



Legislation Text

File #: HPB Resolution 07-2016, **Version:** 4

Agenda Date: April 17, 2017

Subject:

Resolution to approve a COA for the replacement of windows at the Batschelet Building, 2565 - 2579 West Main Street

Presented By: Dennis Swain, Senior Planner
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APPLICATION SUMMARY:

Project Name:	Resolution Approving a COA for the Batschelet Building
Historic Name:	Batschelet Building
Application Type:	Board-Level COA
Location:	2565 - 2579 West Main Street
Applicable Design Guidelines:	Historic Preservation Design Guidelines
Applicant:	Rees F. Davis, Jr.,
Owner:	Mainstreet Partners 1, LLC, by Rees F. Davis
Project Description:	Replace five windows facing Main Street on the second floor of the building.
Staff Recommendation:	Approval, with conditions as identified in the below analysis

PROCESS:

This is a third continuation of a December 19, 2016, public hearing. The board first continued the December public hearing until its January 18, 2017, meeting so the applicant could respond to the board's request for additional information about the design and proven durability of the proposed fiberglass replacement windows.

In response to the board's request, the applicant has provided additional information, which is attached to this staff communication. The applicant has included 1) photos of the historic Bruce Curtis (Museum Collections) Building on the CU Boulder campus, which has Alpen fiberglass replacement windows of a size and design similar to those the applicant proposes using for the Batschelet Building; 2) a summary of a case study installation of Alpen fiberglass windows in a Historic Structure in Palo Alto, California; 3) a data sheet for Alpen 725 Series windows; 4) a quote sheet for Alpen 725 Series Fiberglass Single Hung Venting 57.25 x 94.25 windows; and 5) window details, sections, and dimensions for Alpen 725 Series windows. The applicant has indicated that they will bring their contractor to the public hearing to provide information and answer the board's questions.

The applicant asked for a second continuation from January 18, 2017, until the board's March 20, 2017, meeting because he was going to be out of town on the dates of both the January and February board

meetings. Subsequently, the applicant asked for a third continuation of the public hearing from the March 20, 2017, board meeting until the April 17, 2017, board meeting because he again was going to be out of town on the date of the board meeting.

Per Section 4-6-14(A)l(a), A COA shall be obtained from the Historical Preservation Board (HPB), 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 structure or any property in a designated historic district for: Demolition, new construction, addition or modification, including ...windows of or to the front or side facade of any principal structure.

The Batschelet Building is both a designated historic landmark structure and in the Main Street Historic District. The windows for which replacement is being proposed are on the second floor of the front facade of the building. Because the Batschelet Building is a contributing building in the district and a landmark structure, the applicable adopted design guidelines are the Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Design Guidelines.

Staff review and HPB (“board”) review are the only two steps in the COA review process. If the board approves the COA application and the applicant meets all other city requirement, then the applicant can be issued a building permit for the approved project. If the board attaches condition(s) to the approval, a building permit will not be issued unless the condition(s) has/have been met. If the board denies the COA application, a building perm it will not be issued for the project.

LOCATION:

The Batschelet Building is located on the north side of Main Street, between Nevada and Curtice Streets, as shown on the vicinity map, below.



*Location Map of the Batschelet Building
2565 - 2579 West Main Street,
Between Curtice Street on the west and Nevada Street on the east*

BACKGROUND:

Built in 1908, the Batschelet Building, is representative of early twentieth century commercial construction in Littleton. It is both an individual landmark and a contributing property in the Main Street Historic District. The five windows on the second floor of the building (see the photo attachment) are large; wood; heavy; single-hung, i.e. the bottom window goes up but the top window does not come down; and single-pane. The windows are not original to the building but were part of the first historic restoration of the building, which replaced the smaller windows that had been installed during an earlier remodeling, with windows that matched the windows that appear in a 1917 photograph. The applicant is a long-term owner of this building and reports 1) their southern exposure to the sun and weather, combined with their age, make the windows extremely difficult to maintain; currently, at least two of them will not open safely and several have deteriorated to the point that they are coming apart. 2) The ideal new window would be easier to operate and maintain, and be more durable given the exposure to the sun and precipitation.

The Batschelet Building was designated as a Littleton Landmark in 1994. In the landmark application, it is noted that: "...its 14 foot ceiling height on the second floor and wide staircase attest to its early use as an opera house and meeting hall." It goes on to say: "The building is one of the finest remaining turn-of-the century structures in Downtown Littleton. Its second floor brick facade, overhanging eaves with decorative brackets and lintels on the frieze are intact and in good condition. The restoration of the first floor storefront will complement the Coors Building, one block to the east, and the group of six buildings across the street."

Following its landmark designation, the owners proceeded to reconstruct and restore the first floor exterior storefront based on a 1917 photo. The frame and cedar shake awning and store fronts were removed and replaced with a glass, wood and metal storefront facade similar to the original. At that time, the five upper floor windows were replaced with full-size, wood, sash, windows to match the original.

