

Historic Preservation Design Review

October 23, 2014

HP-14-19, 14-20 N. Main St. (City)

I. THE REQUEST

Applicant: Drakeford Architects

Status of the Applicant: Architect for the Property Owner

Request: Approval for Hotel Design

Location: 14-20 N. Main St.

Present Use/Zoning: Open Space /CBD

Tax Map Reference: 228-12-04-043 through -046

Adjacent Property Land Use and Zoning:
North – Commercial /CBD
South – Commercial /CBD
East – Main St & Commercial /CBD
West – Commercial Parking Lot/CBD

II. BACKGROUND



The applicant is seeking approval to construct a hotel in the open space where two buildings located at 14 – 20 N. Main St. were demolished last year, as shown on the image (left). These properties received a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Demolition Permit to remove the two commercial structures in December 2012.

The properties are interior parcels on the West side of N. Main St. in the block between Liberty St. and Hampton St. The combined area of the four parcels is +/- 0.6 acres.



Above: The former retail building which was demolished in 2013.

Below: The open space as it looks currently.



Above left and right: the buildings to the right and left of the proposed hotel.



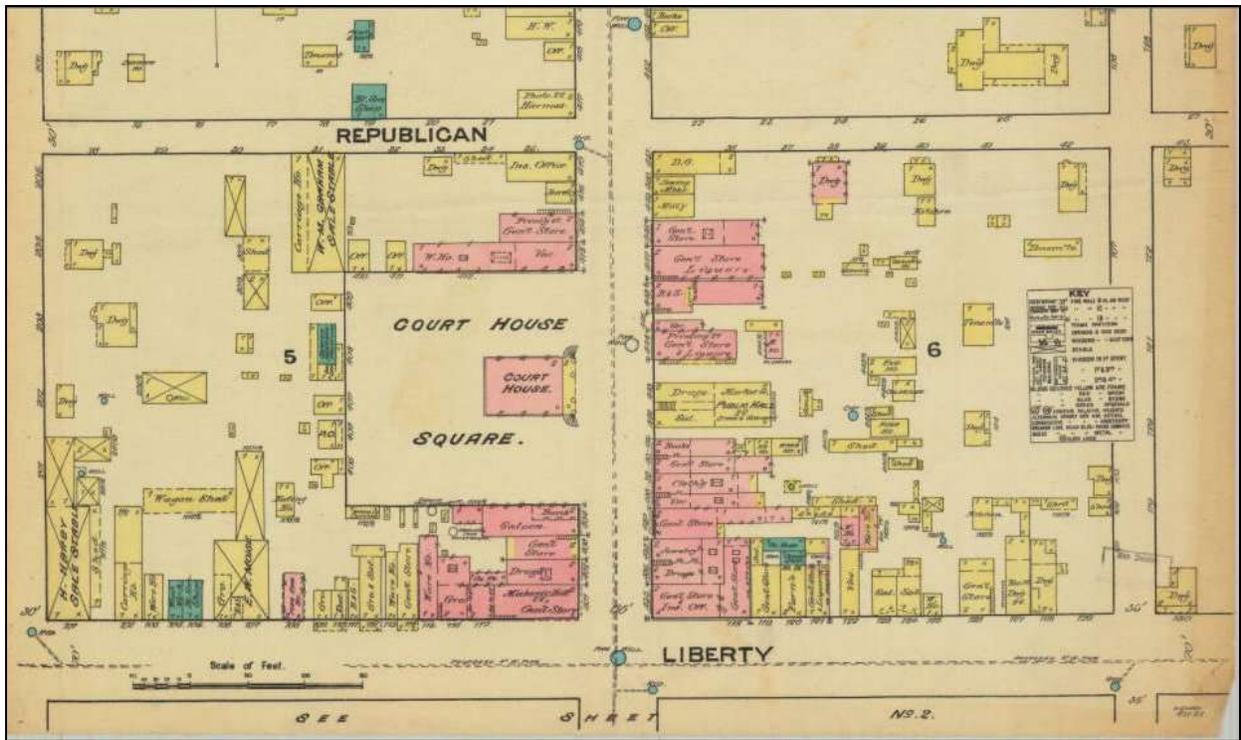
Above: Rear view of property, with the Opera House in the distance.

