

City of Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review

January 23, 2025

HP-24-21, 417 W. Hampton Ave. (City)

I. THE REQUEST

Applicant: City of Sumter

Status of the Applicant: Property Owner

Request: Request for Design Review Approval to demolish existing restroom building, construct new restroom building, install new playground system and associated walkways, and repair existing gazebo structure.

Location: 417 W. Hampton Ave.

Present Use/Zoning: City Park / Residential 6 & Residential-9 (R-6/R-9)

Tax Map Reference: 228-11-02-019

Adjacent Property Land Use and Zoning:
North – Residential / Residential-9 & Residential-6 (R-9/R-6)
South – Residential / Residential-6 (R-6)
East – Residential / Residential-6 (R-6)
West – Residential / Residential-9 & Residential-6 (R-9/R-6)

II. BACKGROUND

417 W. Hampton Ave. is a City park facility known as Memorial Park.

The applicant is requesting Design Review Board approval to demolish the existing restroom building, construct a new restroom building, install a new playground system and associated walkways, and to repair an existing gazebo structure.



ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Memorial Park, located in the heart of the Hampton Park Historic District, is an 8.68 acre landscaped city park with walking path, trees, and shrubs. In the center of the park is a gazebo with a brick base. Tuscan columns support a pedimented gable end terra cotta tiled roof. The site is classified as site #89 in the 1980 Historic Resources Survey of the Hampton Park District.

The property was deeded to the City in 1919 and dedicated in remembrance of the citizens of Sumter who fought in World War I. The park contains a monument with the following inscription:

“In solemn and thankful remembrance of the unselfish and patriotic sacrifice on the part of the brave men of Sumter County who served in the forces of the United States of America in the war against Germany and her allies for the preservation of the rights of mankind throughout the world. This park is given and dedicated in perpetuity for the use of the people of Sumter.

Deed of gift in trust executed by thirty-seven citizens, August 1st, 1919.”

The park also contains a playground area featuring a central play area and two swing sets, as well as a small restroom facility adjacent to the parking lot on the park’s N. Salem St. side.

In 2005, the City of Sumter obtained approval via HP-05-22 to demolish a dilapidated concrete block bathroom facility (15’x27’) at Memorial Park that was originally damaged by Hurricane Hugo. Construction of a new restroom facility, fencing, and associated improvements was later approved via *HP-06-22*.

Additionally, though not directly related to this request, in August 2017, approval was granted for a Demolition Permit to remove the 3,766 sq. ft. community building located at 110 N. Salem Ave. Demolition of the structure was completed making way for reconfiguration of the parking area in Memorial Park and for construction of a new free-standing community center building. In September of 2017, a plan was approved via *HP-17-17* for a stand-alone community center building to be constructed on the site of 110 N. Salem Ave., however the City elected instead to pursue an alternate design which allowed for expansion of the Memorial Park parking lot while preserving the Rutledge House at 407 W. Hampton Ave. This plan, approved via *HP-18-13*, preserved the John Rutledge Sumter House through an adaptive reuse plan while providing an overall space of 4,030 sq. ft. for community use in scale with the existing residential construction in the Hampton Park Historic District. In addition, the plan resulted in 52 off-street parking spaces in the N. Salem Ave. parking lot for Memorial Park.

The site is located in the Hampton Park Historic Overlay District, and is considered a contributing site to the fabric of the District.

CURRENT CONDITIONS



Above: Existing park restroom building (front view)



Above: Existing park restroom building (side view)



Above: Gazebo at park center



Above: existing playground area

SCOPE OF WORK:

The applicant proposes to perform the following work:

- A. Demolish existing restroom building
- B. Construct new restroom building
- C. Install new playground system and associated walkways
- D. Repair existing Gazebo

