

2022

Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission
Plans Review Subcommittee

LEGAL ACTION REPORT/Minutes

Thursday, January 27, 2022

Pursuant to safe practices during the COVID-19 pandemic, all in-person meetings are cancelled until further notice. This meeting was held virtually to allow for healthy practices and social distancing. The meeting was accessible at provided link to allow for participating virtually and/or calling in.

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 1:03 P.M., and per roll call, a quorum was established.

Commissioners Present: Terry Majewski (Chair), Carol Griffith, Joel Ireland, Jan Mulder, and Rikki Riojas

Commissioners Absent/Excused: Savannah McDonald

Applicants/Public Present: Ryan Repucci and Jose Ceja

Staff Present: Michael Taku, Jodie Brown, and Maria Gayosso [PDSD]

2. Approval of the Legal Action Report/Minutes from Meeting of 1-13-2022

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Griffith to approve the Legal Action Report/Minutes for the meeting of 1-13-2022 as submitted.

Commissioner Riojas seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote of 5-0. (Commissioner McDonald absent)

3. Historic Preservation Zone Review Cases

UDC Section 5.8/TSM 9-02.0.0/Historic District Design Guidelines/Revised Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines

- 3a. 10 E. Broadway [The Westerner Hotel]
Downtown National Register Historic District
Construct additional stories on the rooftop
Courtesy Review
Contributing Property /Rehabilitation Standards**

Staff Brown provided background of the proposed second-story addition. Staff requested feedback from PRS on the appropriateness of a second-story addition at this location.

Ryan Repucci from RAH architects presented the project.

PRS members had questions, concerns, and comments regarding the proposed project. Mr. Repucci responded to these during and following his presentation. Ms. Brown also contributed to the discussion.

Discussion was held. No action was taken.

1. Staff Brown noted that in order to participate in the IID program [Infill Incentive District] (which is planned for this project), the property needs to be maintained as a contributing resource. The new owner wants to add a couple stories to the rooftop. Guidance from the Secretary of Interior's Standards is that one-story additions are appropriate. Originally, three stories were being requested, and Ms. Brown had told them no. The way the project is now being designed is for two stories, and the stories are stepped back significantly and have minimum visibility from the street. Ms. Brown wanted to get feedback from PRS through this courtesy review to get the subcommittee's opinion on the second story.
2. The presenter (Ryan Repucci) noted that the project will be for residential units, with the units stepped back in order to achieve minimum visibility from the street. They took photographs from the street and then superimposed massing to show how visible the additional stories would be from different vantage points.
3. Chair Majewski asked about whether any changes would be made to the main entrance of the building. Mr. Repucci said there would be no changes to the entrance, but they may have to work out additional loading zones that the city or the client will require. The plan is to limit changes to the existing building.
4. Commissioner Riojas said if you had to make a change [related to the loading zone], where would you put that? Mr. Repucci noted that in preliminary discussions with the city during the preapplication process, they are looking at the area [southeast side] where there are already openings that could serve as service entry points. The existing entrance on that façade is more of a personnel entrance. Chair Majewski asked if he was thinking this entrance would have to be modified or ? He responded that they are hoping all they will have to do is maintain the existing opening and modify the door type that would allow for additional access. Chair Majewski then asked if there were additional changes related to these openings, and he said that is it for now. Chair Majewski asked Staff Brown for her thoughts on the access door. She responded that in that location, if they maintain the opening it shouldn't be too problematic.
5. Chair Majewski asked Staff Brown if she felt that the changes proposed would put the building in danger of being delisted. She responded that this is why she is asking for our feedback. She admitted she is a little bit on the fence about it. As noted earlier, Secretary of the Interior's guidance says one story. The way the second story is tucked back might make this possible. In a previous version, there was a stairwell proposed to come up near the middle element on the north façade. She said she did not

recommend this design as it competes with the element that “stands proud,” and it makes that addition more visible. So, Mr. Repucci worked to push that stairwell back so that it is not visible. The proposed additional stories don’t have a lot of visibility; also, they are using a glass rail in the patio areas [near the additional stories], keeping the plate heights as low as they’re going to be, and reducing the hard lines – she thinks it will possibly work. She just wanted to get PRS feedback.

