

Staff Report

d.



Meeting Date: February 13, 2025

Planner: Sara Dusenberry,
Senior Planner

APPLICATION SUMMARY:

Project Name: Modifications to previously approved storefront windows

Case Number: COA25-0001

Application Types: Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)

Location: 2600 W. Main Street

Applicant: Lynne Wasinger, Design Studio Architects, Inc

Owners: Murphys Variety LLC

Applicant Request: Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove previously approved storefront windows.

HISTORIC DISTRICT SUMMARY:

Historic Building Name: Harry Post Penny Robbins

Individual Landmark Designation: No

Historic District: Yes

Applicable Design Guidelines: Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Design Guidelines

PROCESS:

Per Section 10-9-8.1 of the Unified Land Use Code (“ULUC”), titled Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), before carrying out any new construction, alteration, relocation, or demolition involving the exterior of any designated landmark or property in a historic district (including non-contributing properties), the owner(s) shall submit the proposed work to the Director, as well as apply for any other required permits.

The ULUC distinguishes between Major Changes and Minor Alterations. Projects that qualify as Major Changes must obtain a COA from the Historical Preservation Commission. As this application includes “new construction in a historic district [and] modification of or to the front or side façade of a principal structure,” it qualifies as a Major Change. As such, the final determination for this Certificate of Appropriateness must be approved by the Historical Preservation Commission in a public hearing.

LOCATION:

2600 W Main St. is located at the SW corner of the intersection of W. Main St. and S. Curtice St. and is zoned Downtown Main Street (DMS).

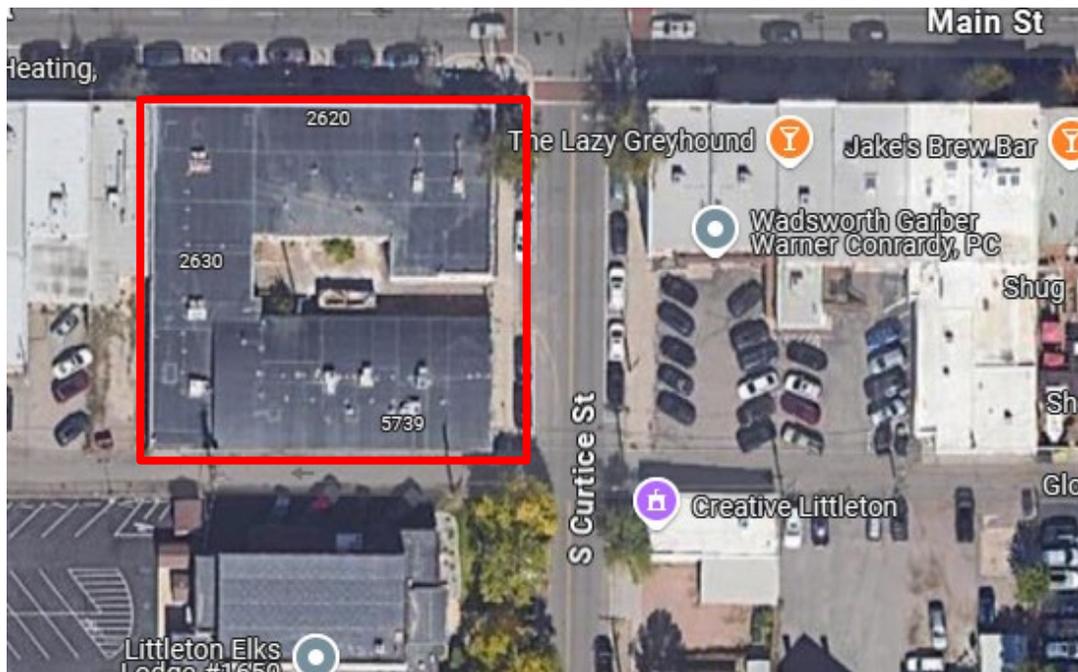


Figure 1: Aerial photo of 2600 W. Main Street with property designated by red bounding box.

PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS:

Pursuant to Section 10-9-3.5 of the ULUC, notice of public hearings shall be given in accordance with Table 10-9-3.9.1, which states, in part, for the relevant applications before the Board:

Table 10-9-3.9.1 Development Review Summary							
Development Application	Pre-App Required	Neighborhood Meeting	Review and Decision		Public Notice	Expiration (10-9-3.8)	Applicable Standards
			Review/Recommend	Decide			
CDD = Community Development Director; PC = Planning Commission; CC = City Council; HPB = Historical Preservation Board; BOA = Board of Adjustment; BBoA = Building Board of Appeals; [] = Public Hearing Required							
Historic Preservation Applications							
Certificate of Appropriateness (Sec. 10-9-8.1)	✓		CDD	[HPB]	M Po	1 year	Chapter 8

 Pu = Published in newspaper 10 days prior to public hearing in accordance with Section 10-9-3.5
 Po = Sign posted on property 10 days prior to public hearing in accordance with Section 10-9-3.5
 M = Mailed notice to adjoining property owners or property owners within a specified distance of the subject property 10 days prior to public hearing in accordance with Section 10-9-3.5

Section 10-9-3.5 of the ULUC requires that any notice provided by mail, shall be provided through the United States Postal Service to all addresses, units, and property owners located within 700 feet of the property. If there are any homeowner’s or other owner associations within 700 feet of the property, then notification need only be sent to the association’s designee.

In accordance with the ULUC provisions regarding public notice, staff notified all addresses, units, and individual property owners and residents within 700 feet of the site at least ten (10) days in advance of the February 13, 2025 hearing date.

PROPERTY HISTORY:

- 1907/1911** Year of construction
- 1921** Building first subdivided into smaller units
- 2020** Penny Robin Dancewear moves out; all storefronts vacant
- 2023** COAs for exterior modifications approved to revitalize building (COA23-0005 and COA23-0007);
- 2024** Administrative COA approved for modifications to courtyard and rear elevation;
- 01/2025** Applicant reaches out to staff to discuss further modifications and applies for COA;

BACKGROUND:

The Assessor’s records indicate that the building was built in 1907, but the historical survey of the building notes that it was constructed in 1911. Regardless of the original construction date, the building was originally divided into four storefronts along W. Main St. with an additional storefront added in 1921. Most of these storefronts were retailers, including a grocery. The segment of the building addressed as 2630 W. Main St. was originally home of the Littleton Garage to service and sell automobiles. An addition was built between 1914-1921 to serve as a garage for the automobile service uses — this latter addition is currently addressed as 5729 & 5739 S. Curtice St. This addition resulted in the building have a u-shape and creating an interior courtyard, used primarily for parking and to service automobiles. The original building was brick and had a standard one-part commercial block composition type.



Figure 2: Historic photo of 2600 W. Main Street

In 2023, HPC approved removal of the 1970s additions to the buildings. The final approved design included the option of keeping the remaining brick or applying stucco to the building. Demolition of the 1970s façade revealed that much of the brick was missing or deteriorated. With this information, the applicant chose to go with the approved stucco option for the exterior cladding. A second COA was approved by HPC in 2023, finalizing the various storefront windows and doors. A third, administrative COA, was approved at the end of 2024 for changes to the alley and the addition of storefronts within the courtyard. The applicant reached out in January 2025 to discuss further modifications to the Curtice St façade.



Figure 3: Photo of Curtice St side of 2600 W Main St

In January 2025, Lynne Wasinger, Design Studio Architects, Inc., applied for a certificate of appropriateness on behalf of the property owner, Murphys Variety LLC, to modify the existing site. The proposal is to remove two proposed storefronts and replace it with a brick wall and single storefront door.

APPLICATION DETAIL

The application’s primary intent is to remove two previously approved storefronts on the Curtice Street side of the building. The affected portion of the building will be the two storefronts closest to the courtyard opening of the northern portion of the building along Curtice Street, outlined in red in Figure 4 below. Due to structural issues related to a basement stairwell and potential tenant needs, the applicant is requesting to remove these two storefronts, as highlighted in Figure 4, which will create a blank wall.



Figure 4: Previously Approved Curtice St. Façade. Affected storefronts outlined in red.

The proposed modification will infill one set of storefront windows with brick. The brick portion will be slightly inset and painted with a mural to create interest and a sense of identity for the tenant space.

Section 10-1-3.1.C.A of the ULUC allows for various treatments to minimize the amount of blank wall at the street level, as the requested removal is in response to an internal function (i.e. structural issues above-referenced). The mural is an approved blank wall treatment under Table 10-1-3.1.C Blank Wall Treatments of the ULUC. The brick portion of the façade is 14ft wide by 9ft-11 in. The top of the brick inset is in line with the other storefront windows on the elevation. Three, down cast lights are proposed to go above the mural. The second storefront to be removed included both windows and a door. The door will remain, but the surrounding windows will be removed. The door’s location is original to the building. A single downlit light will be placed above the door.

