Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	ID# 16-204	**Name:**	
Type:	Report	**Status:**	Passed
File created:	9/2/2016	**In control:**	Historical Preservation Commission
On agenda:	9/28/2016	**Final action:**	9/28/2016
Title:	Sommers Oil Service Station / Columbine on Main COA Application		
Sponsors:			
Indexes:			
Code sections:			
Attachments:	1. Attachment 1 - Photos, 2. Attachment 2 - COA Application for Columbine on Main at Sommers Oil, 3. Attachment 3 - Drawings - 100%, 4. Attachment 4 - Historic Survey		

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
9/28/2016	1	Historical Preservation Commission		

Agenda Date: September 28, 2016

Subject:
Sommers Oil Service Station / Columbine on Main COA Application

Presented By: Dennis Swain, Senior Planner

POLICY QUESTION

Does the proposed project, which includes alterations to the roof and to the south and west facades of the Sommers Oil Service Station, at 2299 West Main Street, meet the criteria for a Certificate of Historic Appropriateness?

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the city's Historic Preservation Code (Chapter 6 of Title 4 of the City Code) is to promote the public health, safety and welfare through:

1. The protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of buildings, structures, sites and areas that are reminders of past eras, events and persons important in local, state or national history, or which provide significant examples of architectural styles of the past, or which are unique and irreplaceable assets to the city and its neighborhoods, or which provide for this and future generations examples of the physical surroundings in which past generations lived;
2. The development and maintenance of appropriate settings and environments for such buildings and structures, and in such sites and areas;
3. The enhancement of property values, the stabilization of neighborhoods and areas of the city, the increase of economic and financial benefits to the city and its inhabitants, and the promotion of tourist trade and interest;
4. The preservation and enhancement of a city of varied architectural styles, reflecting the distinct phases of its history: cultural, social, economic, political and architectural;

5. The enrichment of human life in its spiritual, educational and cultural dimensions by fostering knowledge of the living heritage of the past; and
6. The provision of educational opportunities and to increase the appreciation of Littleton's history.

The Sommers Oil Service Station was one of the original properties in the Main Street Historic District, which was created in 2005. The 1997 Historic Building Survey of the Littleton Townsite of 1890 (See Attachment #4) identifies the property as significant because it 1) represents a type, period, or method of construction; 2) is associated with significant events or patterns; and 3) contributes to a historic district.

The building has been determined to be a "contributing property" within the Main Street Historic District. A "contributing property" is defined as:

A site, structure, or object within a historic district that is determined to be historically significant. It is so because it was: a) present during the period of significance and possesses sufficient integrity to convey its history, or b) independently meets the criteria for landmark designation. A contributing property may have experienced some degree of alteration from its original design, yet retains sufficient building fabric to still be considered contributing.

Since the building's inclusion into the Main Street Historic District, its use has been retail sales and service, and a restaurant.

The Columbine Country Club has leased the Sommers Oil Service Station building at 2299 West Main Street for use as a temporary off-site dining facility while their clubhouse is being rebuilt. Because until now the Sommers Oil Service Station has had neither a full commercial kitchen nor all improvements associated with a commercial kitchen, the country club has undertaken a major renovation of the building.

The initial issued building permit was for the renovation on the interior of the building, per the building code, the improvements to establish a full kitchen do affect the exterior of the building, particularly the roof. So while the original structure of the Sommers Oil Service Station still remains, the new equipment on the roof is readily visible from Main Street to the south of the building, from Bega Park to the south across Main Street, from the bridge across the railroad to the east, from the RTD parking lot and Rio Grande Avenue to the east, and from the sidewalks along Main Street and Rio Grande to the east and south.

The changes to the exterior of the building, including the roof, are:

1) The addition of HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) and other rooftop equipment, including the associated ducting and support structures, necessary to adequately vent the commercial kitchen and support the cooling and heating systems for the full service restaurant
2) The relocation of the gas line and refinishing the long-closed-off side door, both on the west facade
3) A move and refashioning of the patio bar

With this application request, Columbine Country Club is seeking a Certificate of Historic Appropriateness (COA) to allow the alterations to the roof through screening in order to create a full kitchen within the building. The majority of the exterior work on the building is already done.

STAFF ANALYSIS

WHEN A COA IS REQUIRED:

The City Code, Section 4-6-14(A)1, "Certificate of Historic Appropriateness, identifies when construction will be reviewed by the Historical Preservation Board:

A Certificate of Historic Appropriateness shall be obtained from the board, in conformance with any applicable adopted design guidelines, and in addition to any other permit or other approval required by this code for any designated historic landmark structures or any property in a designated historic district for (a) Demolition, new construction, addition or modification…on commercial structures, of or to the front or side façade of any principal structure.

