

Historic Preservation Design Review

February 23, 2012

HP-12-05, 100 N. Main St. – Rear Entrance & Courtyard (City)

I. THE REQUEST

Applicant: Thompson Turner Construction

Status of the Applicant: Property Owner

Request: Design review approval to construct a rear entrance courtyard with a water feature, associated fencing and landscaping.

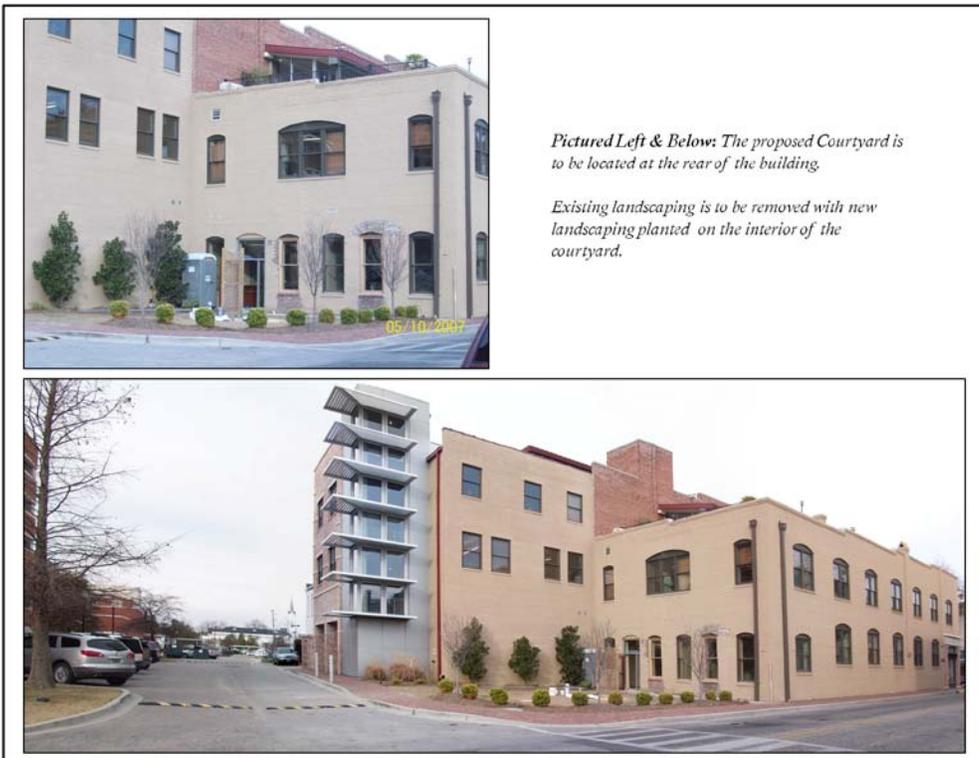
Location: 100 N. Main St.

Present Use/Zoning: Commercial Building/CBD

Tax Map Reference: 228-12-04-032

Adjacent Property Land Use and Zoning: North – Commercial Building/CBD
South – W. Hampton Ave./CBD
East – N. Main St./CBD
West – Parking lot & Tuomey Parking Garage/CBD