Following this first restoration project, COA's were approved for three more projects:

- 2005: Addition of two new windows to the west elevation, second floor. Windows were to substantially match the size, configuration, design and materials of existing second floor windows on the front facade of the building."
- 2005: Added a steel staircase at the rear of the building from an existing second floor doorway to the parking lot.
- 2012: Rehabilitation of the street level storefronts and creation of an outdoor patio for the restaurant (now Smoking Fins).

CERTIFICATE OF HISTORIC APPROPRIATENESS ANALYSIS:

Per Section 4-6-14 (C) of the Littleton City Code, the Historic Preservation Board shall issue a COA for any proposed work on a historic landmark or any property in a historic district when the following five criteria are met. Using the information provided by the applicant, staff has reviewed the proposed project for its ability to meet these criteria:

CRITERION 1.

The proposed work would not detrimentally alter, destroy or adversely affect any architectural or landscape feature which contributes to its original historic designation.

Staff comment:

The proposed project would replace the existing, non-historic, windows with new windows. Although the existing windows are not historic, efforts were made at the time of the original restoration to match the size, materials, single-hung design, and mullion and framing dimensions of the original windows, as they appeared in a historic photo. Optimally, per the design guidelines, if replacement windows are approved, they would be wood on the exterior and interior, as were the original windows. Whether the windows are constructed of wood or of an alternative material, the size, single-hung design, and mullion and framing dimensions should match those of the historic windows. Any alternative material, in this case fiberglass, must be judged on its durability and its ability to match the design and dimensions of the historic windows. At the first public hearing, the board was concerned that the vinyl windows proposed by the applicant would not have the durability nor the ability to match the design details of the original wood windows. At the board's suggestion, the applicant is proposing to use fiberglass windows, which would have greater durability, the additional stability necessary because of the size of the windows, and the ability to match the design details of the original wood windows. The applicant, again at the board's suggestion, has explored the use of fiberglass windows in similar conditions. The applicant has included photographs of the windows in a historic building on the CU Boulder campus as an example of a comparable application.

CRITERION 2.

Is otherwise in conformance with any applicable adopted design guidelines.

The applicable design guidelines are the Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Design Guidelines ("Design Guidelines"), which describe design guidelines as conveying "general policies about the rehabilitation of existing structures, additions and site work. They do not dictate solutions; instead, they define a range of appropriate responses to a variety of specific design issues. They provide a direction for treatment of historic buildings, alterations to other existing structures, and the design of additions and new building."

The relevant section, Windows, is on pages 40 - 42 of the Design Guidelines:

Treatment of Historic Windows

The character-defining features of a historic window, its distinct materials and its placement should be preserved.

The guidelines in this section are:

- 3.14 Preserve the functional and decorative features of a historic window.
 - Repair frames and sashes rather than replacing them, whenever possible.
 - See the diagrams on page 41 of the design guidelines.
- 3.15 Preserve the position, number and arrangement of historic windows in a building wall.
 - On primary facades, enclosing a historic window opening is inappropriate, as is adding a new window opening.
 - Greater flexibility in installing new windows may be considered on secondary and rear walls. (See page 34 of the design guidelines for more information on flexibility.)
- 3.16 Preserve the historic ratio of window openings to solid wall on a primary facade.
 - Significantly increasing the amount of glass on a character-defining facade will negatively affect the integrity of the structure.

3.17 Preserve the size and proportion of a historic window opening on a primary facade.

- Reducing an original opening to accommodate a smaller window or increasing it to receive a larger window is inappropriate.

Staff comment:

Although the proposal is to replace the existing, non-historic, frames and sashes, the proposed changes to the windows on the second floor of the Batschelet Building are substantially consistent with the guidelines in this section.

- Although the existing windows are not historic, the existing windows preserve the historic position, materials, number, and arrangement of the historic windows as they appeared in a historic photo.
- Similarly, the proposal would preserve the historic position, number and arrangement of the windows.
- Historic window openings would not be closed, new openings would not be added, nor would openings be reduced or enlarged to accommodate a different dimensioned window.
- The historic ratio of window openings to solid wall on a primary facade would be preserved. The amount of glass on the front facade would not be increased.

Energy Conservation in Windows

Historic windows can be repaired more easily than often thought. They were built with well-seasoned wood and other durable materials. Repair and adding weather stripping usually will be more energy efficient and much less expensive. Substantial amounts of information are available that document the energy saving benefits of retaining and repairing a historic window, rather than replacing it.

The guidelines in this section are:

3.18 Enhance the energy efficiency of an existing historic window, rather than replace it. Use these measures:

- *Add weather stripping around the window frame.*
- *Install a storm window.*
- *Install an insulated window shade.*
- *Also see the sustainability guidelines on page 59 of the design guidelines.*

Staff comment:

The proposal is to replace the existing, non-historic, frames and sashes with new energy-efficient windows, rather than enhancing the energy efficiency of the existing, non-historic windows. The new windows would be double-paned, rather than the existing single paned, and would include new weather stripping.

