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Sept. 27, 2016

Clark County Historic Preservation Commission

**REQUEST FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT ON PROPOSED FAÇADE
IMPROVEMENTS/UPGRADES AT 812 MAIN STREET
City of Vancouver Case PRJ-151925/LUP-56566**

The request proposes revisions to both the east and north facades of the building located at 812 Main Street. The site is located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Main Street and West 9th Streets. The proposal is for upgrades to the both the north and east façades.

Proposed façade upgrades include:

- New Storefront windows, entries and transom (approved under a prior building permit)
- "Wood-look" cementitious panelized wall cladding in rainscreen application at Main Street and wrapping northeast corner
- Metal canopies (+/- 18 inch depth) and matching metal accent band above storefront
- "Sandstone and concrete-look" cementitious panelized wall cladding in rainscreen application - primarily at 9th Street facade
- Repair and paint select existing stucco surfaces
- Upgraded entry at 9th Street
- Facsimile restoration of eight-foot square windows and trim from 1950 design
- Facsimile restoration and extension of existing aluminum trim pieces from 1950 design
- On the north façade, a metal panel application including laser cut metal panels and metal panels with historic images of the site and adjacent sites is proposed pending adequate budget
- Existing corner blade sign will be removed to accommodate the work and may be re-installed for the corner tenant

Selective demolition of the façade was begun in late spring 2016 under a separate permit. The permit included installation of new aluminum storefront and transom windows along with interior demolition and some interior structural work. The purpose of the exterior facade

demolition was to determine existence of a sound substrate for attachment of the transom window system in the existing openings. The contractor found that the substrate above the window head consisted of loose, failing four-inch concrete masonry (CMU) supported by an inadequate steel lintel. The CMU had served as infill to render a recessed portion of the original brick façade flush for application of stucco in the 1950 alteration. The original 1895 brick surface is exposed at the location where the CMU infill was removed.

Stucco and some existing wood panels were removed at pedestrian level at the north façade also exposing brick.

The proposed rainscreen wall cladding system will cover the removed sections of stucco both at the Main Street façade and at the 9th Street façade.

Proposed use of the building will be tenant spaces; retail, mercantile or small coffee shop or drinking/dining establishment at the ground level, office or retail at the upper level.

The site is within Heritage Overlay District Number 2. Section 20.510.030.B, states changes to signs, marquees, awnings, canopies or other building appendages, whether a building permit is required or not, shall require advisory review by the Clark County Historic Preservation Commission.

Per Section 20.510.020.B.2, the overriding policy for Heritage District Number Two is to ensure the preservation of important street frontages representative of downtown Vancouver at an earlier time, to encourage the restoration of the façades of older buildings to their original character, to enhance and expand the economic, cultural, and architectural attraction of the area, and to coordinate the actions of individual property owners to the benefit of all property owners. In order to accomplish this policy, the regulations set forth in this chapter are deemed necessary to preservation and enhancement of the area.

Section 20.510.020.3 provides the following description of key architectural features:

Certain architectural features, both existing on certain key buildings in the area, and formerly present on these and other buildings in the area are key elements to be preserved and to be used for guidance in restoration of existing buildings and in construction of new buildings, consisting of the following:

- a. Windows which are narrow and vertical in emphasis, symmetrically spaced, generally with large panels, and door openings which are generally narrow and high; windows and door openings generally occupy less than half of the total wall area of the building frontage; bay windows are occasionally present.

Staff Response

The applicant is retaining the windows which were not affected by the recent façade work. The three, eight-square-foot windows on the east façade will be reconstructed to match the 1950 design.

- b. Construction generally of standard brick masonry, and occasionally stone block, sometimes exposed and at times painted, and side walls generally of brick.

Staff Response

The applicant proposes refurbishing some of the stucco, applying wood textured panels and painting the facades. None of the original brick will be visible.

- c. Window and door frames generally of wood or painted metal, and most trim in wood or painted metal.

Staff Response

The applicant proposes installing facsimile restoration of the three, eight-square-foot windows and trim from 1950 design. The recently installed storefront window system is to be retained.

- d. A prominent upper cornice, with occasional lower cornices, with occasional repetition of the upper cornice detail above bay windows and prominent window sills or heavily recessed windows.

Staff Response

A painted cornice is proposed. No bay windows, prominent window sills or heavily recessed windows are present or proposed.

- e. A texture which is generally rough but firm-grained, and a color typically that of red brick or gray stone.

Staff Response

The structure retains much of the previous stucco. The building is shown to be a combination of wood tones and earth tones.

- f. Dark and unobtrusive roofing materials.

Staff Response

The roofing material is not visible from street level. The applicant is not proposing to change the roof.

- g. Arches generally repeated at upper floors when present on the ground floors.

Staff Response

The arches of the original construction were removed during the 1950 façade remodel.

- h. A clear articulation between floors.

Staff Response

The building is two stories. The window pattern clearly indicates this is a two-story building.

- i. Signs integrated into the architecture of the building or relatively inconspicuous additions to the building with lettering characteristic of that common at the beginning of this century.

Staff Response

The existing corner blade sign will be removed to accommodate the work and may be re-installed for the corner tenant.

- 5. Exterior alteration and new construction guidelines. The following guidelines shall be adhered to in the construction of new buildings and alterations to all existing buildings in Heritage Overlay District Number Two.

- a. Every effort should be made to provide a compatible new use for property, one that will require minimal alteration of the building and site; or, effort should be made to utilize the property for its originally intended purpose.

Applicant Response

Proposed use of retail, mercantile (8 occupancy) is compatible with past uses.

Staff Response

Staff concurs with the applicant response; the area is a mixture of commercial uses. The use as a theater is not practical.

