

Historic Preservation Design Review

July 24, 2014

HP-14-14, 21 N. Main St. – Opera House Façade Windows (City)

I. THE REQUEST

Applicant: City of Sumter

Status of the Applicant: City

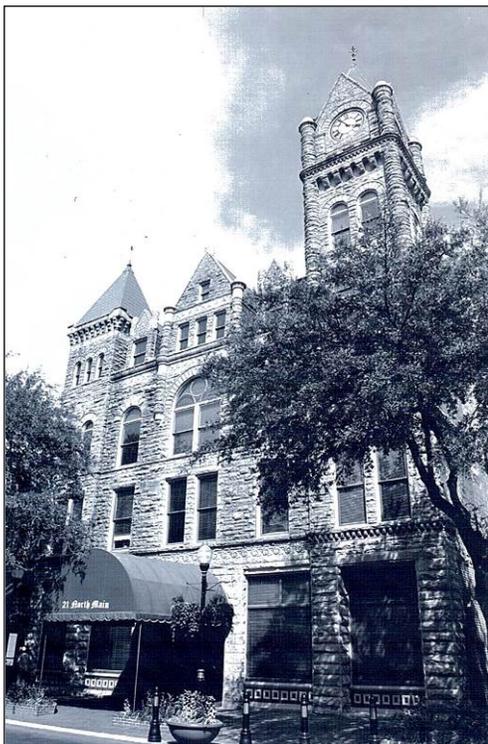
Request: Design Review for replacement of windows on façade of Sumter Opera House.

Location: 21 N. Main St.

Present Use/Zoning: City Hall & Opera House/CBD (Central Business District)

Tax Map Reference: 228-12-05-009

Adjacent Property Land Use and Zoning: North – Commercial /CBD
South –Commercial/GC
East – Parking lot & N. Harvin St./CBD
West – N. Main St. & Commercial/CBD



II. BACKGROUND

The applicant is requesting design review approval for the replacement of the windows on the façade of the Opera House. The replacement of the windows has already taken place, in 2013.

Architectural/Historic Context

21 N. Main St. was constructed in 1893 and has been cataloged in both the 1985 Historic Resources Survey and the 2010 Historic Resources Survey. This structure is considered to be a contributing structure within the National Register Historic District and the building itself was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.

The Sumter Opera House is considered to be a fine example of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture. The four-story structure has a rusticated block façade that addresses N. Main St. The core of the building is flanked by two towers, the tallest of which, at 100 ft. is a clock tower. The building also has three gable dormers, and there is a floral/scroll motif throughout. The façade

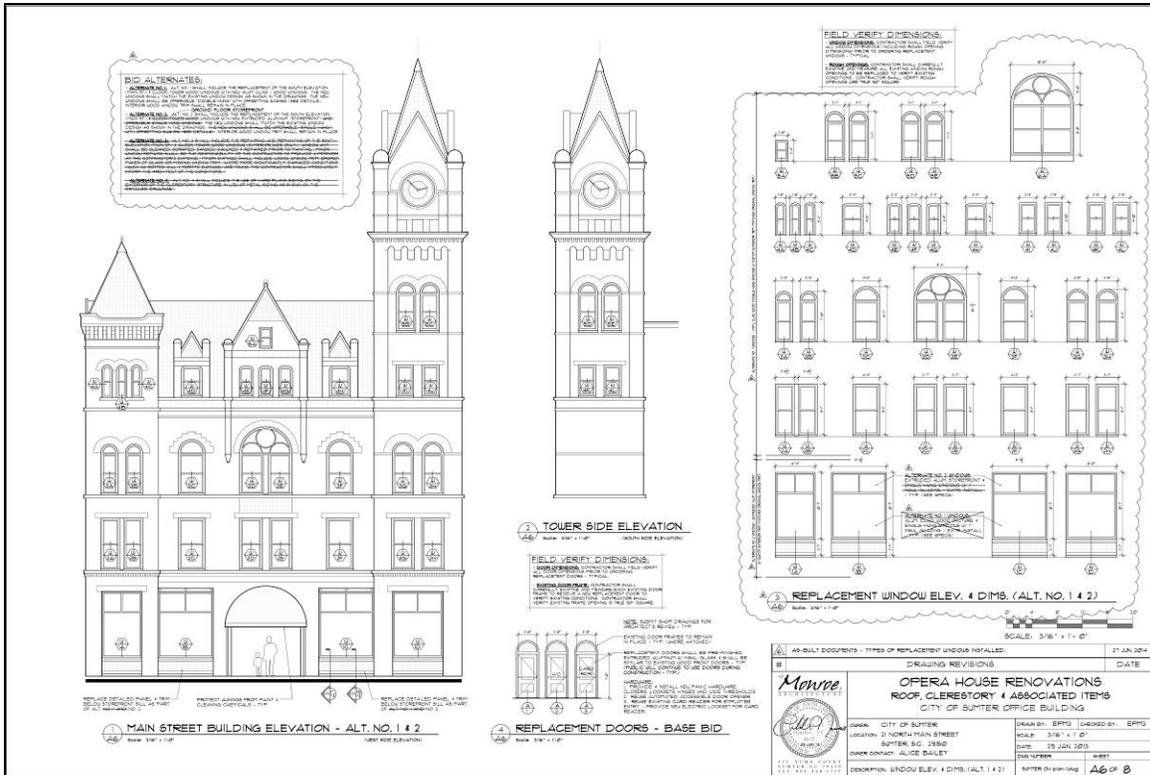
has rusticated pilasters and brackets as well as round flat arches over the windows. The side elevations have a brick exterior. There have been additions constructed to the rear of the structure since the 1970's with major renovations to the interior in the 1980s to accommodate City administrative offices, Council Chambers and restoration of the Opera House stage area on the first floor. In 2011, approval was granted for replacing the clerestory windows on the third floor, surrounding council chambers (HP-11-29 and HP-11-29 Rev.1).