6. Heights were discussed. The total building height with the additions would be ~62 feet, The addition itself would be 18 feet above the top railing on the roof.
7. Commissioner Riojas asked if any of the units would be affordable housing. Mr. Repucci said that right now the owner is thinking it will be general housing.
8. Commissioner Griffith asked if this will be reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to get a call on the continued eligibility of the property. Staff Brown said no, as it’s an IID project, and SHPO doesn’t want to be involved in IID projects. It’s Staff Brown’s call as City HPO [City Historic Preservation Officer] on IID projects, and she’s getting feedback from us. SHPO adheres to the HPO’s recommendation.
9. Commissioner Griffith also asked regarding the northeast corner, as you can actually see the addition at that point. Is there any way to move that back, maybe by one apartment on the second story, or two – to reduce the visibility there. Mr. Repucci said that he thought he could convince his client [to move the second story back]. That front apartment on the second story is very large, and because of the stairwell shift, the loft could be eliminated or reconfigured to push it back a little. He would not have a problem convincing his client to do this. It still ends up being a larger unit. Chair Majewski asked Mr. Repucci to go back to the view of the northeast part of the building. If Commissioner Griffith’s suggestion were followed, much less would be visible. There would still be a small visible area above the “proud” element on that side. She suggested ways to mitigate with coloration. There is still the need to distinguish the addition from the original. Ms. Brown is not a fan of using color to mitigate, as it can be changed, similar to the idea that vegetation cover is used for mitigation.
10. Commissioner Griffith asked if the adjoining building [behind the property] is a contributing property? Staff Brown said it is not contributing – it is new construction. IID review of the non-contributing building said it didn’t impact the Westerner’s eligibility. Architect Don Ryden [preparer of the Downtown National Register Historic District] did an assessment about this. Commissioner Mulder had a question about the adjoining building that she is struggling with – was the adjacent building originally proposed as an addition to the Westerner? Staff Brown replied that she didn’t know. Commissioner Mulder continued, noting that when the adjacent building was put up, it created a sort of “cover” for the proposed additions to the Westerner. Good to hear that the adjacent building wasn’t going to negatively impact the [National Register] status of the Westerner. She’s struggling but likes Commissioner Griffith’s idea of cutting back the second

story on that north side. The paint color issues seem a little problematic, because you really do want that other element to “stand proud.” There needs to be some contrast. The angles are probably going to be such that it becomes de minimis at that point. She noted that while she likes Commissioner Griffith’s suggestion, she still struggles with the big building that went up next to it. At what point is it just too much, cumulatively? But generally, she likes where Staff Brown has gotten it to by working with Mr. Repucci.

11. Commissioner Riojas agrees with Commissioner Griffith’s suggestion but asks if the paint on the additional stories could match the lighter-gray color on the building [segment next to “proud” element]. Mr. Repucci is open to this. Commissioner Griffith said Commissioner Mulder is right, she was thinking that distinguishing the original from the addition is important. But Mr. Repucci can come up with some color schemes that would help minimize the visual impact of the addition as well as distinguish it. Chair Majewski asked Staff Brown about her thoughts on the color. Staff Brown noted that she is not a fan of using color to distinguish because color is so easy to change. She feels that there is some distinction in just the material usage. She and Mr. Repucci had previously talked about the glass railing so that they have the see-through, which is not present on any of the other railings. She pointed out that there is also the fact that those windows that are on the building are all original to the building, so that what they’re going to be asking for their new windows and doors will not match that. So, you’ll have distinction just in old vs. new in the materials. Commissioner Riojas asked if that kind of materials distinction is needed if there is a paint color that is very different?
12. Staff Brown explained ultimately what will happen with this project. The courtesy review PRS is doing today is just so that she can get a feel for how PRS views the two-story addition. If PRS is okay with it, that will push her off the fence. If not, she’ll go with the one story. She noted that it will come back as part of the IID review, and at that point PRS will be viewing materials and colors, etc., and will be making a recommendation of yay or nay. At that point, if PRS wants, it can comment on the paint color. PRS can ask Mr. Repucci to do a color study and say, okay, this is what’s there, so what color are you going to paint the addition and see how they compare. Mr. Repucci notes that in these scenarios, something they’ve done in the past, in order to highlight the existing building, just use white as a background color, as we’ve found that it allows the existing building to “stand proud.” His inclination is just going white with the additional stories, highlighting the profile of the existing building even more so.
13. Chair Majewski asked PRS members if they are in agreement with what has come out of this discussion. Commissioner Riojas noted that we have talked about no changes to the first floor [of the addition] but pushing the second story back. Chair Majewski noted that what we’re thinking about is pushing back the second story to make it even less visible. That is the crux [of the issue]. Are we okay with that? If it’s mitigated by pushing back? Commissioner Riojas thinks she is okay with it but asked to see a view from across the street. Mr. Repucci showed that view, and additional stories would not be visible from the street. Commissioner Riojas noted that the long edge of an added first story wouldn’t be seen except from those corner

views. Mr. Repucci said that that's correct and added that this is the advantage of the "short throw" from the edge of the building to across the street. When you're pushed out, you see the additional stories. Commissioner Riojas noted that she has less of an issue with the two stories then because you'll only see it from specific points. Commissioner Ireland noted that the other commissioners have touched on points he wanted to comment on. He's fine with what we have come up with. Commissioner Mulder had one follow up on the paint issue. While she gets that paint can change, she likes Mr. Repucci's suggestion re the paint. As for the materials in the windows, she can't remember what that façade looks like, but it seems that from the perspective being discussed, those distinctions will be less visible at the obscure angles being looked at, and paint really does potentially provide an opportunity to set off that tower element. So, she is fine with what has been discussed. Chair Majewski asked: Would it be safe to say that we think at this stage, without obviously having seen further-developed plans, that PRS is OK with the two stories, with the second one pushed back as we discussed. PRS was in agreement with this statement.