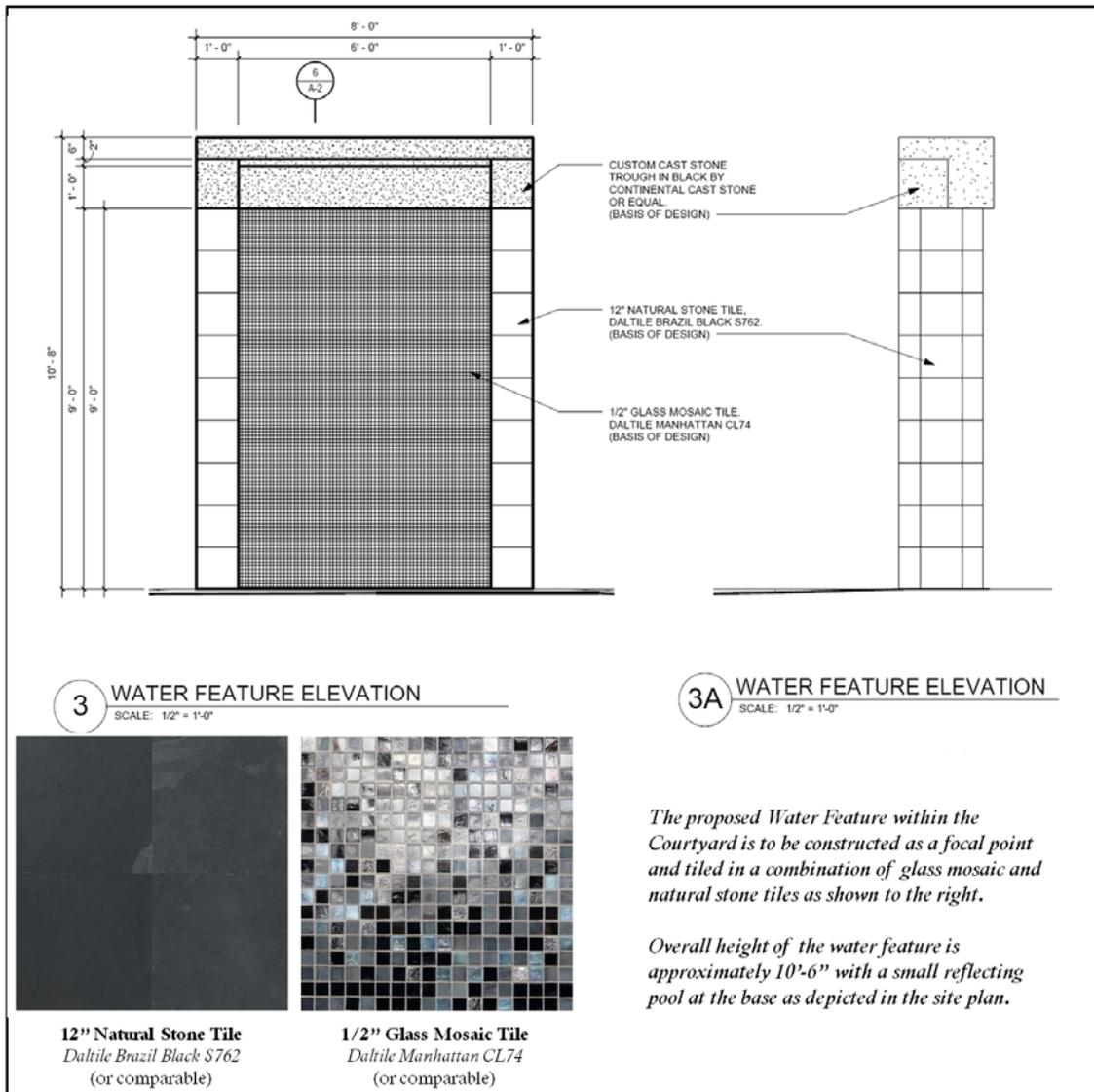
II. BACKGROUND

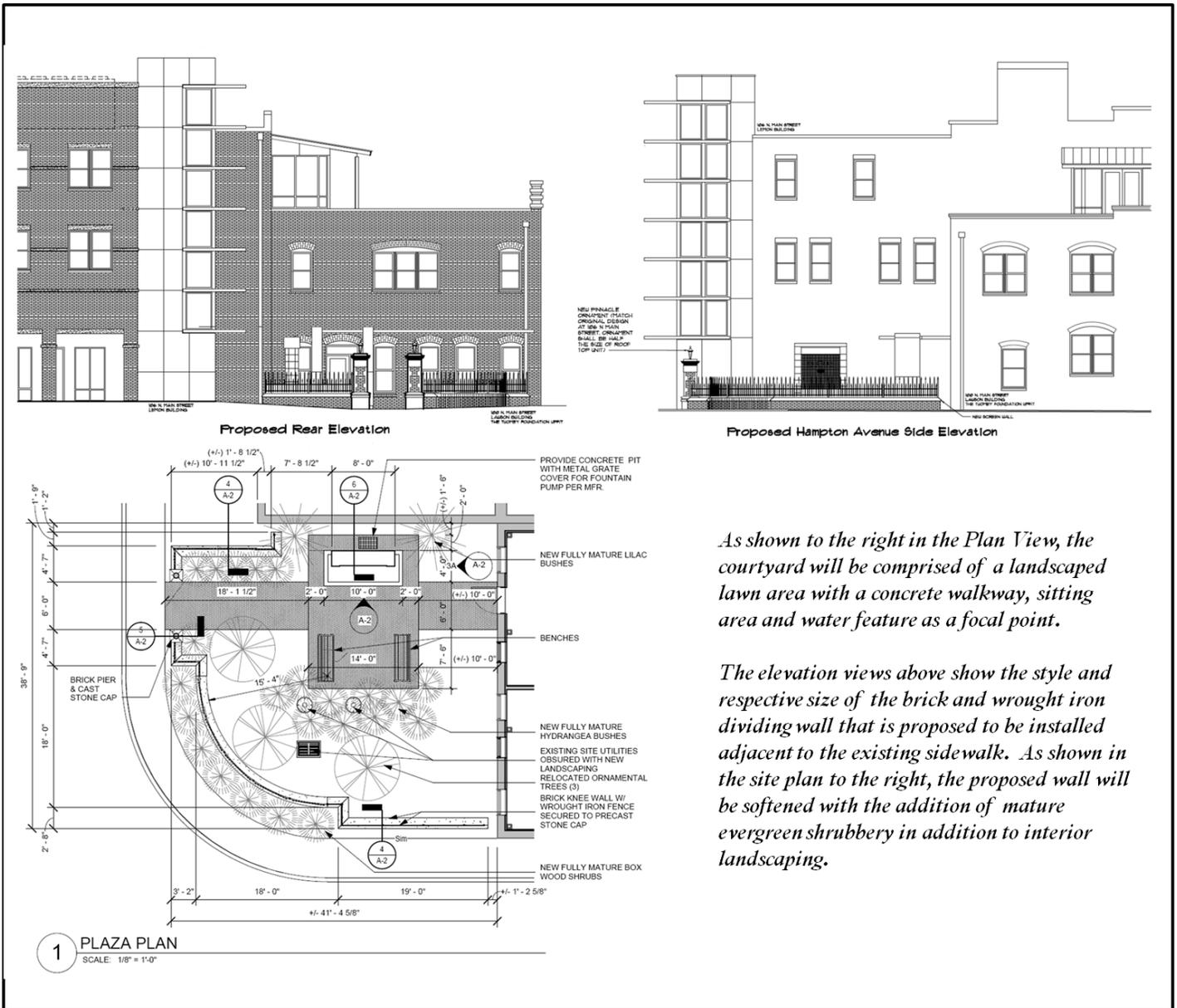


The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the design and construction of a rear entrance courtyard that will create a private open space feature to the rear of 100 N. Main St. Currently, the space is the rear yard of an existing renovated building that is part of the Hampton @ Main Project undertaken by Thompson Turner. The development site is located inside the designated National Register District as well as within the boundary of the Downtown Review District. Any new developments must be reviewed by the Board for compliance with landscape and site design criteria.



The Proposal:





As shown to the right in the Plan View, the courtyard will be comprised of a landscaped lawn area with a concrete walkway, sitting area and water feature as a focal point.

The elevation views above show the style and respective size of the brick and wrought iron dividing wall that is proposed to be installed adjacent to the existing sidewalk. As shown in the site plan to the right, the proposed wall will be softened with the addition of mature evergreen shrubbery in addition to interior landscaping.

The plan excerpts above and on the prior page show the proposed layout for the courtyard space to include landscaping, fencing, and the water feature. Design review is required prior to undertaking the proposed development.

The *Design Review Guidelines Manual* states:

#3) LANDSCAPING SHOULD COMPLEMENT RATHER THAN DETRACT FROM BUILDINGS

Recommended

a. Trees of limited height and dimensions should be considered for the downtown area. Historic commercial areas such as downtown Sumter often had numerous shade trees to shelter pedestrians. With the coming of the automobile many of these trees were removed to make way for parking. The introduction of new trees into the downtown area is appropriate as long as the trees selected are of limited height and dimension. When mature, trees should not overly mask buildings and make signs and details difficult to observe. Trees should be spaced at least 30 feet from each other and have planting beds of at least nine square feet.

b. Low plants and shrubs at sidewalks are appropriate. The introduction of low hedges or planters with flowers or other decorative plants is appropriate. These may be desired as part of an overall streetscape program by the city or added on an individual basis by property owners.