Because the Opera House is located inside of the designated National Register District boundary, and is part of the Downtown Design Review District, any proposed exterior changes or additions to the structure must be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Design Review Committee.



Scope of Work:

A narrative and photographs were submitted by the architect, Bucky Monroe, as explanation for the necessity of the replacement windows and the replacement design concept (See Attachment 1).



The scope of work, as shown above, included the replacement of 4 first-floor storefront sill windows and 29 upper façade windows of varying sizes, some with rounded transoms.

The *Design Review Guidelines Manual* states:

#13) UPPER FACADE WINDOWS SHOULD RETAIN ORIGINAL DIMENSIONS AND DETAILS

Normally Required

- a. Original window opening dimensions and details should be preserved and maintained. Original window sash should be retained.
- b. Original window openings should not be altered. This includes enclosing original openings or obscuring windows with added materials.
- c. Window details such as decorative wood or sheet metal cornices should be preserved and maintained.

Recommended

- d. If original windows are missing, replacement windows should be of one-over-one sash configuration. These windows should have distinct meeting rails and have the appearance of operable windows. Windows with flush or snap on mullions should not be installed.

- e. Wood is the preferred material for replacement windows. Also allowed are one-over-one aluminum windows with a baked enamel finish. Raw or unpainted aluminum windows should not be installed.
- f. Storm windows may be applied if they match the original window configuration and have a baked enamel or painted finish.

#38) MATERIALS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION SHOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH EXISTING MATERIALS

Normally Required

- a. Brick is the preferred building materials for downtown Sumter. Buildings with exterior surfaces of glass and metal, wood, vinyl, or stucco should not be constructed.
- b. Masonry materials should be compatible in size, profile, and detailing with historic materials.

Virtually all buildings in downtown Sumter are of some type of masonry construction. Buildings are predominantly of brick construction with concrete and stone used for foundations, decorative elements, and belt courses. New construction materials should match existing materials in color, texture, and dimensions. Brick is the recommended building material for downtown although concrete may be allowed if scored or textured to resemble brick. Buildings with exterior surfaces of glass and metal, wood, or vinyl and aluminum siding should not be constructed.

New brick buildings should have brick that matches in dimensions and profile of typical historic bricks in the downtown area. Smooth bricks of dark red colors are preferred over textured bricks or bricks with light colors. Oversized or undersized bricks should not be used. The use of concrete for foundations, upper façade decoration or divisions is acceptable.

Wood windows are recommended for new construction but metal windows such as dark anodized aluminum are acceptable.

The replacement windows are wooden clad double-hung and were custom made to match the original windows' configurations.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of this request. The proposed project generally meets the requirements set forth in the design review guidelines. The previous windows on the Opera House were deteriorating, and great effort was made by the City to use the highest quality replacement windows, that matched the originals in both design and materials.

IV. DRAFT MOTION

I move that the Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee approve HP-14-14 in accordance with the Guidelines, plans, materials and colors referenced in the staff report.

I move that the Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee deny HP-14-14.

I move that the Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee enter an alternative motion.

V. HISTORIC PRESERVATION – JULY 24, 2014

The Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee at its meeting on Thursday, July 24, 2014 deferred action on this request until the August 28, 2014, meeting in order to obtain additional information on the type of replacement windows used for this project.