Historic Status of the Site

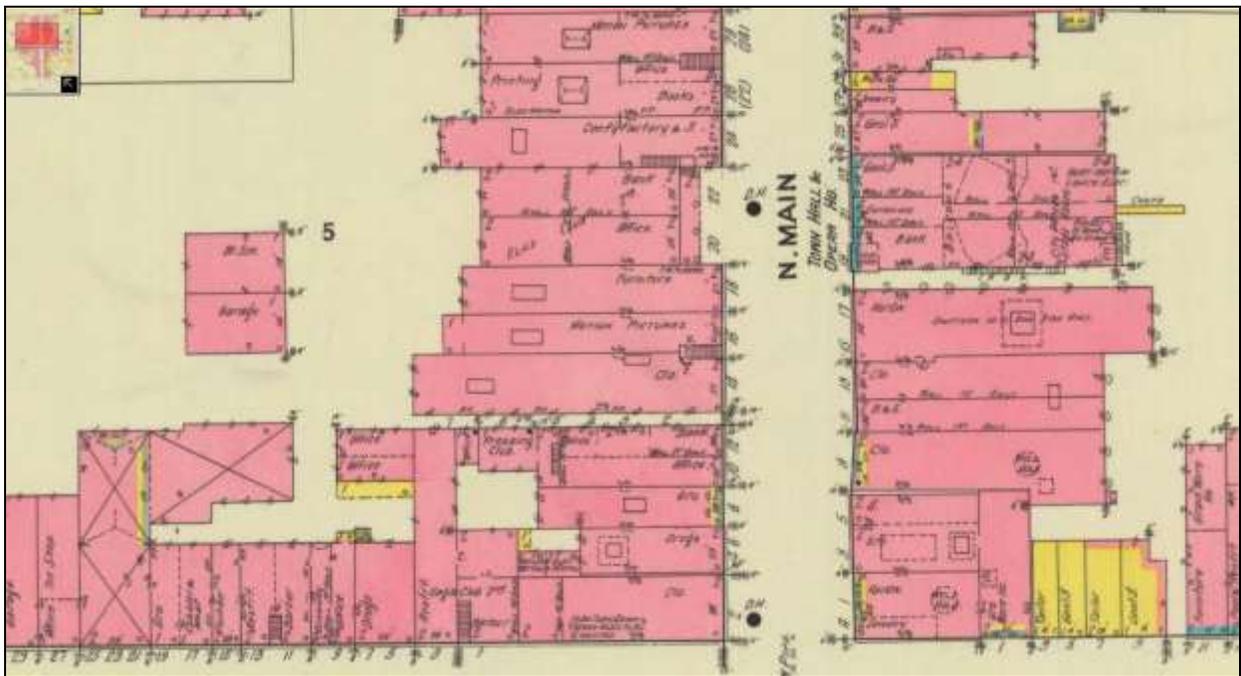


Above: The original Sumter County Courthouse, designed by Robert Mills, was located directly across from the Opera House.

Below: The 1884 Sanborn Map showing the courthouse.