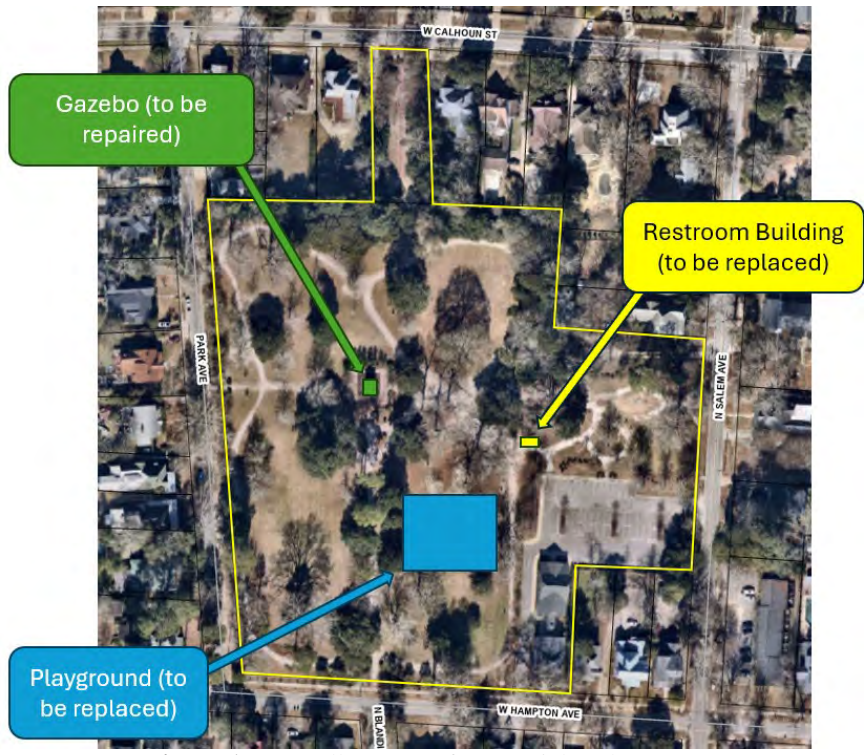


Figure 1 - Overall Layout of Memorial Park

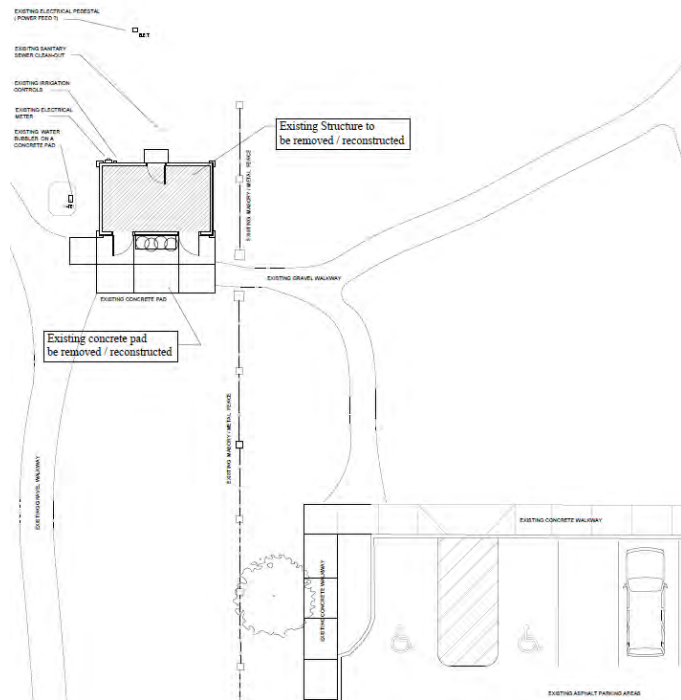
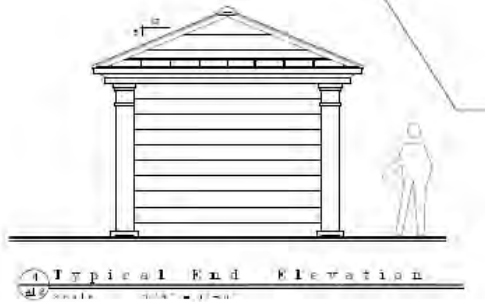
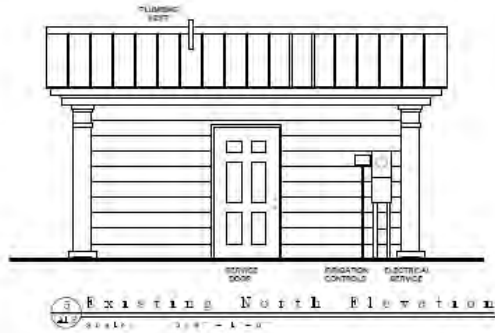


Figure 2 - Diagram showing Location of Restroom Building

Existing Restroom Building Elevation Diagrams



Proposed New Restroom Building Elevation Diagrams

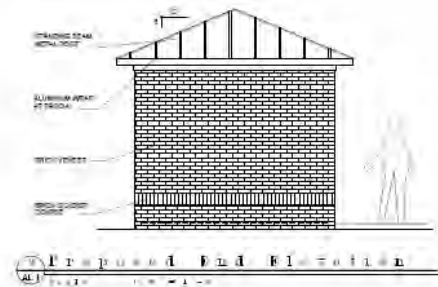
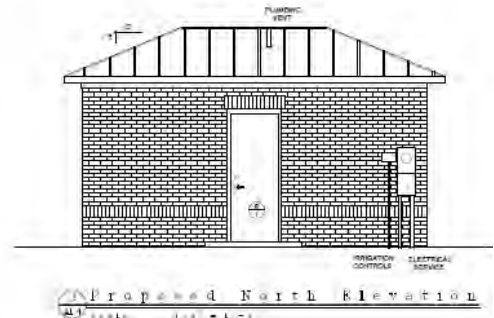