Options for Replacing a Window

A replacement should match the original as closely as possible. When considering replacing or altering a window, evaluate its condition, significance and location. In some cases such work on a secondary wall may be more acceptable. See page 34 for more information on flexibility in facade treatments.

The guidelines in this section include:

3.19 *Match a replacement window to the original in its design.*

- *If the original is double-hung, then the replacement window also should be double-hung, or appear to be so. Also match the number and position of glass panes.*
- *Matching the original design is particularly important on key character-defining facades.*

3.20 *Use materials in a replacement window that appear similar to the original.*

- *Using the same material as the original is preferred, especially on character-defining facades. However, a substitute material may be considered if the appearance will match the original in dimension, profile and finish.*
 - *An alternative material should have demonstrated durability in the local climate.*
 - *The glass should be clear. Metallic and reflective finishes are inappropriate. In some instances colored or tinted glass may be appropriate in commercial storefront transoms or residential windows.*
- 3.21 *Match, as closely as possible, the profile of the sash and its components to that of the original window.*
- *A historic window has a distinct profile, which should be reflected in a replacement. (See diagram on page 41).*
- 3.22 *Convey as closely as possible the character of historic sash divisions in a new window.*
- *Muntins that divide a window into smaller panes of glass should be genuine on key facades and other highly visible places.*
 - *Snap-in muntins located on the outside of a window may be used in secondary locations, but should have a similar depth and shadow line.*
 - *Strips of material located between panes of glass to simulate muntins are inappropriate.*

Staff comment:

As proposed, the new windows would match the original in its design.

- Although the new windows would use a substitute material, they would match the appearance of the original in dimension, profile and finish.
- The substitute material is proposed because it has demonstrated a superior durability in the local climate.
- The applicant has provided examples of historic buildings with replacement windows that match those proposed for the Batschelet Building. Photos of those windows are attached to this communication.
- The glass would be clear, although a slightly colored or tinted glass may be considered by the board.

CRITERION 3.

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

Staff comment:

This criterion is not applicable to the proposed work as there are no other designated historic structures on this property.

CRITERION 4.

When the subject site is within a historic district, the board must find that the proposed work is visually compatible with the development on adjacent properties.

Staff comment:

The proposed replacement of five windows on the second floor facade of the building would be visually compatible with the development on adjacent properties. Specifically, the second floor windows on the Lilley Building, immediately to the east of the Batschelet Building, were approved with an alternative material. Further, the five replacement windows would be compatible with those in adjacent properties in terms of design, finish, scale, mass, and height.

CRITERION 5.

In the case of partial demolitions, the board must find that the:

- a. *Partial demolition is required for the renovation, restoration or rehabilitation of the structure and*
- b. *Impacts on the historic importance and architectural integrity of the structure/s located on the property have been mitigated to the greatest extent possible.*

Staff comment:

This condition is not applicable because there is no demolition included with the proposal.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff finds that, in compliance with Section 4-6-14(C) of the Littleton City Code, the proposed Certificate of Historic Appropriateness for the Batschelet Building at 2565 - 2579 West Main Street meets the criteria for approval. Staff, therefore, recommends approval of HPB Resolution 07-2016, with the stated conditions, approving the Certificate of Historic Appropriateness for the Batschelet Building at 2565 - 2579 West Main Street.

PROPOSED MOTION:

The historical preservation board may take any of the following actions on the Resolution: approve; approve with conditions; continue to a date certain; or deny. A sample motion is provided for each option.

Motion to Approve and/if Necessary, with Conditions

I move to APPROVE HPB Resolution 07-2016, concerning a Certificate of Historic Appropriateness for the Batschelet Building at 2565 - 2579 West Main Street, [with the following condition(s):]

Note: If conditions are necessary, include them here:

- 1.
- 2.

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 the Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation 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;

Motion to Continue to a Date Certain

I move to continue the public hearing on HPB Resolution 07-2016, concerning a Certificate of Historic Appropriateness for the Batschelet Building at 2565 - 2579 West Main Street to _____ (insert date) in order to _____.

Motion to Deny

I move to DENY HPB Resolution 07-2016, concerning a Certificate of Historic Appropriateness for the Batschelet Building at 2565 - 2579 West Main Street. The foregoing denial is based on the findings that the proposed work:

NOTE: Identify criterion or criteria not met and adjust motion accordingly:

- (1) does not [does] detrimentally alter, destroy or adversely affect any architectural or landscape feature which contributes to the original historic designation;
- (2) is [is not] in conformance with the Littleton Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines;
- (3) is [is not] visually compatible with designated historic structures located on the property in terms of design, finish, material, scale, mass and height; and
- (4) is [is not] visually compatible with the development on adjacent properties.