

Historic Preservation Design Review

December 22, 2011

HP-11-29, 21 N. Main St. – Opera House Clear-story (City)

I. THE REQUEST

Applicant: Julie Coker

Status of the Applicant: Project Coordinator

Request: Design Review for proposed removal and replacement of existing skylight over Council Chambers with a 5'8" tall clear-story addition constructed of fiber cement board siding, aluminum storefront windows and a standing seam metal roof to match existing structure.

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

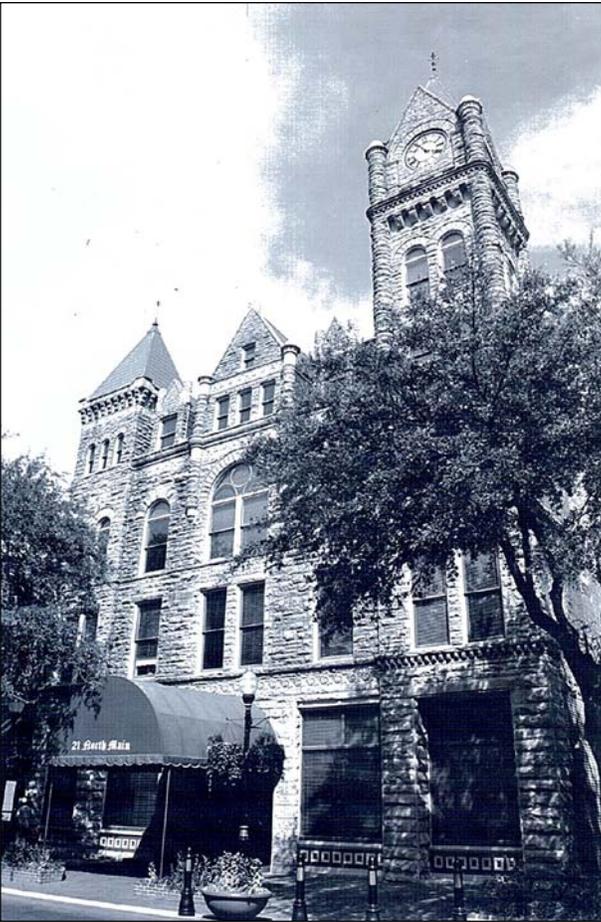
II. BACKGROUND

The applicant is requesting design review approval for the removal and replacement of the existing skylight over City Council Chambers within the Opera House. The proposed removal and replacement is part of an overall facelift proposed for Council Chambers that will also remedy a leaking issue that is as a result of the current skylight.

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.

