



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 430 W Gilman Street
Application Type: Major Façade Alterations in the Downtown Core
UDC is an Approving Body
Legistar File ID #: [88343](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Nikki Yuan, Haven

Project Description: The applicant is proposing major exterior alterations for an existing building in the Downtown Core (DC) zoning district, including painting masonry on a street-facing elevation and installing tile on the storefront.

Approval Standards: The Urban Design Commission is an **approving body** on this request. Section 28.074(4)b, MGO states that:

"All new buildings and additions that are less than twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet and are not approved pursuant to (a) above, as well as all major exterior alterations to any building shall be approved by the Urban Design Commission based on the design standards in Sec. 28.071(3), if applicable, and the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines."

Project Background: This project is before the UDC as a result of a Building Inspection compliance case as the exterior alterations that are the subject of this request have been completed without the necessary review and approval as noted above.

The role of the Commission in this case is to determine whether the exterior alterations can be found to meet the applicable review and approval criteria and design guidelines. Staff also notes that the UDC is not required to approve any of the completed alterations. Staff have discussed this with the applicant noting the possibility that the building will need to be restored to the original condition.

Related Zoning Information: The project is zoned Downtown Core (DC) zone. Generally, and in summary, the design-related zoning standards outlined in the DC zone district, include, but are not limited to those that speak to building entrance orientation, façade articulation, height, fenestration, and materials.

Staff notes that with regard to zoning compliance, the installed faux-wood porcelain tile is not listed as an allowable building material. Under the Zoning Code, the UDC does not have the ability approve a variance to allow this material. Staff note, however, that the application of this tile did not change any openings, but rather was placed on existing walls.

Downtown Urban Design Guidelines: The project site is located within the Downtown Plan planning area within the State Street neighborhood and in the DC zone. As such, the [Downtown Urban Design Guidelines](#) are applicable in the design and details of exterior alterations and additions to existing buildings, and new development. As noted in the guidelines' purpose statement, *"The guidelines were developed to ensure that new buildings, and additions and alterations to existing building are compatible on a city, neighborhood, and block level, have an engaging pedestrian orientation, and are designed to reflect the use of the structure."*

More specifically, in the Commission's consideration of this item, staff refers the Commission to those guidelines that speak to materials being appropriate for urban environments, durable and high quality, as well as complementary to context and architecture (refer to page 15 of the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines).

Summary of Design Considerations

Below are images of the subject building, showing the previous and current conditions.



Previous Condition – Before Current Modifications



Current Condition – With Modifications

Staff requests that the UDC review the proposed exterior building alterations and provide feedback based on the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines as it relates to the following design considerations:

- **Masonry - Painting.** As indicated on the proposed elevation drawings, the applicant requests approval for painting the existing masonry. The proposed paint is an “interior flat matte” paint versus a paint that would be more appropriate for an exterior application, especially as it relates to masonry (i.e., stain, or latex).

In addition, staff are unaware of any facade preparations related to washing, priming, sealing, anti-graffiti treatment, etc., as it relates to ensuring the success and longevity of the proposed painting, or continued graffiti removal efforts, which were noted as a concern in the applicant's letter of intent.

Staff notes that in past practice the UDC has raised concern related to painting unpainted masonry and has encouraged alternatives to painting masonry, like a stain or coating, especially on street-facing elevations.

Staff requests the UDC review and make findings related to the proposed painting, especially as it relates to those Downtown Urban Design Guidelines that speak to durability and longevity of materials, as well as maintaining compatibility with context and design. As such, consideration should be given to the extents of the painting, including termination points, as well as how it impacts the architectural design and detailing which is reflected in the image above taken from Streetview 2019 prior to the painting.

- **Materials – Porcelain Tile.** As noted above, the applicant requests approval of the installation of a faux wood Casamia porcelain tile. As noted above, the porcelain tile is not a permitted building material in the Zoning Code and the UDC does not have the ability to grant an approval or variance for that material. However, the UDC could advise on whether the intended design aesthetic is appropriate and an alternate material that could be used to replicate the effect.