No action was taken.

4. Rio Nuevo Area (RNA)/Infill Incentive District (IID) Review Cases
UDC Section 5.12.6.E.2; 5.12.7 & 5.12.10

**4a. HPZ 22-002/RNA-DRB-22-01, S. Arizona Avenue
Downtown National Register Historic District**
Façade modifications for bar expansion
Contributing Property

Staff Gayosso gave background.

Jose Ceja from Exa Architects presented the project.

Discussion was held. Action was taken.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Mulder to recommend approval as presented, subject to the conditions:

1. that the divisions on the person door and garage door align as they do on the existing doors;
2. that the painted signage above the garage door on the bricks remains; and
3. that the applicant returns if any additional signage is proposed.

Commissioner Riojas seconded the motion. The motion was modified by Commissioner Mulder with the approval of the seconder.

Modified Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Mulder to recommend approval as presented, subject to the conditions:

1. that the mullions on the person door and garage door align as they do on the existing doors;
2. that the painted signage above the garage door on the bricks remains; and
3. that the applicant returns if any additional signage is proposed.

The modified motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote of 5-0.
(Commissioner McDonald absent)

5. Task Force on Inclusivity Recommendations

5a. Discussion on incorporation of the Task Force on Inclusivity report recommendations.

Chair Majewski noted that at the last PRS meeting on 1-13-22, we had extensive discussion about this item, and Commissioners Riojas and Griffith and Chair Majewski are working on a draft of the points to consider on the best practices document that we had talked about. At the 2-10-22 PRS, we will start discussion of those points as time allows. Commissioners Griffith and Riojas and Chair Majewski are meeting about this on 1-31-22 via Zoom. Three members do not make a quorum of PRS, so the meeting does not need to be noticed [it is a small working group]. Commissioner Mulder noted that she had followed up with Commissioner Grede, chair of the commission's Historic Landscapes Subcommittee, about the Alva Torres naming of the historic landscape at the Tucson Convention Center. He was hoping to be contacted by Lydia Otero to obtain her assistance with the proposal for naming, as she had recently compiled a book of Alva Torres' columns. Commissioner Grede has not heard from Dr. Otero, and he said he doesn't have the bandwidth to work on this now. Commissioner Mulder mentioned that Commissioner Riojas had volunteered to follow up with Dr. Otero [clarification – Commissioner Riojas had just volunteered to go over and help with the history parts commissioner Grede was working on]. Commissioner Mulder wanted to let us know that she had talked with Commissioner Grede. This issue can be discussed further as time permits on 1-31-22. It might be a good way to talk about how to proceed with best practices for naming.

No action was taken.

6. Current Issues for Information/Discussion

6a. Minor Reviews

Staff Taku noted that there is one pending minor review at 3488 E. Via Golondrina and asked for a volunteer. Commissioner Griffith volunteered, with Commissioner Riojas as backup. Staff Taku noted that two minor reviews were completed recently, both in West University: one at 207 E. University Boulevard for solar panel installation, and the other at 621 N. 6th Avenue for exterior modifications, including doors, windows, stucco, and painting. Commissioner Riojas attended for PRS, and she briefly reported on the outcomes of the two minor reviews.

6b. Appeals

Staff Taku noted that there are no current appeals. Staff Brown noted that the Fort Lowell Historic Zone Advisory Board recently met and voted not to appeal the PDS Director's decision regarding the property at 5345 E. Fort Lowell Road. Chair Majewski asked that those minutes be provided to PRS members for their information.

6c. Zoning Violations

Staff Taku noted that there are ongoing and pending cases being worked on for compliance and/or in the review process, and that staff is working with their zoning violation code enforcement liaison.

6d. Review Process Issues

The issue was raised about scheduling PRS review of IID cases so close to the date of a Design Review Board (DRB) meeting on the same case. Today's PRS case 4a is scheduled for DRB review on 1-28-22, which gives very little time to properly transcribe and provide the notes and motion on that case. There could be better coordination on the timing of PRS review of IID cases in advance of DRB review.

7. Summary of Public Comments (Information Only)

No comments were received by the deadline.

8. Future Agenda Items for Upcoming Meetings

Staff mentioned that no cases are scheduled just yet, so PRS will focus on the best-practices-for-naming discussion at the next meeting.

The next scheduled meeting is February 10, 2022. PRS meetings to be conducted virtually until further notice.

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:07 P.M.