



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

**SAN ANTONIO HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION
OFFICIAL MINUTES
19 June 2020**

The Historic and Design Review Commission of the City of San Antonio met in session on Friday, June 19, 2020, in the Board Room at the Development and Business Services Center, 1901 S. Alamo.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

- Chairman Fetzer called the meeting to order at 8:20 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

- The roll was called by the Executive Secretary.

Present: Fernandez, Fish, Gibbs, Velasquez, Carpenter, Grube, Bowman, Fetzer, and Laffoon.

Absent: Arreola, Martinez-Flores, Bowman, .

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

PUBLIC COMMENTS: See list of Public Comments on the Individual Item.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

CONSENT AGENDA

- **No Consent Agenda because Special Hearing for case- 2020-201--335 TRAIL.**

INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION AGENDA ITEM

- **Item # 1. HDRC NO. 2020-201**

ADDRESS: 335 TRAIL

Applicant: April 15, 2020 -Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders

REQUEST:

Item A: Consideration and approval of a waiver pursuant to City Code Section 35-451 (f) to accept and review the application submitted for the request described below.

Item B: The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to construct a multi-unit residential development (23 units) on the vacant lot located at 335 Trail. The property features lots that are located within the RiverImprovement Overlay only, as well as those that are located within both the River Improvement Overlay and the River Road Historic District. The applicant has proposed for the residential structures to feature two and three stories in height. Access to the site will be provided from Trail Street and Huisache Street.

FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to construct a multi-unit residential development on the vacant lot located at 335 Trail. The property features lots that are located within the River Improvement Overlay only, as well as those that are located within both the River Improvement Overlay and the River Road Historic District. The applicant has proposed for the residential structures to feature two and three stories in height. Access to the site will be provided from both Trail Street and Huisache Street..
- b. PREVIOUS REQUESTS – A previous application which consisted of five, 3-story buildings and one, 2-story building (total of 24 units) was approved with stipulations by the HDRC on December 18, 2019. An appeal of this approval was submitted by a neighboring property owner and approved by the Board of Adjustment on February 17, 2020. The UDC provides guidance on the acceptance and review of subsequent applications following BOA action. According to the UDC, *a new application for the same work shall not be resubmitted for consideration until one (1) year has elapsed from the date of disapproval unless the indicated changes in the plans and specifications required to meet the conditions have been incorporated into the new application. The commission, by a majority of its membership, may waive the aforementioned time limitation if the application presents new substantial evidence. If such waiver is granted, a new application shall be filed with the historic preservation officer.* Thus, in determining whether to grant a waiver of the one-year waiting period for subsequent applications, the commission must make findings as to whether the subsequent application (1) incorporates indicated changes in plans and specifications required to meet the conditions required; and (2) presents substantial new evidence. Upon such findings, a waiver of the one-year waiting period may be granted. And, if such waiver is granted, HDRC may consider whether to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness. The current request introduces several revisions to the previous proposal including a reduction of units by 1, reduction of building height on Trail street, elimination of front-loading garages facing Trail Street, and reduced lot coverage to preserve an existing heritage oak. The overall architectural character has also been revised with updated porch and column details and material specifications. Staff finds that these changes respond to the previous feedback and warrant approval of a waiver and consideration of the item for a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- c. DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE – This request was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on April 8, 2020, and again on May 5, 2020. At those meetings, the committee reviewed updated application documents and discussed front yard parking, density, roof profiles and massing. This request was heard a second time by the Design Review Committee on June 10, 2020. At that meeting, Committee members noted their overall concern with the amount of parking and noted that the overall architectural design of the project had improved.
- d. SETBACKS (Trail) – Both the UDC Section 35-672(b)(A) and the Guidelines for New Construction note that front facades on new construction are to align with the front facades of adjacent buildings where a consistent setback has been established along the street frontage. The applicant has noted setbacks of twenty (20) feet on Trail for both buildings 5 and 6. Generally, staff finds the proposed setbacks to be appropriate.
- e. SETBACKS (Huisache) – The applicant has noted per the site plan that setbacks on Huisache will match those of the adjacent, one story structures. The site plan notes porch foundations that protrude past the setbacks of the adjacent structures. Staff finds that the applicant should confirm that no portion of the structures’ massing will feature a setback that is less than those of the adjacent, one story structures.
- f. ENTRANCES – Both the UDC Section 35-672(b)(A) and the Guidelines for New Construction note that a structure’s primary entrance is to be orientated toward the street. The proposed new construction is consistent with the Guidelines and the UDC in regards to entrance orientation.
- g. SCALE & MASS – The applicant has proposed for both structures on Trail Street (buildings 5 and 6) to feature two (2) stories in height, while the other structures (buildings 1 through 4) will feature three (3) stories in height. Per the Guidelines for New Construction 2.A.i., a height and