- b. Alterations to facades and the construction of new facades should incorporate as many as possible of the key architectural features, and should be compatible with any adjacent or nearby key buildings. If possible, the original distinguishing qualities and character of a building, especially of its street facade, should be retained. Whenever possible, care should be taken to avoid altering or removing any historic material or significant architectural features such as cornices, display windows, recessed entries, original siding materials, or other features.

Applicant Response

Design elements from the 1950 alterations are retained: eight-foot-square windows are retained. Stucco finish is retained. Aluminum trim feature is retained.

Staff Response

Staff concurs. The proposal uses design elements echo those constructed in 1950. The window pattern is similar and the upper areas are to remain stucco. Wood texture panels are proposed for the east façade and the eastern portion of the northern façade.

- c. Canopies should be compatible with the building to which they are attached, and should not disrupt key horizontal or vertical details of existing or adjacent buildings; and shall provide adequate lighting underneath.

Applicant Response

Proposed canopies are minimal in depth and will not create darkened areas below. The proposed canopy provides a look similar to adjacent building to south.

Staff Response

Staff concurs. The buildings to the south have narrow canopies; similar to those proposed



On the northern façade, entry canopies are proposed. The building to the west does not have any canopies.



- d. Attempts should be made in new construction to articulate the street facade by the use of bay windows above the first story, and by rhythmically spacing building projections and recessions and other details, while maintaining the continuity of building lines along the street.

Applicant Response

Not applicable.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- e. Facade materials should be restricted to those commonly in use in the early 1900's, such as brick and wood. Metal window and door frames should have nonmetallic finishes and colors.

Applicant Response

Not applicable. This building's clearest significant point in history ties to 1950s modern architecture.

Staff Response

Staff concurs. Although the building was constructed in 1914, the 1950 façade remodel precludes returning the building's façade to its original appearance.

- f. Buildings and accessories should not imitate styles inappropriate to the period exemplified by the key buildings (such as Spanish, Colonial, Federal, Georgian, etc.), which are not characteristic of or compatible with examples of architecture common in Vancouver in the early 1900's.

Applicant Response

Strongest affiliation of proposed design is to 1950s modern architecture.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- g. Dark glass or opaque window panes should be avoided in favor of clear or textured glass similar to that in the key buildings.

Applicant Response

No dark glass is proposed.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- h. Colors should contribute to the distinct character of the building. For non-listed structures, colors should be compatible with neighboring buildings. For listed structures, period-appropriate building colors shall be researched and incorporated in any new color scheme. Significant departures from these standards shall be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Applicant Response

Colors contribute to the distinct character of the building and are compatible with existing adjacent buildings.

Staff Response

Staff concurs. This is particularly the case on the north façade.

- i. Continuity of cornice lines should be maintained physically or visually, between adjacent buildings.

Applicant Response

Not applicable.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- j. Each building should be recognized as a product of its own time and place. Efforts should be made to avoid designs that seek to create an early appearance but which have no historic basis (Colonial, Bavarian, "wild west" and other artificial themes).

Applicant Response

Strongest affiliation of proposed design is to 1950s modern architecture.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- k. Changes have taken place over the course of time and are the evidence of the history on a building and its site. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right and should be recognized and respected during alteration work.

Applicant Response

Design elements of the 1950 alteration are continued. Though design elements of the original structure are lost, artwork is proposed that will provide some visual interpretation of the buildings early history.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- l. Stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize the building should be treated with great sensitivity.

Applicant Response

Strongest affiliation of proposed design is to 1950s modern architecture. Significant features of the 1950 renovation are repaired and retained.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- m. Architectural features that have deteriorated should be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features on historic buildings should be based on physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings.

Applicant Response

Architectural features that can reasonably be retained, repaired or restored are from the 1950 alterations. Significant features of the 1950 renovation are repaired and retained to the extent that this is feasible.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- n. Building surfaces should be cleaned with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting or other cleaning methods that could damage the historic building materials should be avoided.

Applicant Response

Brick surfaces that are likely intended for this guideline item were damaged extensively as a result of the 1950 alterations.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- o. Contemporary designs for new alterations or additions to the existing buildings should not destroy the significant architectural and historical material present on those buildings. Such designs must be compatible with the size, color, material and character of the building and the conservation district as a whole.

Applicant Response

The proposed design incorporates contemporary materials and methods and is representative of currently popular aesthetics. The design also retains and incorporates significant elements of the 1950 alterations.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- p. Whenever possible, new additions or alterations to a building should be designed in such a way that if they are removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the original building would remain unimpaired.

Applicant Response

Construction deficiencies in the façade of the 1950 alterations and demolition of components of the original 1895 facade that occurred during the 1950 alterations make it infeasible to retain more of the essential form and integrity of either era than is proposed in the current design.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- q. In strict restoration projects, any reinforcement required for structural stability and any installation of protective or code-required mechanical system should be concealed so as not to detract from the property's historical quality, except when concealment would result in the alteration or destruction of historically significant materials or spaces.

Applicant Response

Not applicable.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.

- r. Mortar joints on brick or masonry-face buildings should be repointed only when moisture problems are evident or when enough mortar is missing that water stands in the joint. The old mortar should be duplicated to the greatest extent possible in composition, color, and texture. Most old mortar is high in lime content and "softer" than newer Portland cement types. When new mortar types are combined with old brick, changes in compression, expansion and contraction, caused by moisture migration stresses can damage the brick and break the mortar bond. In all joint repairs, the original joint size should be duplicated along with the method of application and joint profile.

Applicant Response

Not applicable.

Staff Response

Staff concurs.



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Exhibits

1. Application Form
2. Narrative
3. Applicant's renderings