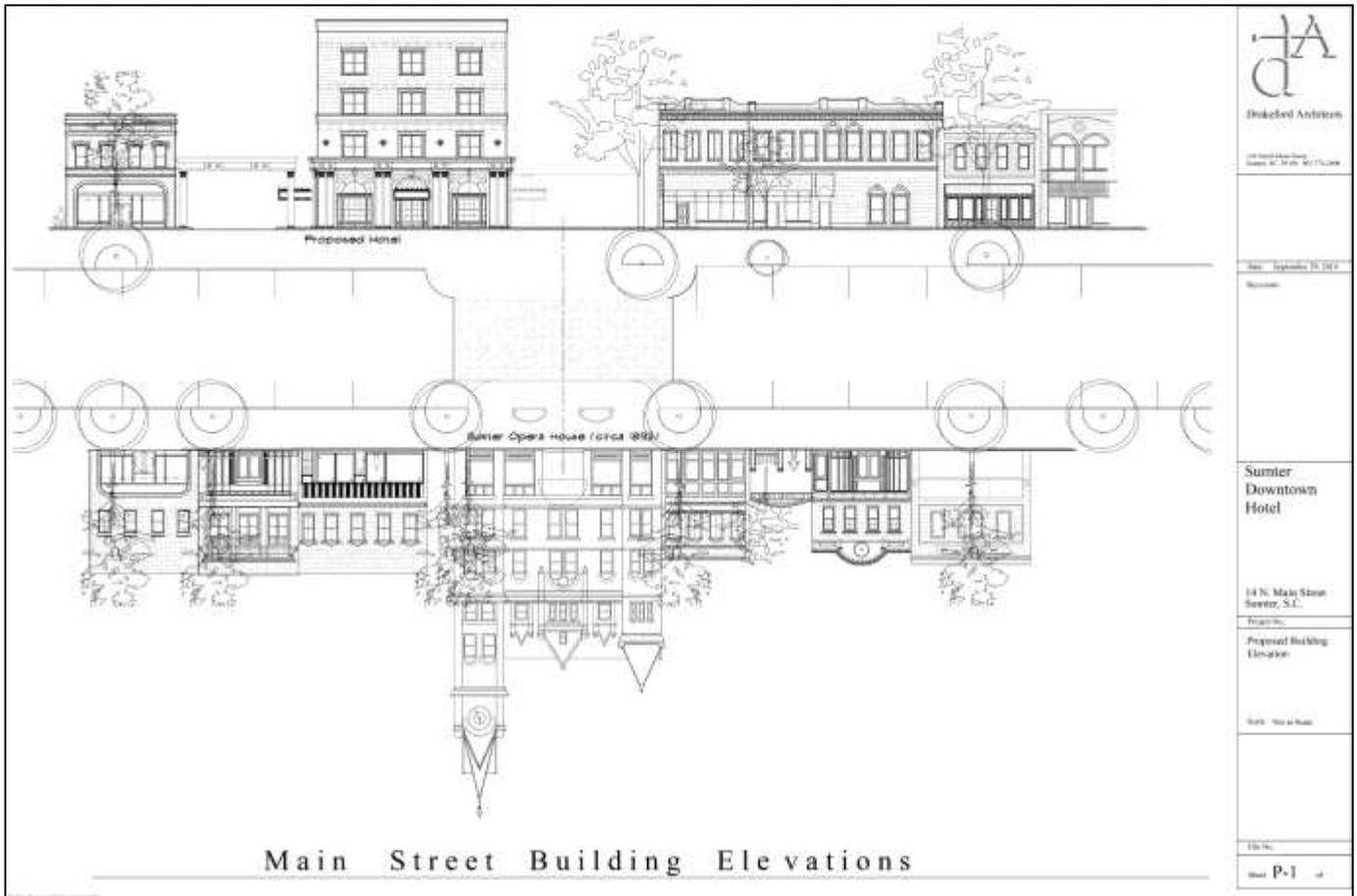


Below: In 1912 the space in front of the Opera House on the opposite side of Main Street was recessed, creating an open space across the street. The original courthouse had been removed by this time.