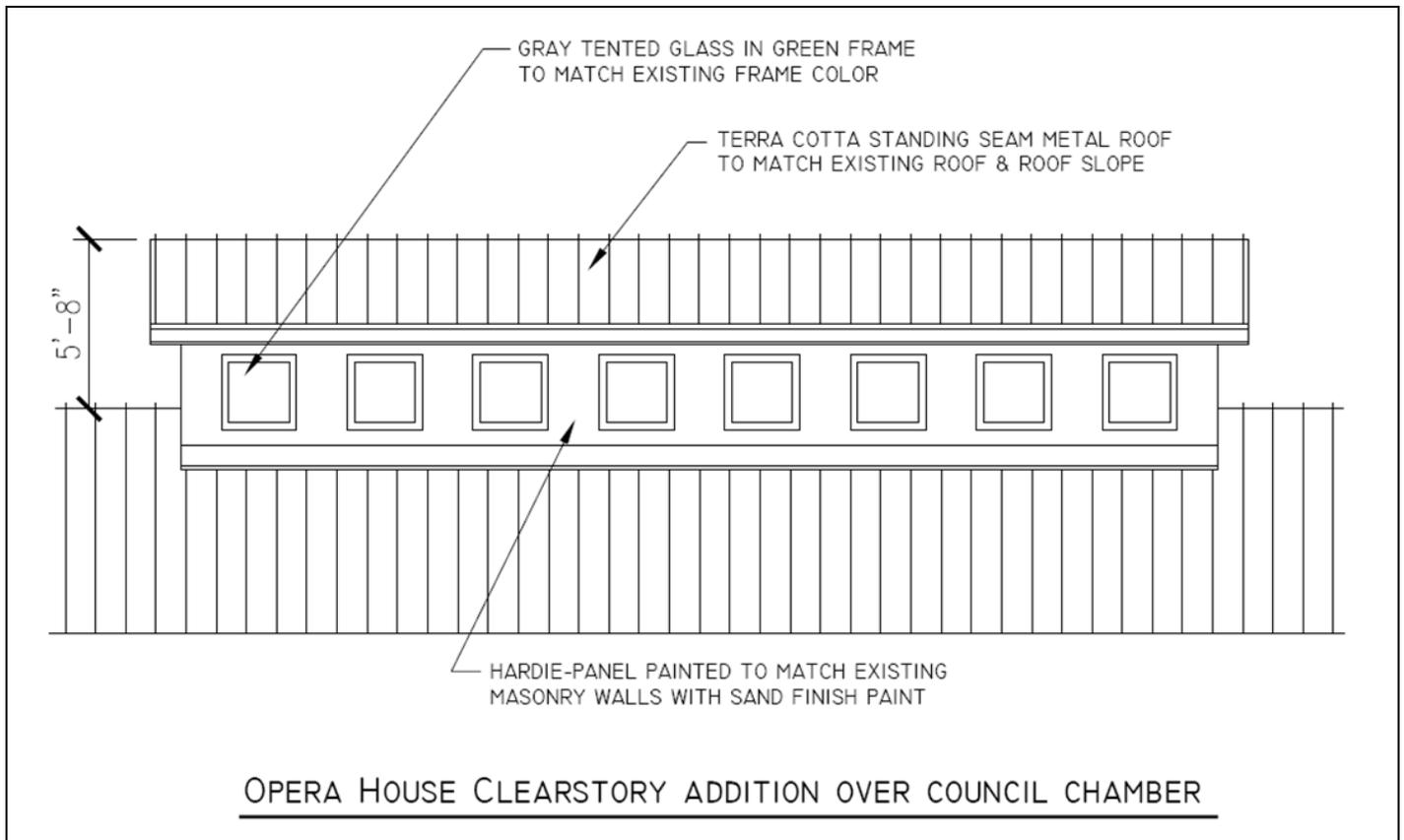
The Sumter Opera House is considered to be a fine example of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture. The four-story structure has a rusticated block façade that addresses N. Main St. The core of the building is flanked by two towers, the tallest of which, at 100 ft. is a clock tower. The building also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

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 Proposed Work:

The submitted scope of work is as follows –

1. Existing skylight over City Council Chamber to be removed.
2. Construct a clearstory structure over the skylight curb containing 8 windows on each side. Windows to be 32" square with gray-tinted 1" IG glass in a green window frame to match existing window frame color. Window system shall be an aluminum store-front system providing long term low-maintenance for windows 50'+ above ground.
3. The clearstory shall be constructed of light-gauge steel framing to provide necessary strength with a minimum additional weight added to the existing roof structure.
4. Clearstory roofing shall be terra cotta-colored standing seam metal roofing to match existing metal roofing present on the structure.
5. Exterior cladding material shall be fiber cement board painted to match existing split-face concrete masonry units with sand-finished paint.
6. Interior of the clearstory structure shall be gypsum board painted a "soft" medium to light gray coordinating with the new interior color pallet of the Council Chamber.



The *Design Review Guidelines Manual* states:

#37) MINIMAL ROOFTOP ADDITIONS MAY BE ALLOWED

Normally Required

- a. The construction of an extra story at the roof of a commercial building may be acceptable as long as the addition is not readily visible from the street.
- b. Additions should be contemporary in design to distinguish them from the original structure.

The construction of an additional story on existing buildings in the downtown area is acceptable under certain conditions. Additions must be stepped back from the main façade of the building so that no part of the addition is visible from the street. The addition must also be of such scale that it is not readily visible from within a one block area surrounding the building. Roof additions are encouraged to be contemporary in design to distinguish the addition from the original building.

The proposed clearstory addition will raise a total of 5'-8" from the plane of the roof to the rear of the structure. Because of the proposed shape, materials, and color it should blend seamlessly into the existing roofline. The addition will not be visible from the front façade.

#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 proposed clearstory addition is to be constructed of painted fiber cement board siding with a standing seam metal roof to match the existing structure and aluminum windows. While fiber cement board is not one of the traditional building materials for additions within the historic district, the material was chosen because of its relatively light weight and ease of maintenance at 50'+ from the ground. Were this addition to be at ground level and/or for an addition of a much larger magnitude fiber cement board would not be an appropriate material.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of this request. The proposed project generally meets the requirements set forth in the design review guidelines.

IV. DRAFT MOTION

I move that the Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee approve HP-11-29 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-11-29.

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

V. HISTORIC PRESERVATION – DECEMBER 20, 2011

The Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee at its meeting on Thursday, December 22, 2011, approved this request in accordance with the Guidelines, plans, materials and colors referenced in this staff report.