WHO REVIEWS A COA APPLICATION:
§4-6-14(A) 2, outlines when an application for alteration via a COA application is heard by the Historical Preservation Board and when it is staff-level reviewed. *The Director will issue a certificate of historic appropriateness for any designated historic landmark structure or any property in a historic district when the criteria in this chapter have been met for any:*

> §4-6-14(A)2(c) states: *Changes in roofing materials, architectural features, including, but not limited to, shutters, awnings, cornices, antennas, satellite dishes, painting of previously unpainted surfaces, wind generators or electrical exterior light fixtures.*
>
> *Except when the work will have a significant visual impact from a public right of way, then a certificate of historic appropriateness shall be obtained from the historical preservation board.*

The initial COA submitted by the applicant indicated that the work would not have a "significant visual impact", but as construction has proceeded, the magnitude of the work exceeded the original application and the visual impact has proven to be significant. Therefore, the COA application is to be heard by the Historical Preservation Board.

CHRONOLOGY OF THIS APPLICATION:

- February 16 - Building official received an application for a building permit that indicated minimal visual impact to the exterior of the building
- April 11 - Building official approved a building permit for the project as submitted
- April 14 - HP Staff approved a staff-level COA for the project as submitted
- May 11 - Building official and HP staff met with the applicant team on site to review work that was not included in the original application
- May 11 - HP staff pulled the staff-level COA for the project and informed the applicant they needed to submit corrected drawings and apply for a board-level COA
- July 22 - Building official issued a stop work order for the project until the City received both corrected drawings that reflected work not included in the original drawings and an application for a board-level COA
- July 27 - HP staff received an initial application for a board-level COA
- July 28 - Building official released the stop work order to allow **inside** work to continue
- August 22 - HP staff received a final COA application that reflects staff comments

- September 28 - HPB public hearing on the COA

The original use of the building was a gas service station. The code allows adaptive reuse of historic buildings. The definition of adaptive reuse is as follows:

ADAPTIVE REUSE: The reuse of an existing structure for a purpose other than its original intended use; reuse should maintain the exterior architectural feature(s) of the structure.

The code permits contributing properties to have some degree of alteration from its original design, as long as the alternation retains "sufficient building fabric to still be considered contributing." The applicant is requesting the board recognize the functional needs to operate a full-service restaurant, and seeks a COA to minimize the visual impact of the rooftop and other exterior construction undertaken for Columbine on Main to use the Sommers Oil Service Station.

CRITERIA FOR APPROVING A COA FOR A NON-LANDMARK STRUCTURE IN A DISTRICT:
Per Section 4-6-14 (C), the Historical Preservation Board will issue a COA for any proposed work on a historic landmark or any property in a historic district when these four criteria are met:

COA CRITERION #1: HISTORIC FEATURES
The proposed work would not detrimentally alter, destroy or adversely affect any architectural or landscape feature which contributes to its original historic designation.

The project will be in conformance with this criterion.

The original building footprint and structure remain intact. The applicant has added rooftop equipment and is proposing screening, as well as painting the rooftop equipment to minimize its impact. Screening materials will include similar colors and roofing materials used on the existing building.

Using colors and roofing materials that match the existing structure appears to minimize the projections of the roof mounted kitchen-related equipment.

COA CRITERION #2: DESIGN GUIDELINES
Is otherwise in conformance with any applicable adopted design guidelines.

The project will be in conformance with this criterion.

Because the Sommers Oil Service Station is a contributing building in the Main Street Historic District, the applicable adopted design guidelines are the *Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Design Guidelines*, which were adopted July 6, 2011. These guidelines provide a comprehensive set of preservation guidelines for alterations to contributing structures within the District.

With the proposed screening and other remedies, the project can be in conformance with the Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Guidelines. Four of these guidelines are particularly relevant.

1) On page 44 of the Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Guidelines, "Treatment of a Historic Roof", guideline 3.27 states: "*Preserve the original roof form of a historic structure"*. Despite the addition of the new HVAC equipment and the proposed addition of a parapet on the flat roofed section

of the building, the original roof form of the building will remain and will be readily visible.

2) On page 53 of the guidelines, the second sentence of the lead paragraph for the section labeled "Solutions for Additions to Historic Buildings" states: "*An addition should be compatible with the primary structure and not detract from one's ability to interpret its historic character*". The screening and other remedies will help make the addition of HVAC equipment to the roof compatible with the primary structure and help it not detract from one's ability to interpret the historic character of the building.