III. PROPOSAL

Drawings submitted by Drakeford Architects and dated September 29, 2014:





- Marquee:** Aged Bronze
- Brick Veneer:** Dark Red Smooth by Palmetto Brick
- Cast Stone Finish:** Palomino by Southern Cast Products
- Windows, doors and frames:** Metal curtain wall in a standard manufacturer white enamel finish
- Lighting:** Black to match existing city lampposts
- Glass – windows and doors:** Clear safety, type: insulated

The *Design Review Guidelines Manual* states:

#12) AWNINGS OR CANOPIES ARE APPROPRIATE FOR STOREFRONTS

Normally Required

a. Original canopies or awnings of wood and metal construction should be retained and preserved.

The retention of existing awnings and introduction of new awnings into the downtown area is encouraged.

- Proposed awnings on the front façade and sides will be bronze finish.
- The rear exterior is to have awnings similar to the ones nearby on Hampton St., as shown below:



- Use of awnings meets the guidelines.

#15) HISTORIC COLORS AND TEXTURES SHOULD BE MAINTAINED

Recommended

c. Colors should be selected to compliment the dominant existing colors of dark red and similar hues. The downtown area of Sumter contains a variety of colors in elements such as upper facades, storefronts, signs, and awnings. The introduction and use of colors shall not be restricted but it is encouraged that colors complement each building and its neighbors. The overall dominant colors in the downtown area are variations of red, brown, and grey reflected by the widespread use of brick, astone, and concrete building materials. Paint colors on storefronts, trim, and upper facade openings should relate to the overall color of the building as should added elements such as signs and awnings. In many cases, this will be colors which complement or harmonize with the overall brick or stone colors found on upper façades. The use of contrasting colors to highlight architectural details on storefronts and upper facades is encouraged. The use of intense or vivid hues should not be introduced into the downtown area which would create disharmony with adjacent buildings. Original masonry exteriors should not be painted.

- The colors chosen for this project are subdued and are in keeping with the character of the district.

#28) NEW CONSTRUCTION SHOULD BE CONTEMPORARY IN DESIGN AND HISTORIC REPRODUCTIONS SHOULD NOT BE BUILT

Normally Required

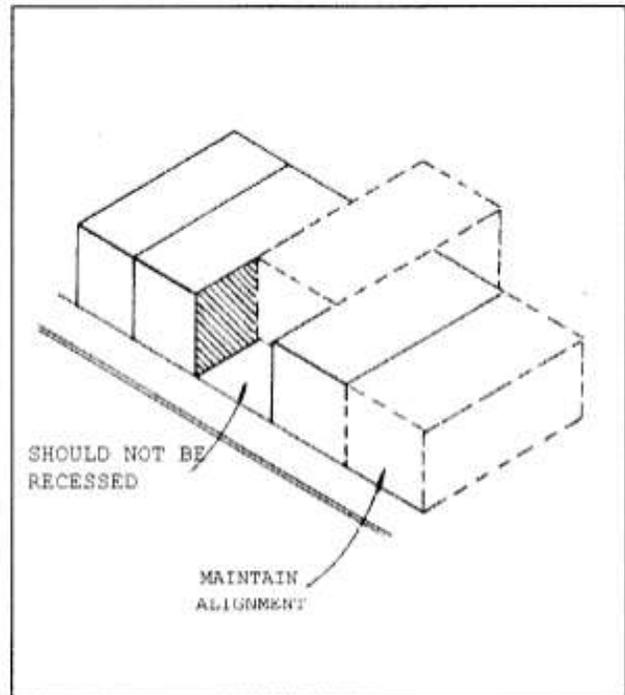
- a. **New construction in the commercial area should be of its period. Historic reproductions should be avoided. Compatibility of new buildings within historic commercial areas poses particular challenges for designers.** Historic commercial areas often have similar setbacks, similar storefront and upper facade alignment, and certain rhythms to the streetscape. These built-in parameters assist in defining new construction but they may also result in restricting building design to appear as reproductions of historic buildings as opposed to an appearance of present day construction. Successful new construction in historic commercial areas is clearly of its period but avoids direct imitation of historic designs such as reproducing window lintels or elaborate sheet metal cornices. Direct reproductions may cause observers to confuse the old with the new. No building should be constructed in downtown Sumter which imitates ante-bellum architectural styles. Such buildings would reflect a time period which precedes Sumter's growth and development.
- The proposed hotel plan has primarily neoclassical reproduction elements in its design. The façade architecture has both Palladian and Romanesque influences, as well as Corinthian columns. The rear has modern elements such as the asymmetrical sunshade awnings.

