

# CITY OF FLAGSTAFF HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

## STAFF REPORT

### CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

PZ- 19-00056

**Address: 100 N San Francisco**

DATE: August 5, 2021

MEETING DATE: September 15, 2021

REPORT BY: Mark Reavis, AICP, NCARB

### BACKGROUND

The Hotel Monte Vista is a significant presence within the Flagstaff downtown and anchors the east side of the Downtown District north of Route 66. The property is listed individually in the National Register and is a contributing element within the Railroad Addition National Register District and is within the Downtown Overlay Design Review District. By being within the overlay the project is subject to design review under requirements of the "Design Handbook for Downtown Flagstaff". The handbook first published in 1990 and revised in 1997 does not fully address additions to historic buildings but does provide guidance. The handbook has specific guidance language in separate categories: historic buildings, rehabilitation of existing buildings, sign design, design guidelines for color, new buildings, and site design. The Handbook addresses additions in a general way under "Rehabilitation Guidelines for All Existing Buildings". The color of the addition's primary façade material has been an issue in the past review but there is noted guidance in the Handbook. "The Design Handbook for Downtown Flagstaff" will be the primary document for design review compliance.

As a typical approach architects often reference "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties" to assist with their decisions. As an individually listed property reference to the Standards seems appropriate and is referenced in the Heritage Preservation section of the Municipal Code 10-30.30.

### PREVIOUS HPC DECISIONS

This property has had previous HPC reviews as noted more fully in the architect's narrative. The Master Plan and Phase 2 were reviewed by the HPC on April 17, 2019. Phase 3 was indicated as a required HPC design review. The noted primary concern was on the lightness of the stucco color for the new addition. This was also an aspect of applied paint color on tertiary facades of the alley portion of the building. Also called out were design aspects of the new addition impacting the historic integrity of the main body of the hotel. Minor design changes were to be expected from the conceptual drawing that required a design review for Phase 3.

### REQUEST

This is a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Phase 3 improvements to an existing historic hotel with an addition on the east of the hotel's secondary façade. The new addition is setback behind a portion of the historic hotel building. The 3-story historic portion of the hotel steps down from the primary façade and housed the Cocktail Lounge with the new 3 story addition is placed behind. The requested review includes a street facing parking entry with a patio area over a portion of the parking. The project is located within the Downtown Overlay Zone. The requested review included in the Architect's Narrative notes compliance with the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation addressing HPO communications as well as the design intent of the established Downtown Overlay Zone. The narrative also covers the changes to the Phase 2 HPC review that varies slightly from the HPC review of the Master Plan/Phase 2 design.

NOTE: The Commission review will need to determine if the proposed aspects of the design will not adversely affect the integrity of the historic property. The Heritage Preservation Commission has the sole authority to approve exemptions to requirements.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for Phase 3 of the Monte Vista Hotel Improvements with a condition that the Heritage Preservation Office be provided an acceptable paint chip with color and LRV specifications for the stucco of Phase 3 based on the feedback provided by the Heritage Preservation Commission.

Base the motion on the findings that the submission has no significant adverse effect on the integrity of the historic structure and its historic neighboring properties, meets the intent of the Design Handbook for Downtown Flagstaff, and addresses the US Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

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**INTENT**

The purpose of the Downtown Overlay is to review the appropriateness of proposed changes to historic buildings with guidance by the Design Handbook for Downtown Flagstaff: *“This handbook is included as a guide to the Commission in making consistent decisions on the appropriateness of proposed changes. Interpretation should be neither overly strict nor too permissive. In making its decisions, the Commission will consider the historic value of the building, its prominence and significance to the district, the state of physical deterioration, and the economic factors of repair, replacement, or renovation.”*

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards are incorporated into reviews by reference.

10-30.30.060 Development of a Landmark Property and Property within a Historic Overlay Zone, Process “C”: “Prior to the granting of any required approvals or permits and prior to the commencement of any work on a landmark property or within a historic overlay zone, the Heritage Preservation Commission or the Historic Preservation Officer shall review all work proposed and approve or conditionally approve the work in the form of a certificate of no effect, certificate of appropriateness, or certificate of economic hardship”.

**Scope of Work**

The Certificate of Appropriateness is applicable (Flagstaff Zoning Code 10-30.30.060E.) in the case of this property. The impact to the significance and integrity of surrounding historic properties and the compatibility with the approved design guidelines for the zone and nearby adjacent structures are a consideration for this level of review.

**Required Findings for:**

E. Certification of Appropriateness.

1. Applicability. This approval is appropriate if the proposed work alters a cultural resource but does so in such a way that is compatible with the historic or archaeological character of the resource and all

major impacts are mitigated such that the work does not diminish, eliminate, or adversely affect the significance or integrity of the resource.