massing similar to historic structures in the vicinity of the proposed new construction should be used. 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. The UDC Section 35-673(c) notes that the maximum construction height for RIO-1 is 5 stories, or sixty (60) feet in height. Additionally, the UDC notes that within each RIO District, a general similarity in building heights should be encouraged in order to help establish a sense of visual continuity and that building heights shall be configured such that a comfortable human scale is established along edges of properties. The River Road Historic District is comprised mainly of single family residential structures. Multi-family residential structures that exist within the District often feature two stories in height. Generally, staff finds the proposed massing throughout to be appropriate. The proposed massing on Trail Street provides an appropriate transition in height as structures to the immediate south feature one story in height.

- h. **ROOF FORM** – The applicant has proposed roof forms that include both front and side facing gabled roofs as well as shed roofs over porch elements. The applicant has also proposed mansard roof forms; however, these forms will be located on the interior of the site, and on Huisache. Generally, staff finds the proposed roof forms to be appropriate.
- i. **WINDOW & DOOR OPENINGS** – Per the Guidelines for New Construction 2.C.i., window and door openings with similar proportions of wall to window space as typical with nearby historic facades should be incorporated into new construction. Per the UDC Section 35-674(e)(5), fenestration should be well-detailed to add depth and scale to a building’s façade. Additionally, window placement, size, material and style should help define a building’s architectural style and integrity. Generally, the applicant has proposed window openings that relate to those found historically within the River Road Historic District in regards to both the locations and profiles. Staff finds that the applicant should ensure that all ganged windows are separated by a mullion of at least six (6) inches in width.
- j. **LOT COVERAGE** – Per the Guidelines for New Construction, the building footprint for new construction should be no more than fifty (50) percent of the size of the total lot area. Per the application documents, the applicant has proposed a total lot coverage of forty-seven (47) percent within the historically designated portion of the site. This is consistent with the Guidelines.
- k. **PROXIMITY TO ACEQUIA** – The applicant has proposed a setback of fifteen (15) feet from building 4 to the acequia, as well as a setback of more than fifteen (15) feet from building 6. While staff finds the increased setbacks to be appropriate; staff finds that additional steps must be taken to further protect the acequia. Staff finds that the applicant must submit a construction management plan. The construction management plan should outline the steps taken to protect the acequia throughout the course of construction. Moreover, the formal construction plans should identify no subsurface work (utilities, grading, etc.) within 5 feet of the extant acequia. In-field protection of the acequia should include orange construction fencing and silt fencing at a buffer distance of 5 feet from the feature. No construction activities will occur within the buffer area. This fencing should be present on-site until construction is completed. As stated previously, the acequia shall not be used for storm water drainage. Furthermore, the acequia shall not be used for storage, equipment cleaning, or any other use during development that could impact the feature.
- l. **ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS** – The applicant has proposed a number of architectural details that are found historically within the River Road Historic District, including roof forms and materials. As noted in finding j, all ganged windows should be separated by a mullion of at least six (6) inches in width. Additionally, staff finds that appropriate foundation heights should be incorporated. The Guidelines note that foundations in new construction should be within one (1) foot of those found historically on the block.
- m. **MATERIALS** – The applicant has proposed materials that include standing seam metal roofs, composite siding with both board and batten and lap details, and brick. Generally, staff finds the proposed materials to be appropriate. The proposed standing seam metal roofs should feature panels that are 18 to 21 inches wide, seams that are 1 to 2 inches in height, crimped ridge seams

or low profile ridge caps and a standard galvalume finish. If a low profile ridge cap is to be used, it must be submitted to OHP staff for review and approval. The applicant has noted a four inch exposure and smooth finish for lap siding; however, staff finds that board and batten siding should feature boards that are approximately twelve (12) inches wide, with batten that are approximately 1 ½ inches wide.