#33) NEW CONSTRUCTION SHOULD MAINTAIN SETBACK

Normally Required

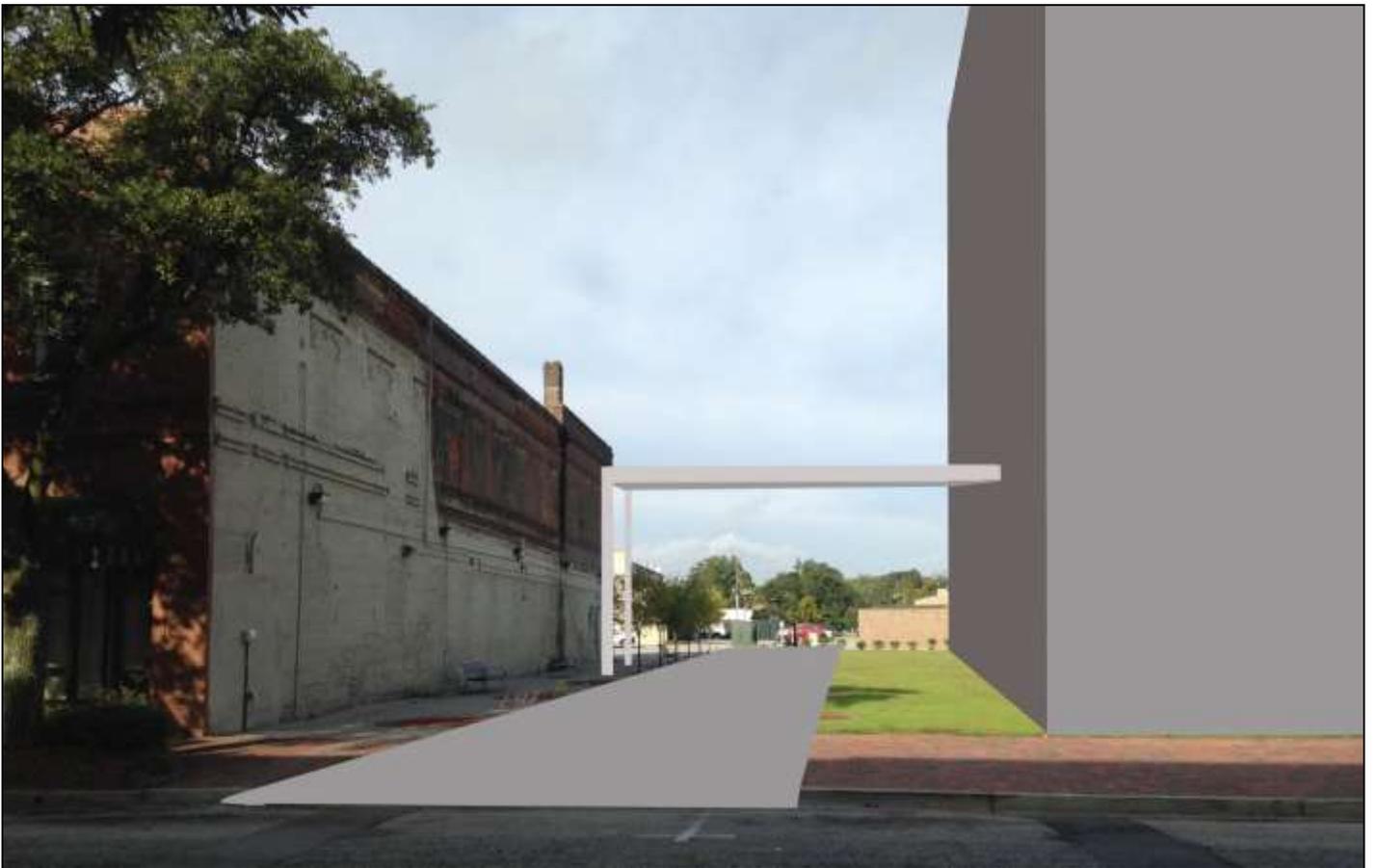
- a. **New construction should maintain the existing alignment and lack of setback of existing historic buildings.**
- b. **Buildings that are constructed on the edges of the district or that do not share party walls with adjacent structures may have minimal setbacks for landscaped areas or pocket parks.**