Figure 3 - Proposed New Playground Rendering



Figure 4 - Proposed New Playground Site Plan

DESIGN REVIEW:

The proposed work requires design review approval beforehand. The *Design Review Guidelines Manual* states:

5.1 Trees and Plantings

- A. *Maintain historic trees and plantings.*
 - *Protect and retain existing trees and plants wherever possible.*
- B. *Devise a planting scheme that complements the building and the overall district.*
 - *Design landscaping to be secondary to the historic building.*
 - *Do not use large trees and plants that will conceal or obscure the primary elevation.*
 - *Use low plants and shrubs along sidewalks and walkways.*
 - *Use plant materials native to the Midlands of South Carolina to ensure their health and longevity.*
 - *Plant trees and bushes several feet away from the foundation of a building to prevent root damage and moisture infiltration.*

Staff Analysis:

The applicant proposes to remove one mature tree classified as an invasive species (Bradford Pear), and to update plantings in conjunction with the new playground and its pathway system.

The Tree and plantings guidelines are recommended practices only, they are not enforced by the Design Review Committee. The landscaping plan for the park will be designed and overseen by the City's Arborist/Horticulturalist.

5.3 Driveways, Walkways, and Ramps

- A. *Maintain traditional walkway configurations.*
 - *Retain and repair historic walkways and their materials.*
 - *Use paving materials that complement the architectural style of the site.*
 - *Use the same materials for driveways and walkways to maintain design consistency.*

Staff Analysis:

The current park contains a series of interconnected cinder walking paths, primarily oriented in a loop around the park boundary bisected with straight paths through the center. The scope of this project includes installation of a concrete loop connecting the restroom building, playground, and the Meeting House.

6.1 Commercial Properties

B. Design new buildings to reflect their own time.

- *Avoid the direct imitation of a historic style that would blur the distinction between old and new.*
- *Avoid any reference to historic styles that precede the growth and development of the district.*

Staff Analysis:

The proposed new restroom building is a simple brick construction, reflecting the building's utilitarian nature. While the design departs from the imitative design of the existing restroom, the intent is to construct a durable building that will not be subject to the same environmental factors that have influenced the short lifespan of the existing structure (moisture, insects). While the building is visible from public streets (N. Salem Ave. and W. Hampton Ave.), it is not prominent, and will blend in to its surroundings based on the red brick exterior finish.

The existing gazebo structure at the center of the park is considered a historic structure. No changes to the building are planned, though extensive repairs and replacement of deteriorated materials with "like-for-like" materials is planned.

7.2 Demolition

A. Demolish a historic building only after all alternatives have been exhausted.

- *Provide an explanation of alternatives that were explored and the reasons why they were not feasible options.*
- *Prepare a detailed plan for the development of the site that includes a budget for both the demolition and the new construction, as well as a timetable.*
- *Document the building prior to demolition to include measured drawings, photographs, and a detailed history of the property.*

Staff Analysis:

The existing restroom building, constructed in the late 2000s, has deteriorated quickly, due to a combination of insect damage and moisture issues based on its location and the topography of the park. The existing building has been determined by the City's Public Services Department to be deteriorated beyond reasonable repair, and replacement of the structure is the most economical measure that can be taken. Because the building is not considered historic, having been constructed less than 20 years ago, removal and replacement is the most effective course of action.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

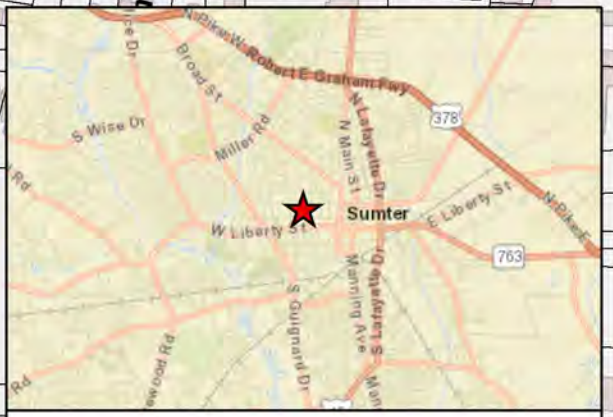
Staff has evaluated the proposed scope of work, and finds that the planned changes are consistent with the Design Guidelines. Approval is recommended.