- n. WINDOW MATERIALS – Per the applicant’s submitted documents, an aluminum clad wood window is to be installed. Additionally, the applicant has submitted a window installation detail noting that windows will be sufficiently recessed within openings, per staff’s standards for windows in new construction. Staff finds that all standards for windows in new construction should be followed. These standards are found above in the applicable citations.
- o. MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT – Per the UDC and Historic Design Guidelines, all mechanical and service equipment, to include trash enclosures are to be screened from view at the public right of way. The applicant is responsible for complying with this requirement.
- p. AUTOMOBILE ACCESS – The applicant has proposed units to be constructed on Trail to the easternmost extent of the lot. As proposed, automobile access would dead end, as currently existing on Trail. The applicant is responsible for all compliance with Transportation and Capital Improvements in regards to access for emergency vehicles and automobile traffic.
- q. PARKING ON TRAIL – For units on Trail, the applicant has proposed 16-foot wide parking pads in front of each unit with the exception of the easternmost unit in Building 6. This parking configuration is atypical for properties within the River Road Historic District, where single lane driveways (9-10 feet) are typically situated to either side of primary structure. The Guidelines for Site Elements discourage the addition off-street parking areas within the front yard setback or in front of primary structures on the lot. They also indicate that access to parking areas should utilize alleys or secondary streets when possible. Traditional front lawn spaces are also a distinctive characteristic of the district and should be incorporated into new construction projects. This portion of Trail Street features two homes with a traditional driveway configuration, one commercial parking lot, and one street-facing overhead garage door. The remainder of the street consists of privacy fences along the southern side. The proposed parking configuration on Trail dominates the front yard setbacks for Buildings 5 and 6 restricts the ability to retain traditional front yard spaces for those units. While anomalies to the prevalent historic development pattern are present on this portion of Trail Street, the proposed development should better respond to the historic conditions by preserving open lawn or garden space within the front yard setback. Furthermore, parking spaces should be sited as to not obstruct views to the front, primary entrance of the units or on either side of primary entrances. In addition to the Historic Design Guidelines for Site Elements, the provisions of RIO also discourage a prevalence of surface parking along street frontages. UDC 35-672 limits the exposure of surface parking areas to no more than 50% of the property line along a street frontage. In response, the applicant has proposed linear walkways separating parking areas which also provide a clear line of sight to front entrances on Trail and provide some green space in the traditional front lawn area. The proposed parking on Trail should be greatly reduced to conform to both the Historic Design Guidelines and the UDC and allow for additional green space in the traditional front lawn area.
- r. LANDSCAPING – The applicant has submitted landscaping information that notes the locations of various landscaping materials, as well as the locations of existing, and heritage trees. Generally, staff finds the proposed landscaping plan to be appropriate.
- s. SITE DESIGN - The applicant has submitted a drainage plan to include an on-site rainwater catchment system (cisterns) and permeable pavers within driveways to handle rooftop and pavement drainage. The cisterns and pavers will be designed to capture a two year (2-yr) storm event, or approximately the first four (4) inches of rainfall. Rainfall in excess of the 2-yr storm or in areas that do not drain to the pavers would be captured by drains throughout the site and conveyed to the proposed on-site detention pond at the northeast corner of the site. The detention pond will release water along Huisache. Additionally, the applicant has proposed a small

wall/curb to deter runoff from entering the acequia from the site. Public Works Stormwater Review staff has determined that the overall drainage plan would result in a reduction of runoff entering the acequia adjacent to the site when compared to existing conditions. Public Works staff also concurs that the design is generally compliant with storm water code requirements and does not use the acequia as part of the proposed drainage infrastructure.

- t. SIDEWALKS – The UDC requires that a pedestrian sidewalk be provided across properties. The applicant has received an administrative variance to not install sidewalks from Development Services Department. The applicant and neighborhood are in agreement on not installing sidewalks.
- u. TREE PRESERVATION – The applicant has submitted a tree preservation plan noting percentages of trees, including heritage trees that have been preserved.
- v. FENCING/TRELLIS – The applicant has proposed front yard fencing on Trail to act as automobile screening and a divider between yard space. Generally, staff finds the proposed fencing to be appropriate; however, if used as fencing the element should not exceed four (4) feet in height. If functioning as a trellis for landscaping, additional height may be appropriate. Staff finds the screening of parking areas to be appropriate and the applicant should work closely with staff to develop appropriate site and fencing elements.
- w. ARCHAEOLOGY – The archaeological investigation has been completed. The development project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology.
- x. ARCHAEOLOGY – Staff has general concern about the sensitivity of the site and the impacts of construction to the acequia. Detailed construction management plans should be developed and provided prior to permitting that includes the limits of construction in proximity to the historic acequia and measures taken to mitigate potential impacts during construction. The UDC Section 35-672 does not allow drainage into the acequia.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Item A: Staff recommends approval of a waiver to accept and review the application based on finding b.

