STAFF BRIEF

This document is the staff’s comparison of the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures and Districts, the Landmark Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 30, Revised Municipal Code) and other applicable adopted area guidelines as applied to the proposed application. It is intended to provide guidance during the commission’s deliberation of the proposed application. Guidelines are available at www.denvergov.org/preservation

Project: #2019-COA-355*
LDDRC Meeting: December 5, 2019
Address: 1637 Blake Street
Staff: Brittany Bryant
Year structure built: n/a – Vacant lot (Period of Significance: 1860-1941)
Applicant: SA+R

Past LDDRC Action:
Meeting Date: April 11, 2019
Description: Infill – Phase I: Mass, Form and Context
Motion by M. Coughlin: I move to deny application #2019-COA-096 for the Phase I: Mass, Form, and Context at 1637 Blake Street, per design guidelines 4.1-5.3 related to New Buildings, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report.
Second: R. Falkenberg
Vote: Unanimous in favor (5-0-0), motion carries

Meeting Date: June 6, 2019
Description: Infill – Phase I: Mass, Form, and Context
Motion by T. Salgado: I move to conditionally approve application #2019-COA-194 for the Phase I: Mass, Form, and Context at 1637 Blake Street, per design guidelines related to New Buildings, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report with the condition that the articulation and detail supporting standard 5.3.1, really represent a distinctive top to both the larger and smaller component of the buildings, further defining the base, middle, top and supporting the vertical proportions of the fenestration.
Second: B. Gibson
Vote: Unanimous in favor (5-0-0), motion carries.

Meeting Date: September 19, 2019
Description: Infill – Phase II: Design Details
Motion by S. Weil: I move to approve application #2019-COA-355 for the Phase II: Design Details at 1637 Blake Street, per design guidelines related to New Buildings and guidelines related to All Buildings, Design Guidelines for Lower Downtown Streetscapes, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report.
Second B. Gibson
Friendly Amendment by H. Vasquez Johnson: add the following conditions to the motion: 1. the stucco material on alley elevation be applied to a cement board per the presented testimony from the applicant; 2. window types A, C and E, be provided with a true divided light per presented testimony from the applicant; 3. interior elevations of the center light well be included in the final documentation to staff.
Amendment accepted by motioner and seconder.
Vote: Unanimous in favor (6-0-0), motion passes
Project Scope Under Review:
Infill Construction – Phase II: Design Details Revisions for a new mixed-use hotel building

Footprint: 125' X 123'      Height: 84'-9"

Materials:
Alley elevation cladding: CMU basalite ground face block in “605R” on the first floor and acrylic polymer-based stucco system on floors 2-8, see page 51 and 57-58

Staff summary:
The applicant, SA+R, is requesting additional Commission review of the proposed alley material on a new hotel development at 1637 Blake Street.

At the September 19, 2019 Lower Downtown Design Review Commission, the commission conditionally approved the Design Detail submittal for the new hotel with the condition that the stucco material on the alley elevation be applied to a cement board. The applicant has perused the feasibility of applying the proposed material to cement board and would like to further discuss the products application and composition with the Board.

The applicant has provided to staff further documentation to meet the Commission’s other conditions verifying window types A, C, and E will have a true divided light and the interior elevations of the center light well. These items do not require further Commission review and can be reviewed administratively by staff.

The building will be clad in a natural stone on the primary façade, wrapping onto portions of the east and west elevations. The upper story setback clad is a matte finish metal panel. CMU block is proposed on the first floor of the alley with an acrylic stucco above. The center light well will be clad in the approved natural stone on the north and south elevations and the approved matte finish metal panel on the east and west elevations. All mechanical equipment will be screened with a metal panel. The storefronts will be constructed of metal with metal knee wall and details. All windows will be aluminum clad wood.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guideline</th>
<th>Meets guideline?</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy 5.2 Non-Street Wall Elevations</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The alley will serve as the back of house operation for this building with service areas at the ground floor. The alley elevation will have window and doors and a design treatment consistent with the primary and side elevations.</td>
</tr>
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Buildings often have more than one or two sides visible to the street; walls may also be visible from nearby buildings or rooftops. All visible elevations are crucial to Lower Downtown’s character, and walls must be designed accordingly. Historically, alley facades were the backs of buildings: where deliveries were made and trash disposed of. Their designs were a lesser priority than those of street facades, and they often looked more cluttered with smaller windows and a variety of materials, textures, setbacks, doors, docks and colors. In addition, alleys provided light and air. Today, alleys are well-used for many of the same purposes, but design treatment along them must also respect and respond to new uses, such as greater pedestrian activity, and to views from shops, restaurants, residences, and offices.
**Policy 6.2 Materials and Craftsmanship**
The materials currently existing in Lower Downtown are predominately wall of brick masonry usually left natural, but sometimes painted.

6.2.1 Materials
Requirement: Traditional masonry (e.g. brick, stone, terra-cotta tile, or ceramic tile) shall be used for street facades.
Preference: Also appropriate are certain uses of metals, such as steel lintels, cast iron columns, metal decorative elements, and wood trim at storefronts.
Preference: Nontraditional materials uses on street facades should be compatible with the historic context.

6.2.2 Craftsmanship
Preference: High quality craftsmanship is encouraged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>The alley elevation is proposed to have CMU block at the ground floor with an acrylic stucco above.</th>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>An acrylic stucco is proposed for the alley elevation. A genuine cementitious 3-coat stucco system is typically required.</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Acrylic stucco will dry from the outside in and should not be applied in temperatures below 40 degrees. Traditional stucco will “cure” within 7-14 days and can be applied in temperatures as low as 35 degrees.</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Traditional stucco is rigid with little give. Acrylic stucco is softer, making it more resistant to hairline cracks, however, stucco is more durable for high impact hits, such as hail.</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Properly applied traditional stucco will seal out moisture while an acrylic stucco will pass moisture through as a vapor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Traditional stucco will absorb surface moisture and change color when wet while acrylics retain their color. Stucco can be finished with a clear sealer that will provide water repellency, but it must be reapplied every 2-3 years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Acrylic stuccos typically fail due to improper water draining behind the acrylic stucco. Traditional stuccos generally fail due to improper maintenance/application that allows water to infiltrate into the metal lath and sheathing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Properly applied traditional stucco has a proven durability 100s of years. EIFS was introduced in America in 1960s and reengineered in the 2000s.</td>
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</table>
Policy 6.3 Color
Color play an important role in Lower Downtown, and attention must be paid to its use on the building.

6.3.1 Painted Masonry
Preference: Masonry should not be painted

| Yes   | No masonry is not to be painted. All color is integral to the material. |

Recommendation: Denial
Basis: The acrylic stucco systems are not typically approved. Traditional stucco systems have historically been required in Denver’s historic districts.

Suggested Motion: I move to DENY application #2019-COA-355* for the Phase II: Design Details revisions for the proposed stucco material at 1637 Blake Street, per design guidelines 6.2, 6.2.1, 6.2.2, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report.