IV. DRAFT MOTION

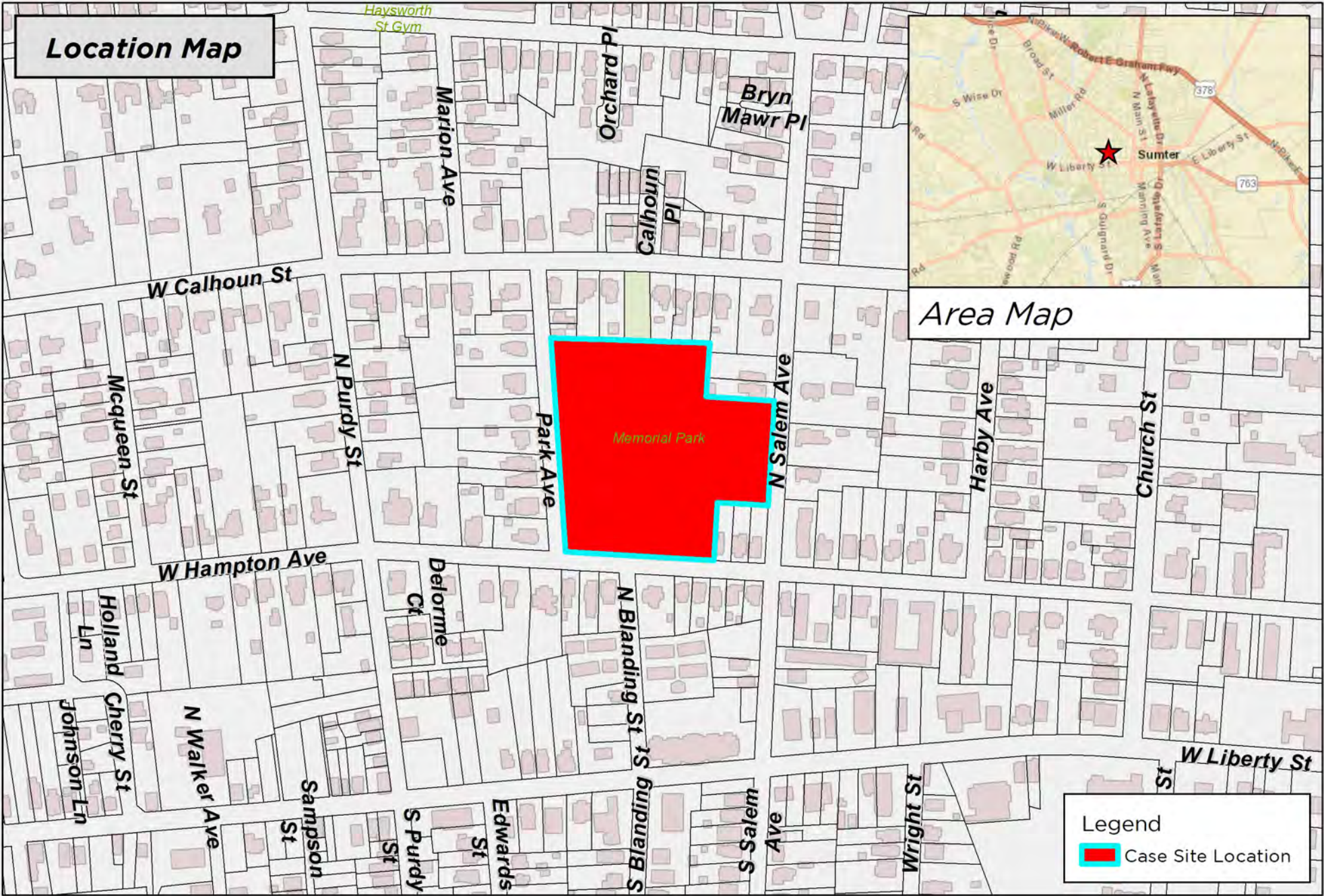
- 1) I move the City of Sumter Design Review Board ***approve*** HP-24-21 in accordance with the materials, photographs, construction details submitted and staff recommendation referenced in the Staff Report based on compliance with Design Review Guidelines.
- 2) I move the City of Sumter Design Review Board ***deny*** HP-24-21.
- 3) I move the City of Sumter Design Review Board enter an alternative motion.

V. DESIGN REVIEW BOARD – January 23, 2025

Location Map



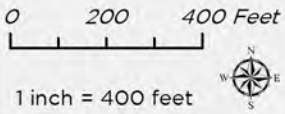
Area Map



Legend

 Case Site Location

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HP-24-21
417 W Hampton Ave, Sumter, SC 29150
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