Item B: If a waiver is approved, then staff recommends approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness with the following stipulations:

- i. That the parking configuration on Trail Street be revised to preserve front lawn or garden space within the front yard setback of each unit in front of each primary entrance facing Trail. No more than 50% of the street frontage along Trail may consist of surface parking spaces, and all parking areas must be incorporated into a comprehensive landscape and buffer plan in accordance with the UDC. Any additional off-street parking spaces, if required by zoning, must be relocated to the interior of the site as recommended by the Historic Design Guidelines and the UDC.
- ii. That front setbacks along Huisache be accurately represented and that all portions of Buildings 1 or 2 meet or exceed the front setback established by the primary wall planes of the existing homes on Huisache per finding e.
- iii. That all windows follow staff's standards for windows in new construction as noted in finding n.
- iv. That all ganged windows be separated by a mullion of at least six (6) inches in width as noted in the findings.
- v. That the proposed standing seam metal roofs feature panels that are 18 to 21 inches wide, seams that are 1 to 2 inches in height, a crimped ridge seam or a low profile ridge cap, and a standard galvalume finish. If a low profile ridge cap is used, it must be submitted to OHP staff for review and approval. Additionally, all other materials are to adhere to the specifications outlined in finding m.

- vi. That the applicant use a foundation height that is within one (1) foot of those found historically on Trail, as noted in finding l.
- vii. That all mechanical equipment be screened from view at the public right of way as noted in finding o.
- viii. That the applicant comply with all Transportation and Capital Improvements department requirements regarding emergency vehicle access, automobile access, storm water management and parking.
- ix. That the proposed fencing and trellis element be approved by staff once further developed, as noted in finding v.
- x. **ARCHAEOLOGY** – The archaeological investigation has been completed. The development project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology. The Upper Labor Acequia shall be preserved and shall not be impacted by new construction. Staff has general concern about the sensitivity of the site and the impacts of construction to the acequia. Detailed construction management plans should be developed and provided prior to final approval that includes the limits of construction in proximity to the historic acequia and measures taken to mitigate potential impacts during construction. The UDC Section 35- 672 does not allow drainage into the acequia. Moreover, the formal construction plans should identify no subsurface work (utilities, grading, etc.) within 5 feet of the extant acequia. In-field protection of the acequia should include orange construction fencing and silt fencing at a buffer distance of 5 feet from the feature. No construction activities will occur within the buffer area. This fencing should be present on-site until construction is completed. As stated previously, the acequia shall not be used for storm water drainage. Furthermore, the acequia shall not be used for storage, equipment cleaning, or any other use during development that could impact the feature. (The applicant has noted that they will comply with this stipulation.)

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Raleigh Wood- there is no significant change and opposes to project; Barbara Witte-Howell- supports projects but there are issues in scaling and massing to protect the upper Acequia and parking; Beth Wells opposed because there is concerns about tree preservation; Roy Schweers- opposes to project as it is inconsiderate and inappropriate; David Schmidt- opposes because massing and scaling is inappropriate; Richard Reed- opposes because there are no significant changes and request to deny appeal; Mimi Quintanilla- is not appropriate for the location; Patricia Pratchett-opposes due to inappropriate scaling, mass, and it's a fragile neighborhood; Gemma Kennedy- should be one story home, and not 3 story- not appropriate for the neighborhood; Emily Ferry- massing and scaling issues as there already issues with garbage men going into the neighborhood. Larry Clark-the massing is to big and parking issues with Acequia problem; John Hertz- wishes to deny appeal; William Shelby- massing, density, and scales- not enough adjustments and cohesion the project is to dense-scaling and dense; Mark Canaan- not enough substantial new evidence; and Blanquita Sullivan- no substantial changes and opposes the project.

Motion: Commissioner Carpenter moved for approval of waiver on item b-one year moratorium. Commissioner Grube seconded the motion.

Vote: Ayes: Fernandez, Gibbs, Carpenter, and Grube,
Nays: Fish, Velasquez, and Fetzer.
Absent: Arreola, Martinez-Flores, Bowman, and Laffoon.

Action: MOTION FAILED with 4 AYES AND 3 NAY. 4 ABSENT
****NEEDS TO HAVE A MINIMUM OF 6 COMMISSIONERS APPROVAL IN ORDER FOR MOTION TO PASS****

6/19/20

ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:03 AM.

APPROVED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Fetzer', written over the word 'APPROVED'.

Jeffrey Fetzer
Chair