2. Criteria for Approval. When approving a certification of appropriateness, the Heritage Preservation Commission shall find that:

a. The proposed work is consistent with the purpose and intent of this division;

b. The proposed work is compatible with its context:

(1) The appropriate context for a landmark or a historic property is the property itself and, to a much lesser extent, the surrounding properties and neighborhood;

2) The appropriate context of work in a historic overlay zone is the significant portions of the property itself, the surrounding properties, and the neighborhood;

c. The cultural resources associated with the proposed work have been sufficiently sought, identified, and evaluated;

d. Major impacts on cultural resources are sufficiently mitigated; and

e. The proposed work is consistent with applicable development standards and design guidelines. See also subsection (G) of this section, Development Standards and Guidelines.

G. Development Standards and Guidelines. The following standards and guidelines apply to all approvals granted pursuant to this section:

1. City Code, Title 10, Zoning Code. The Heritage Preservation Commission and the Historic Preservation Officer shall apply the development standards and guidelines provided in Section [10-30.60.050](#), Compatibility, as criteria for determining the appropriateness of a development proposal.

2. Industry Standards and Guidelines.

b. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.*

c. *Preservation Briefs* and other similar best practice documents published by the National Park Service.

3. Zone-Specific Development Standards and Guidelines. These standards and guidelines are available from the Planning Section.

a. *Design Handbook for Downtown Flagstaff (1997)*;

### **Downtown Historic Overlay Design Guidelines**

"The Downtown Overlay (DOZ) zone applies to areas of the City subject to the Downtown Historic Design Review Overlay District Guidelines and Design Standards and Guidelines with design review by the Heritage Preservation Commission for the development of properties located within the boundaries of the zone." (Flagstaff Zoning Code 10-40.50.030 Overlay Zones). **DO.** The Downtown Overlay (DO) zone applies to areas of the City subject to the Design Handbook for Downtown Flagstaff for the development of properties located within the boundaries of the zone.

a. The requirements of the DO zone are intended to promote the preservation and unique character of all structures within the zone.

The following design guidelines apply to this case:

Design Handbook for Downtown Flagstaff: “Rehabilitation Guidelines for all Existing Buildings” (applicable sections addressed in Architect’s narrative in compliance with Handbook and US Secretary Standards).

- R13 – Avoid new additions or alterations that would hinder the ability to interpret the design character of the original building.
- R14 – Where new additions are planned that have no historic basis, design them to be as inconspicuous as possible.
- R15 – When locating additions to historic buildings, maintain the pattern created by the repetition of similar building fronts.

“Design Guidelines for Color” (applicable sections addressed in Architects’ narrative noting district examples).

- C1 – Use color schemes that will complement other buildings nearby.
- C2 – Use color to coordinate façade elements in an overall composition.
- C3 – Reserve bright colors for accents only and where evidence demonstrates the historical use of bright colors.

*Note: there is not stated definition of what a bright color is within the guidelines.*

### **Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties – Rehabilitation**

The applicable Standards for Rehabilitation are 1-5 and 9 & 10.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships. 2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided. 3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken. 4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved. 5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved. 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment. 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

### **Relevant NPS Guideline – Historic Buildings – New Additions “Recommended”**

*“Placing functions and services required for the new use in non-character-defining interior spaces rather than installing a new addition. Constructing a new addition so that there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed. Locating the attached exterior addition at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of a historic building; and limiting its size and scale in relationship to the historic building. Designing new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new. Considering the attached exterior addition both in terms of the new use and the appearance of other buildings in the historic district or neighborhood. Design for the new work may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic building. In either case, it should always be clearly differentiated from the historic building and be compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and **color**. Placing new additions such as balconies and greenhouses on non-character-defining elevations and limiting and size and scale in relationship to the historic building. Designing additional stories, when required for the new use, that are setback from the wall plane and are as inconspicuous as possible when viewed from the street.”*

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## **DISCUSSION**

### **COMMUNICATION BACKGROUND**

This property and the selected design decisions have been discussed by phone and emails between the HPO and the project Architect.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

The Certificate of Appropriateness is the correct review for addition to the motel within the Downtown Historic Overlay Zone with the stated and included submission. In the Downtown Overlay, the HPC retains the sole authority to approve modifications to historic buildings that do not meet the Zones Design Guidelines, the National Park Service Standards for Rehabilitation and guidelines and City of Flagstaff’s additional design requirements.

### **HISTORIC ERA INTEGRITY**

The Heritage Preservation Officer Mark Reavis, AICP, NCARB has reviewed the property and has determined the hotel building has a high degree of historic integrity.

### **ARCHITECTURAL DISCRIPTION & History:**

This circa 1927 four story, brick Monte Vista Hotel is one of the few remaining buildings with **the Spanish Colonial style of architecture**. It is in the Railroad Addition Historic District in downtown Flagstaff (National Register, 1982). It features decorative brick patterns and accents and a variety of fenestration and glazed (white) terracotta accents of Spanish Colonial origins. Of particular interest are the corner mounted and roof top signage. As a component of the motel is the 1919 original post office that retains its original classical architectural elements in off-white glazed terracotta ornamentation.