#4) SIDEWALK AND STREET IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD RESPECT DOWNTOWN CHARACTER

Recommended

a. Streetscape improvements should be in keeping with the traditional character of downtown. Appropriate improvements include the introduction of brick sidewalks or textured concrete which imitates the appearance of brick. The use of brick or textured concrete can be of particular assistance in defining pedestrian crosswalks across streets. Simple street furniture such as wood benches would also be appropriate. The addition of elements such as continuous metal or concrete canopies, oversized kiosks or gazebos, and ornate wrought iron street furniture should not occur.

b. Streetscape improvements should be selected for their simplicity and durability. Many streetscape improvements completed across the county in the 1960s and 1970s are now in varying degrees of deterioration. In many of these cases, materials or construction methods were selected which were incompatible with exposure to the elements or could not withstand the constant use by vehicles and pedestrians. Before any major expenditure for street furniture, sidewalk materials, or curbing, the longevity and lifespan of the proposed improvements should be carefully studied. Once selected, street furniture should be sited away from vehicular areas and be bolted or anchored in place to discourage vandalism.

Although specific guidance for creating fenced in open space within the Downtown Historic District is not listed within the Guidelines, there are established criteria for fencing within the Residential Historic District. In addition, there are commercial guidelines that reinforce placement and material selection related to defining spaces at the street level among established buildings. Specifically, Guidelines #33, 36, 38 and 43 speak to the preferred material types and placement of wall/fence like structures, as well as secondary entrances within the downtown district.

#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 that do not share party walls with the 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 edge of the historic district or that do not share party walls with adjacent buildings may have setbacks for landscaped areas or pocket parks.

#36) ADDITIONS MAY BE ADDED AT REAR FACADES

Normally Required

a. Rear facades are appropriate locations for additions to commercial buildings. Additions should clearly be contemporary in design and not historic reproductions or mimic the original building.

b. Rear additions should be simple in design and not be constructed to as the primary entrance to a building.

Additions to low-rise commercial buildings are generally of two types – rear additions and the rooftop additions. Rear additions are possible where a building's lot line is deeper than the existing building. The construction of a new addition could therefore extend at the rear of the original building to encompass the entire lot. Present zoning requirements and the configuration of lot lines will restrict additions on the primary

or side façade.

Rear facades are appropriate locations for additions to existing buildings. Most rear facades are not visible from the major street elevations and face rear alleys or parking areas. Rear additions should be stepped lower than the roofline of the original building versus the new addition. Acceptable materials for rear additions include brick, concrete, and combinations of metal and glass.

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

Normally Required

- a. Brick is the preferred building material for downtown Sumter.
- b. Masonry materials should be compatible in size, profile, and detailing with historic materials.

#43) THE ADDITION OF HISTORIC FENCE DESIGN AND MATERIALS IS APPROPRIATE

Normally Required

- a. Other allowable fence materials are open weave brick designs or cast iron.
- b. **Wooden plank fences, solid wall brick fences, and chain link fences and other metal designs should not be installed at the sidewalk or property line on primary facades.**
- c. **Fence heights not exceeding 3' on the property line on primary facades and 6; on the property lines of secondary and rear facades are encouraged.**
Wooden split rail fences are not historic designs for urban areas of the late 19th century and are not appropriate.

The overall design proposal to include plant selection, planting location, proposed materials and overall street level appearance of the proposed courtyard area are consistent with established Guidelines. This proposal will create a pedestrian scale versatile open space that maintains the established street level rhythm at an appropriate scale.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff has reviewed this request in accordance with the design guidelines. Staff recommends approval of this request.

IV. DRAFT MOTIONS

I move that the Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee approve HP-12-05, in accordance with the materials, photographs, and construction details submitted and referenced in the Staff Report based on compliance with Design Review Guidelines #3, 4, 33, 36, 38 and 43.

I move that the Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee deny HP-12-05.

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

V. HISTORIC PRESERVATION – FEBRUARY 23, 2012

The Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Committee at its meeting on Thursday, February 23, 2012, voted to approve this request in accordance with the materials, photographs, and construction details submitted and referenced in the Staff Report based on compliance with Design Review Guidelines #3, 4, 33, 36, 38 and 43.