

**CITY OF FLAGSTAFF HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT – 15 N Leroux**

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

PZ- 24-00054

Address: 15 N Leroux St

DATE: April 10 ,2024

MEETING DATE: April 17, 2024

REPORT BY: Mark Reavis, AICP, NCARB

BACKGROUND

The Historic Loy Office Building is a stuccoed brick storefront, it dates from 1897 as the oldest surviving pre-1900 office building in Flagstaff. Its unique features are its conservative size and proportions. The property is listed 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.

PREVIOUS HPC DECISIONS

None

CHANGES TO HISTORIC CHARACTER

The stucco is on the primary Leroux Street facade and the south alley façade. When inventoried the stucco was in place 46 years ago and dates beyond 50 years with physical evidence. The stucco being a common solution to repairs to low fired soft brick. The large windows were replaced with single pane plate glass that replaced wood sash window units assumed to be divided light units that were operable. These visible facades have been the most significant changes to the building's fenestration, but its significance with these changes still determined that the building is a contributing historic structure to the Railroad Addition District because of its proportions, scale, and uniqueness in surviving age.

REQUEST

This is a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for façade improvements.

STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness with following conditions:

- 1) Repair the stucco with the gentlest means in removing peeling paint and surface coating repair,
- 2) Follow best practices in historic foundation work that reflects the 1897 construction techniques and follows the recommendations of the structural engineer,
- 3) Submit a separate HPC application for a Certificate of No Effect to review signs and lighting, and
- 4) Allow for the HPO to monitor and ensure that window modifications meet historic preservation guidelines and the current Energy Code.

OPTIONS FOR COMMISSION DECISION-MAKING:

- 1) The Commission could approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the submitted package -or-
 - 2) The Commission could approve a Certificate of Appropriateness with HPO conditions -or-
 - 3) The Commission could request modifications to the proposal and include them as conditions of approval – or –
 - 4) Continue the HPC review to a date certain and ask the applicant to come back with a modified proposal.
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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.”*

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. 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 changes in a general way under “Rehabilitation Guidelines for All Existing Buildings” and guidance for “Historic Buildings”. The Design Handbook for Downtown Flagstaff” will be the initial review document for design review compliance. The Flagstaff Zoning Code Heritage Preservation 10-30.30 notes the US Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines as also applicable for historic structures with an emphasis on the “Rehabilitation” Standard as being the focused review for the new adaptive reuse.

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties 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” and “Special Design Guidelines for Historic Buildings”

The project as presented is reviewed under the Downtown Handbook H1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 with review by the HPO. This is with an understanding of the removal of the stucco and the re-stuccoing proposed that will once again expose the historic brick that is assumed to be damaged by the

attachment of some form of metal lath. With the exposing of the original brick work the historic bricks are to be preserved and restored. The stucco though altering its original appearance has protected the historic fabric of the building.

The submission has been reviewed under H1 – H9 & H11 & 12. The US Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. 1-5 & 9 &10. SOI Guideline Replacement of Masonry.

The submission is reviewed per the Downtown Handbook

- H1 - Respect the original design character of the building. *The footprint is remaining the same but blanking off windows and removal of stucco would require retention of the exposed brick that will require significant brick repair.*
- H2 – New Uses that require the least change to existing structures are encouraged. *The interior gutting of the building and the indicated interior footings as shown threatened the structural stability of the building and its facades.*
- H3 – Avoid removing or altering any historic material or significant architectural features. *This concerns the current stucco and historic brick fabric beneath.*
- H4 - Maintain existing significant stylistic elements. *The retention of the historic windows frames and doors complies with this guideline. The plate glass panes are not significant as they are stopped in and are missing a typical window sash. The film application to the glass alters the stylistic look of the facade.*
- H5 – Use the gentlest procedures for cleaning, refinishing, and repairing historic materials. *The removal of if stucco does not meet this requirement and can damage underlying material.*
- H6 – Minimize the removal of historic elements. *Removal of stucco is removal of a repair that has gained significance that can be retained.*
- H7- Replace only missing portions of original elements where economically and physically feasible. *The project does not propose to replace the plate glass with an appropriate historic window unit*
- H8 – When disassembly of an historic element is necessary for its rehabilitation, use methods that minimize damage to the original material. *Removal of stucco will cause damage.*
- H9 Replacement of missing architectural elements should be based on accurate duplication of original features. *Exposed brick will need to be restored with damaged brick replaced in kind and mortar repointed*
- H11- Preserve older alterations that have achieved historic significance in themselves. *The stucco can be considered as achieving historic significance.*
- H12 – More recent alterations that are not historically significant may be removed. *Metal guards have not gained significance and are proposed to be removed.*