Towering above the corners of Aspen and San Francisco Streets, the Hotel Monte Vista stands just off historic Route 66 as a true touchstone for all of Flagstaff and her citizens. When tourism was on the rise during the mid-1920’s, local residents agreed that Flagstaff needed first-class accommodations. Existing hotels were old and outmoded. Fundraising began in April of 1926, and within one month, investments of prominent citizens and funds donated by the novelist Zane Grey, totaled approximately \$200,000. Ground was broken on June 8. Construction plans for the 73-room hotel incorporated the local Post

Office (1917-1927). The new hotel opened for business on New Year's Day, 1927. Originally named the Community Hotel, in honor of the townspeople who contributed to its existence, the name 'Monte Vista', meaning mountain view, was chosen by a 12-year-old contest winner. The Monte Vista continued to be the longest publicly held commercial property in Arizona until it was sold to a private investor in the early 1960's. It continues to be one of the oldest hotels in Flagstaff and is listed individually on the U.S. National Registrar of Historic Places. The Hotel Monte Vista is truly one of Northern Arizona's unique treasures.

### **PROPOSED CHANGES**

The proposed changes to the primary hotel building (a 4-story with double height first floor) is an addition to the east of the hotel. The detailed face brick of the hotel is only on the street facing facades of Aspen and San Francisco. Phase 3 work consists of a substantial addition to the backside of the north tertiary facade of the Cocktail Lounge portion of the hotel. This much lower 3-story portion of the hotel with 2 floor step-down from the main extensive facade to the west and makes the new addition subservient to most of the hotel structure. The new addition's height is matched to the lower portion of the hotel. A patio roof and covered parking entry faces Aspen Ave and is an addition on the secondary facade, starting on the lower 3-story portion of the hotel. The street abutting addition is pulled away from the historic portion of the secondary facade with a recessed area with landscaping and features a stairway. Beyond the recessed area the parking addition's front features a detailed arch entry and is paced as a zero-setback facade to Aspen Ave. The new facade contains a covered parking area for a portion of the facilities parking area and is roofed with a usable patio area. The patio features 2 fireplaces with detailed chimneys, a roofed Loggia, and other Spanish Colonial detailing that is differentiated from the hotel yet of a compatible style.

### **DESIGN CRITERIA**

The Architect's narrative addressed the following: interior alterations, connection to the existing, location of addition as subservient, main building remains readable, similar style (Spanish Colonial Revival), and fenestration. The Architect notes compliance with both the "Handbook" and Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines with the progression of facade elements within this area of the block as part of the hotel complex and is consistent with other blocks that express a variety of architecture in their facades. Starting with the 1916 Post Office's classical glazed terracotta facade at the north alley, the detailed dark brick of the main hotel facing 2 streets and the step-down height at the Cocktail Lounge. The motel complex expresses a significant variation of scale and facade material in its 2 primary facades, secondary east faced and alley facade all adding interest. The east addition to the main hotel body is expressed differently, yet in a compatible architectural style that can be clearly differentiated from the historic as new addition that is in compliance with the "Handbook" and design standards. An expanded discussion was provided by the architect regarding the introduction of a design element of a noted chimney cap along with an extensive discussion of the "Exterior Cement Plaster Color". Flagstaff's general design review requires an LRV of 50% or less with the architect's selected tone options reflective of more light than is typical, as this differs from the general design standard. The justification for the use of a lighter color was found acceptable to the HPO with a clarification of the Light Reflectance Value (LRV) selected and options to be considered by the HPC. The submission of the design packet is to the satisfaction of the HPO and is noted as being in compliance with requirements.

### **Basis of Report:**

The information in this summary report was derived from the application to the Heritage Preservation Commission, requests for additional information from the Architect, the Flagstaff Zoning Code, and the Downtown Historic Design Review Overlay District Requirements noting the Design Handbook for Downtown Flagstaff and Federal US Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines and other relevant Historic Preservation Resources.

### **Evaluation of Effects**

The proposed addition does not significantly impact the historic appearance of the primary hotel property and is in compliance with the various design reviews provisions, Standards and Guidelines.

### **Consideration of past Overlays**

Staff has looked toward past reviews in the Downtown Overlay and did not find specific similar situations. The proposed addition is subservient to the primary hotel and is not the introduction as a new primary architectural element within the District.

### **OPTIONS FOR COMMISSION DECISION-MAKING:**

- 1) The Commission could approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the submitted architectural package. This includes the HPO recommended adjustments of stucco colors and Light Reflective Value (LRV) that is a balance between Downtown Overlay design criteria and Flagstaff's typical limitation that requires an LRV of 50% or less. The Commission should note the required findings in the HPO Staff Report and whether the situation in this case would be applicable to other similar properties in the district.
  - 2) The Commission could request modifications to the proposal and include them as conditions of approval – or –
  - 3) Continue the HPC review to a date certain and ask the applicant to come back with a modified proposal that meets those conditions.
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### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- "Architect's Narrative" that addresses discussions with HPO in regard to architectural expressions, style, detailing, compatibility and stucco color and tone. Included in submission.
- Heritage Preservation Commission application and architectural floor plans and elevations, color chips, Spanish Colonial colors (Santa Barbra), as supplemental information included in the submission on Agenda Quick.