VI. HISTORIC PRESERVATION – August 28, 2014

The Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee at its meeting on Thursday, August 28, 2014 voted to approve this request for design review approval for replacement windows on the façade of the Sumter Opera House in accordance with plans, materials and colors submitted based on compliance with criteria #s 13 and 38 of the *Design Review Guidelines*.



OPERA HOUSE RENOVATIONS ROOF, CLERESTORY & ASSOCIATED ITEMS

PROJECT NO. #22-12/13

SUMTER, S.C.

WINDOW REPLACEMENT NARRATIVE:

Existing window conditions:

The City of Sumter Director of Construction, Jim Avins, explained at the beginning of the renovation project, that the city has continuously repaired, repainted and maintained the wood windows for the last 30 years. The existing wood windows were installed during a major building renovation that was completed sometime around 1983. This was the renovation that converted the old movie theater to a performing arts center and provided office space for the City of Sumter administration offices (new fourth floor added inside the existing attic space). The wood windows replaced in 1983 were detailed to match the original (severely deteriorated) building windows removed during renovations.

Continuing window maintenance:

Since 1983, the replacement windows on all sides of the Opera House building have been subject to routine maintenance due to normal weathering conditions and use. However, the city director of construction explained the windows on the front of the building, where a majority of the city administrative offices are located, have required the most extensive repair and maintenance. Due to the western facing exposure of the front of the building, the intense direct sun exposure had severely damaged the exposed wood finish. Additionally, the deteriorated windows leaked air and water universally and in some offices, severely. Water leaks through the window units and frames had caused heavy damage to interior office finishes including interior window trim, wall finishes, flooring and office furnishings. Several office and meeting spaces were no longer habitable due to the extensive interior building damage caused by the leaking window conditions.

Energy efficiency:

Another important concern the city had about the existing windows was the fact that the existing window units could not be properly weatherproofed or sealed. The existing windows were single pane, so the windows were not insulated for energy efficiency. Due to severe weathering, the existing double hung window sashes commonly had open joints of 1/8" to as much as a 1/2" gap, allowing unconditioned air in and conditioned air out. The gaps allowed blowing rain to get inside the building. The large gaps also allowed insects, dirt, dust and pollen to blow inside offices. In many cases, windows were unable to be locked using the standard sash lock and had to be secured with screws and blocking. The new replacement windows are double pane insulated glass meeting the current energy code building requirements. The new window frames are also sealed inside each window rough opening.

Storefront windows:

The ground level storefront windows were also severely deteriorated. The interior finishes were damaged by water leaks from the storefront windows. The wood framed knee walls supporting the large storefront windows had extensive water and termite damage. The termite damage to the window on the right hand side of the front entrance (W-1C) was the most severely infested

area by termites. Following window removal, it was discovered termite damage had extended up inside the building to the second and third floor windows directly above window W-1C. These building areas were retreated for termites and all termite damage was repaired as part of this project.

New replacement windows:

The new replacement windows were customized by the window manufacturer (Jeld-Wen Windows) to match the size, style and trim details of the original windows replaced in 1983. The **ground level storefront windows** (manufactured by YKK Corp in America) and supporting knee walls were replaced with matching new windows and details. The appearance of the new storefront windows does not look any different than the original replacement windows. The only notable differences concerning the new storefront is the new units are insulated (double pane), the frames are extruded aluminum instead of wood and the custom trim is vinyl (provided by the clad window manufacturer and matches identically to the double hung windows trim). The **double hung upper level windows** located on the second, third, fourth and higher levels were also customized by the window manufacturer to match the size, style and trim details of the original windows replaced in 1983. The new replacement windows are vinyl clad wood windows with interior wood finish stained to match existing interior office colors. The new window units are insulated to meet the energy code requirements. Additionally, the window frames are sealed tight to the building, eliminating air leakage around the new window units (the windows removed were not sealed or insulated). The **large celestial window** on the rear of the building facing Harvin Street was also replaced as part of the project. The window (installed in 1983) had been severely damaged during the hurricane Hugo storm in 1989. Since that time, the window had a storm window installed over the window to weatherproof the opening. However, the storm window had also deteriorated enough that the entire window unit needed replacement.

Window colors:

The new replacement windows were custom colored to match the existing paint colors on the building. The 1983 windows were painted with a custom two color combination for each window unit. Therefore the replacement windows were also painted the same color combination of green and tan. No changes in color were made as part of the recent building renovations.



Window W-3F: View of “existing replacement” window with repaired trim rotting again.



Window W-3F: Exterior wood sash separated. Heavy air flow and sash unlockable.



Window W-3F: Rotted exterior wood sill & sash need replacement again.



Window W-5D / W-5E: Exterior custom wood header damaged by long term rain & sunlight exposure.



Window W-3D / W-3E: Rotted exterior wood sill damaged by long term rain & sunlight exposure