lead to a downward staircase was filled in so that the storefront display could be enlarged. The proposed restoration will be to open this space back into a doorway so that retail space in the basement is accessible from the street level. As much of the existing fabric as possible will be re-used and the door will be of a period appropriate design. Staff recommends approval of this part of the Certificate of Appropriateness based on compliance with *The Secretary of the Interiors Guidelines for Restoration*.

The awnings over the first floor were also modified from the original design. It is Mr. McCathren's intention to install new awnings that are closer to the original design, not to extend more than 6' from the building façade, and no lower than 8' from the sidewalk (Both of these measurements meet the City of Abilene Land Development Codes.) The color will be green and beige stripe to match the paint trim color on the windows. Currently there is no regulation for awning colors in the Landmarks Ordinance. Staff recommends approval of this section of the Certificate of Appropriateness based on the National Park Service *Preservation Brief 44: The Use of Awnings on Historic Buildings Repair, Replacement & New Design*.

Mr. Weatherl opened the public hearing.

Mr. Jim McCathren (owner) spoke in favor of this request. Mr. McCathren described the proposed modifications to the building. He stated the awning would be stationary and draped to replicate the original awning and would help repel the water from the sidewalk.

Mr. Weatherl closed the public hearing.

Mr. McClellan made a motion to approve CA-2012-12. Mr. Butman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (4-0).

Mr. Weatherl asked for a motion to adjourn at 4:35 P.M. Mr. Butman made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Lee seconded the motion. The vote to adjourn was unanimous (4-0).

Approved: _____, Chairman