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

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. 10. 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.

Masonry Guideline

Masonry....Replace

Recommended.....Replacing in kind an entire masonry feature that is too deteriorated to repair--if the overall form and detailing are still evident--using the physical evidence as a model to reproduce the feature. Examples can include large sections of a wall, a cornice, balustrade, column, or stairway. If using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.

not recommended.....Removing a masonry feature that is unrepairable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new feature that does not convey the same visual appearance.

DISCUSSION

COMMUNICATION BACKGROUND

This property and the selected design decisions have been noted as differing from historic building technique commonly utilized in Flagstaff with a building constructed in 1897. The HPO met with the project team to discuss the submission on April 10, 2024 and gave an overview of the proposed conditions.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

The Certificate of Appropriateness is the correct review for this building within the Downtown Historic Overlay Zone and is applicable.

HISTORIC ERA INTEGRITY

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

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION & History:

The Loy Office Building is a brick one story structure that has a stucco coat added to the primary and alley facades. A rectangular plan measuring 20' x 25' original footprint and a 10' x 15' addition. The main façade faces east toward Leroux with a secondary alley façade on the south and visible as it faces onto the alley. The building features a distinctive window door/window door façade and corbeled parapet that has been stuccoed over. The doors and transoms are original to the building while the windows have been replaced with large plate glass panes. The building's openings are protected with welded rebar security bars that are not considered as historic.

PROPOSED CHANGES

Scope of Proposed Work

The submission proposes the removal of the stucco coating and the re-stuccoing of the Leroux Street and alley facade. Work also includes the installation of lighting wiring and mounting through historic brick work. Blacking out the southern plate windows and a door on the east facade with an applied film on exterior and interior to hide mechanical equipment. Work described and represented on the drawings show the construction techniques and details of this pre-1900 brick building in a modern representation that can impact the stability of the proposed façade improvements in the protection of historic underlying brick and stone structural fabric.

Significant foundation work is proposed. Modification to doors proposed in operation. Signage and lighting are proposed but specifications are not provided as part of this application. Paint colors are proposed.

DESIGN CRITERA

Basis of Report:

The information in this summary report was derived from the application to the Heritage Preservation Commission, with requests for additional information from the initial submission. The Flagstaff Zoning Code 10-30.30, and the Downtown Historic Design Review Overlay District Requirements were utilized, 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 building is from 1897 and would not have a concrete footing or would the footing be placed at that depth. The small addition to the original building has an evident indication of stone rubble foundation that would also be the type of foundation used on the original building. The drawing indicate the subsurface condition with the brick wall shown below grade not typical for this era of construction. The soft brick used would not survive below surface. Typical foundation would be stone and not be placed very far below the surface. The projection at the top of the parapet on the primary façade is corbelled brick that forms a detailed projecting brick work cornice. How the new concrete floor is provided should consider the stone foundation. There is a concern about the buildings survival with what is proposed with the façade as well as new interior concrete work size and shape shown against the foundation wall below the surface. There will likely be damage to the bricks if the stucco is removed the expectations will be to preserve and restore the brick work and not allow the brick to be re-stuccoed. This is the interpretation of both the Downtown Design Standards and the US Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

The signage and lighting are shown in the submission. It will be a separate sign permit and a Certificate. Concerns about drilling through the parapet for the lighting and damaging the fragile brick work within.