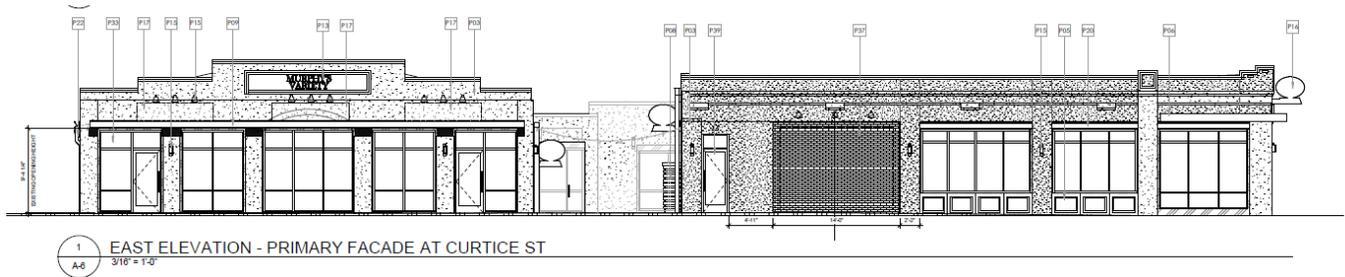


Figure 5: Proposed elevation, Curtice St. side of 2600 W. Main St.



Figure 11: 3-D Rendering of 2600 W Main St. with mural mock up

Prior to installation of the mural, the applicant will submit the design work to Planning staff for review. The mural design must meet all requirements of Table 10-1-3.1.C and Section 10-2-5.1.C.8. In addition to the requirements of the code, and to ensure preservation of the historic building, planning staff recommends the condition that the design mural cannot be incorporated or implanted into the building in such a manner as to physically distort or destroy the building. Further, the applicant has acknowledged and has agreed to maintain and preserve the mural with periodic cleaning, repairs, and repainting as needed in order that the mural design does not become an eyesore to its environment or a detriment. Planning staff recommends adding each of these items mentioned above as a note on the final plan set.

DECISION CRITERIA AND ANALYSIS:

Eligibility

Pursuant to Section 10-8-1.2 of the ULUC, prior to beginning work on a designated historic landmark or property in a Historic District, the property owner shall consult with the Director and submit materials for a certificate of appropriateness. Additionally, per Section 10-9-8.1(A) of the ULUC, the Certificate of Appropriateness “provides for the preservation of historic resources and establishes criteria for the proposed alterations to designated landmarks and buildings in historic districts.” 2600 W. Main Street is a contributing building in the Littleton Downtown Historic District, and as such any proposed work must be approved through a COA process.

Approval Criteria & Analysis

10-9-8.1(C). General Decision Criteria. A Certificate of Appropriateness may be approved, approved with conditions, or denied based on the following criteria:

1. ***Federal Standards.*** The proposed changes are in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, & Reconstructing Historic Buildings as adopted by the National Park Service:

Secretary of Interior Standards

Standard #1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

This building has served as a multi-tenant commercial space, and the application before HPC anticipates this continued use. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

The work under review with this COA will not include the removal of historic materials. The previously approved COA23-0005 allowed for the removal of the 1970s façade, which has been completed. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historic development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

The proposed changes do not create a false sense of historic development. The proposed door will be new but located in an existing door opening. The brick inset is located on a portion of the building that was primarily blank, except for a small window with an arched, brick lintel above. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

The proposed changes do not further remove any historic material. COA23-0005 approved the removal of the 1970s façade. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

No distinctive features, finishes, or construction techniques will be altered through this change. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive features, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

The repair or replacement of deteriorated historic features is not included in the application. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials.

The applicant is aware that no harsh treatments, such as sandblasting or corrosive chemicals may be used. The options before HPC in this application for a COA do not anticipate inclusion of any harsh treatments. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measure shall be undertaken.

There are no known archaeological resources on the property. No excavation is expected with these alterations. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #9. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

The proposed modifications will not destroy any historic materials that characterize the property. The inclusion of the brick inset negatively affects the rhythm and architectural features of the proposed storefronts along Curtice Street but seeks to mitigate that through the inclusion of the mural and utilizing the historic door opening. The mural will help provide a sense of identity, as well as, diminish the starkness of a blank wall along an activated street. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The proposed work does not constitute an addition. This standard appears to be met.