3) On page 53, "Solutions for Additions to Historic Buildings", guideline 3.54 states: *Minimize the visual impacts of…rooftop devices*. The screening and other remedies will help minimize the visual impacts of the new rooftop equipment.

4) Also on page 53, "Solutions for Additions to Historic Buildings", guideline 3.54 states: "Minimize the visual impacts of skylights and other rooftop devices". The screening and other remedies will help minimize the visual impacts of the new rooftop devices.

Recommendations for meeting the design guidelines 1-4, stated above:

To minimize the visual impact of the new rooftop HVAC, other mechanical items, and their supporting construction (e.g. the platform and dormers), the following specific items must be done to ensure compliance with the Main Street Historic District Guidelines:

a. The platform and dormer should use the same, or similar, building materials as those historically used for the building.
b. The sides of the platform and dormer should be painted grey or a similar color that matches the primary color of the roof shingles to minimize their visibility.
c. All silver-colored equipment and ductwork should be painted grey or a similar color that matches the primary color of the roof shingles to minimize their visibility.
d. Opaque screening should be added around all rooftop mechanical equipment and ductwork to minimize its visibility and to create a second, set-back, parapet around the two exposed sides (south and east) of the flat roof. The one exception to screening is the large silver-colored exhaust fan on the platform above the sloping roof of the original building. Per the city's building code, that fan must retain a large area around it to retain its effectiveness and safety, so screening is impractical and would cause a larger rooftop structure. As with the other equipment, however, the large fan should be painted grey or a similar color that matches the main color of the roof shingles to minimize its visibility.

To minimize the visual impact of the relocated gas line, the following should be done:

a. Repaint the gas line to match the wall color.

Consistent with these recommendations, the applicant is proposing screening and painting the rooftop equipment and gas line to minimize impact. With these changes, the project will meet the design guidelines.

COA CRITIERION #3: PROPERTY COMPATIBILITY

The proposed work is visually compatible with designated historic structures on the property in terms of design, finish, materials, scale, mass and height.

The project will be in conformance with this criterion.

While there are no other historic structures on the property, the applicant is proposing screening and painting the rooftop equipment to minimize its impact. Screening materials will include similar colors and roofing materials used on the existing building. The footprint and roof of the structure remain intact. The roof projection does not exceed the height of the existing building roofline.

COA CRITERION #4: DISTRICT COMPATIBILITY.
When the site is within a historic district, the board must find that the proposed work is visually compatible with the development on adjacent properties.

The project will be in conformance with this criterion.

The applicant is proposing screening and painting the rooftop equipment to minimize its impact. Screening the equipment will lessen the impact and allow the property to retain its historical character while affording modern use of the building with a full kitchen. The proposed changes to this property appear to be compatible with the older buildings to the north.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Historic Appropriateness for the Sommers Oil Service Station, at 2299 West Main Street, conditional upon the applicant following the recommendations of the staff and board for minimizing the visual impacts of the changes to the exterior of the building.

PROPOSED MOTION:
I move to approve the Certificate of Historic Appropriateness for the Sommers Oil Service Station, at 2299 West Main Street, conditional upon the applicant minimizing the visual impacts of the changes to the exterior of the building:

1) For the platform and dormers:
    - Use the building materials originally used on the building or, if that is not possible or optimum, use materials that match the original closely
    - Paint the visible sides grey or a similar color that matches the primary color of the roof shingles

2) For all silver-colored equipment and ductwork:
    - Paint them grey or a similar color that matches the primary color of the roof shingles

3) For all rooftop mechanical equipment and ductwork:
    - Construct an opaque screen around all rooftop equipment and
    - Place the screening so that it becomes a single opaque screen around all of the rooftop equipment, or as much of the equipment as possible, rather than a series of screens around smaller areas of equipment. The screen should function as a secondary parapet and should be just high enough to screen the rooftop equipment from Main Street, the sidewalk along Main Street, Bega Park, and Rio Grande Avenue.

4) For the large exhaust fan on the platform above the sloping roof of the original building:
    - By code, that fan must retain a large area around it to retain its effectiveness and safety, so screening is impractical.
    - As with the other equipment, however, paint the large fan grey or a similar color that matches

the primary color of the roof shingles

5) For the gas line on the west wall:
    - The gas line has been repainted to match the blue west wall rather than black to match the gutters

The foregoing approval is based on the findings that, with the above conditions, the proposed work:

(1) does not detrimentally alter, destroy or adversely affect any architectural or landscape feature which contributes to the original historic designation;

(2) is in conformance with any applicable adopted design guidelines;

(3) is visually compatible with designated historic structures located on the property in terms of design, finish, material, scale, mass and height; and

(4) is visually compatible with the development on adjacent properties.