Buildings in the downtown historic district were constructed flush with the sidewalk to maximize building exposure on the primary façade. This lack of setback is uniform for historic structures and new construction should maintain this alignment. Buildings should not be recessed back from the sidewalk in the commercial area. Buildings that are constructed on the edges of the historic district or that do not share party walls with adjacent buildings may have setbacks for landscaped areas or pocket parks. The zoning ordinance of Sumter does not require any setback in the CBD zone and there is no minimum lot coverage.



Facade alignment should be maintained.

- The proposed building is set to the street as directed in the guidelines. However, the site design includes large open spaces on either side of the hotel, including a porte cochere on the side entrance of the building, which is a suburban design element and not suitable for a downtown. See graphics to follow:



The preferred design solution for Main Street urban fabric is to have continuous architecture that frames and defines the street. Because of the open spaces on either side in this proposal, fencing, gates, a narrow 12' entrance driveway, landscaping, and other site design elements are strongly recommended, to minimize the effect of wide open spaces along the Main Street urban fabric.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends continued discussion on the following:

- The design of the hotel is not entirely consistent with guidelines. It is a reproduction of a combination of classical architectural styles.
- The open space on the right (north) side of the building will not be a public space, and therefore requires careful planning to create a private space that also maintains a quality pedestrian scale at the street level. It is understood that there will be a gate at the street, to separate the hotel open space.
- Urban framework requires close proximity of architecture in order to maintain walkability, a pedestrian environment and a downtown feel. There is a large amount of open space on either side of the proposed hotel, which needs to be addressed and minimized through good landscape and site design.
- The proposed one-way drive is simply too wide, and will have a negative effect on the downtown urban fabric. Instead, a smaller, 12' wide one-way driveway that widens once it reaches the porte cochere entrance is strongly recommended, along with fencing, gates, landscaping and other design elements to close the gap on the left / entrance side of the building.
- For pedestrian safety, staff recommends a cross walk at the drive entrance.
- A design for the gates, fencing and hotel open space will require separate historic preservation approval at a later date.
- Staff recommends the applicant coordinate with the city regarding future planned Main Street improvements.