2. ***Littleton Design Standards and Guidelines.*** The proposed changes are in compliance with the adopted design standards and guidelines documents, such as the Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, as outlined in the Design Requirements section on the city's Envision Littleton webpage:

Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Design Guidelines

As a part of the Littleton Downtown Historic District, this application is subject to the *Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Design Guidelines*. These guidelines establish solutions and standards for the restoration, preservation, and treatment of historical buildings. The specific guidelines are separated into six categories: commercial facades and storefronts; windows; doors; roofs; building materials; cornices, moldings, and other architectural features. The Design Guidelines also establish solutions for additions to historic buildings, including commercial and residential properties and historic site features. Relevant guidelines to this proposal are outlined and evaluated below:

1) Commercial Facades and Storefronts

- 3.1 Preserve the character-defining elements of a traditional storefront.
 - (i) *This portion of the building did not historically have a traditional storefront. The proposal does retain the historic, single door opening.*
- 3.2 Repair an altered storefront to its original design.
 - (ii) *This façade did not have a storefront historically. The storefronts were located closer to Main Street. This portion of the building had a single door and small window located towards the upper portion of the façade.*
- 3.3 A contemporary interpretation of a traditional storefront may be considered.
 - (iii) *The previously approved storefronts were unable to be incorporated due to structural issues within the building. The width of the brick inset is similar to other storefronts and follows in line with the other proposed storefronts on the façade.*

Additionally, the mural seeks to create interest and diminish the starkness of a blank wall.

Window Replacement Design Guidelines

No historic windows will be replaced or affected by this proposal. As such, staff finds that the application is consistent with the intent of these guidelines as the proposed improvements will not alter, remove, or replace any historic windows that may exist.

- 3. *Original Features.* The proposed work preserves, rehabilitates, or reconstructs the original architectural features, and proposed new features are visually compatible with designated historic structure(s) located on the property in terms of design, finishes, material, scale, mass, and height.**

No historic features will be affected by this COA. The previous façade was approved to be removed under COA23-0005. The proposed changes retain a historic opening, and the proposed brick inset is in proportion with the façade and surrounding buildings. The inclusion of a mural will further provide interest and diminish the interruption in the rhythm of the storefronts along Curtice Street. This criterion appears to be met.

- 4. *Compatibility.* If property is in a designated historic district, the proposed work is visually compatible with the development on abutting properties and those on the same block. The HPC shall consider characteristics such as setbacks and building scale.**

Staff finds that the proposed work is compatible with the surrounding historic district. The proposed modifications are located in a portion of the building that was predominantly blank for much of its lifespan. It is not uncommon in the district for properties along the streets perpendicular to Main Street to feature larger expanses of solid or blank walls. To mitigate the shift from storefronts on the portions of the building located closer to Main Street to the rear portion of the building, which features a large storefront, a mural will be included on the brick inset. This criterion appears to be met.

- 5. *Character, Interest, and Value.* Aside from changes that do not require a Certificate of Appropriateness, as set out in paragraph B.3.a, above, the proposed work does not adversely affect the special character or historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value of a landmark or property in a historic district.**

Staff finds that the proposed work does not adversely affect the special character or historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value of the building. The proposed storefront door utilizes a historic opening and is in keeping with the other previously approved doors. The proposed brick inset with the mural accommodates the structural issues within the building, while providing a point of interest along the façade. This criterion appears to be met.

- 6. *Color and Materials.* The architectural style, arrangement, textures, paint colors especially if applied to brick or stone, and arrangement of colors and materials used on existing and proposed structures are compatible with the character of the existing landmark or property in a historic district; and**

Staff finds that the exterior colors and materials, and their arrangement, are compatible with the

character of the existing building. This criterion appears to be met.

7. ***Exterior Features.*** The proposed work preserves, enhances, or restores, and does not damage or destroy the exterior architectural features of a historical landmark or property in a historic district.

Staff finds that this COA application will not negatively affect the exterior architectural features of the historic building, as COA23-0005 approved the removal of the 1970s façade additions. The proposed work will not damage or destroy any primary features, like the cornice that will be repaired and maintained as close as possible to the original building (approval of treatment for the cornice was provided under COA23-0005). This criterion appears to be met.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION OPTIONS:

Pursuant to Section 10-9-8.1.E, the HPC shall approve, approve with conditions, or deny the certificate of appropriateness. The board may also issue an order to continue the application process if the board determines that additional information is necessary to make a decision.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff finds that the Certificate of Appropriateness for 2600 W. Main St. does meet all the approval criteria in the ULUC Section 10-9-8.1. Planning staff recommends approval, with the following condition(s) on HPC Resolution 02-2025:

- 1) The applicant shall provide a note on the final plan set that the mural design cannot be incorporated or implanted into the building in such a manner as to physically distort or destroy the building; and
- 2) The applicant shall provide a note on the final plan set acknowledging and agreeing to maintain and preserving the mural with periodic cleaning, repairs, and repainting as needed in order that the mural design remains in good and workmanlike condition.

Please note that if HPC approves Resolution 02-2025 as stated above with the listed conditions, then this approval will supersede COA24-0007.