V. DRAFT MOTIONS

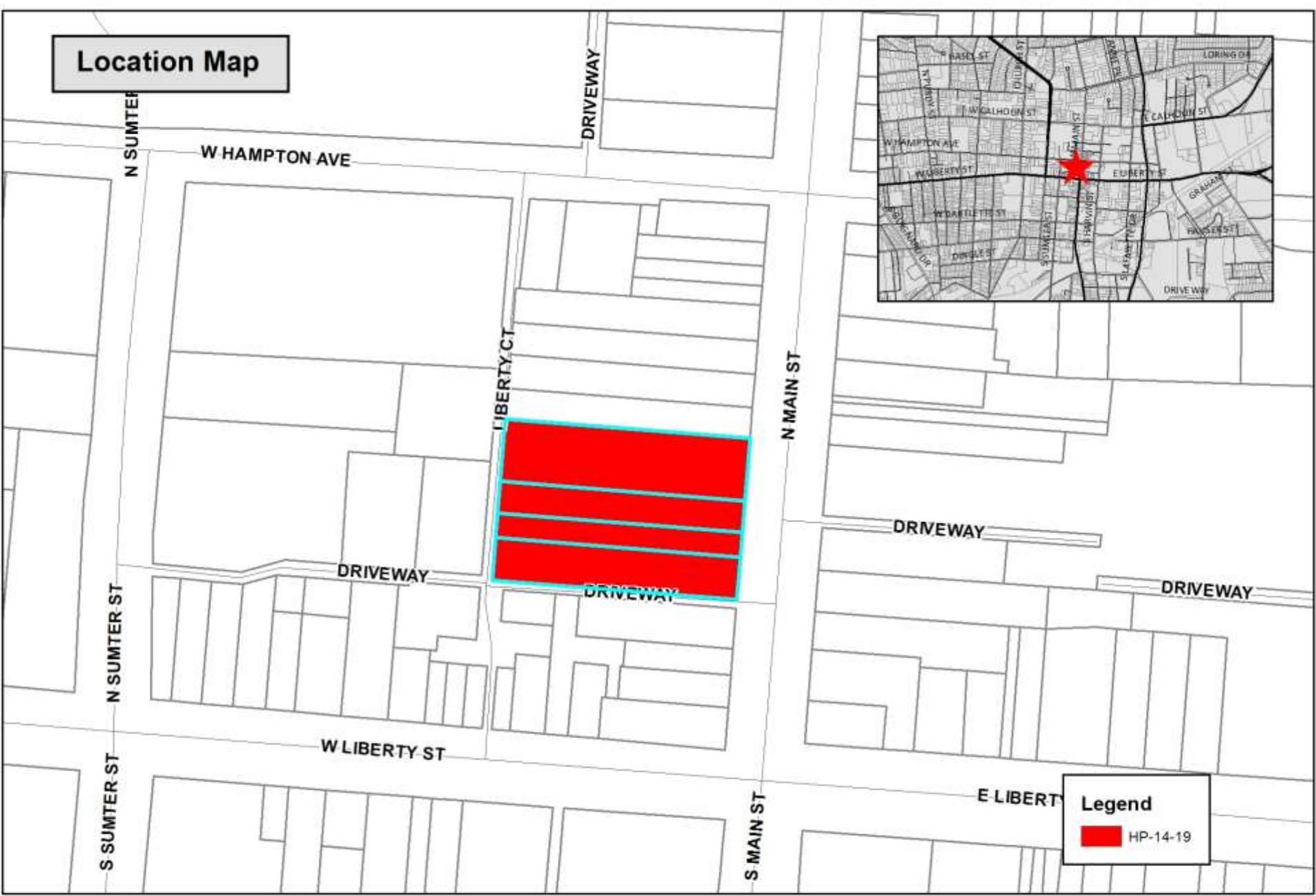
I move that the Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee approve HP-14-19, in accordance with the materials, photographs, and construction details submitted by Drakeford Architects and dated September 29, 2014 and referenced in the Staff Report.

I move that the Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee defer the request to next month for further discussion.

VI. HISTORIC PRESERVATION – OCTOBER 23, 2014

The Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee at its meeting on Thursday, October 23, 2014, deferred this request until the November 20, 2014 meeting.

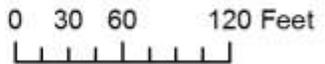
Location Map



Legend

HP-14-19

Disclaimer: While the data on this map has been collected accurately, the Sumter City Planning Commission cannot be held liable for any errors or omissions. The user of this map is advised to verify the accuracy of the data before using it for any purpose. The user of this map is advised to verify the accuracy of the data before using it for any purpose.



Map Prepared by: Sumter Planning Department
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 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
 October 2, 2014

HP-14-19
 14, 16, 18, 20 (22) N. Main Street, Sumter, SC
 Tax Map #228-12-04-043, 044, 045 & 046