



Landmarks & Urban
Conservation Commission



Agenda Number: 7
Case No.: 10LUCC50011
Project # 1006616
April 14, 2010

Staff Report

Agent	Studio SW Architects	Staff Recommendation <i>APPROVAL of Case # 10LUCC50011, Project #1006616, a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction, based on the Findings 1-11 beginning on page 11 and subject to Conditions on page 11.</i> Maryellen Hennessy Staff Planner
Applicant	Rumi Muenala	
Request	Certificate of Appropriateness	
Legal Description	Tract 206 MRGCD Map 38	
Address/Location	424 San Felipe NW	
Size	.37 ac.	
Zoning	H-1	
Historic Location	H-1 Historic Zone	

Summary of Analysis

The application is for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new mixed use building in the Old Town Historic Zone. The 2544 square foot building would be located on a property with four existing buildings.

The proposed development demonstrates a general compatibility with the character of the Old Town Historic Zone, but recommended conditions of approval include enhanced landscape and modification of non-traditional features.

Subject to the recommended conditions of approval, the proposed alterations are appropriate and the historic architectural character of the Old Town Historic Zone is sufficiently preserved to meet applicable guidelines.

PRIMARY REFERENCES:

Landmarks and Urban Conservation Ordinance; Design Guidelines for the Old Town Historic Zone.

City Departments and other interested agencies were given the opportunity to review this application from 3/16/10 to 3/26/10. Agency comments that were received were used in the preparation of this report, and begin on page 13.

Development Review Division Report:

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

<i>Requests</i>	<i>Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction.</i>
<i>Historic Location</i>	<i>H-1 zone</i>

AREA HISTORY AND CHARACTER

Surrounding architectural styles, historic character and recent (re)development

	<i># of Stories</i>	<i>Roof Configuration, Architectural Style and Approximate Age of Construction</i>	<i>Historic Classification & Land Use</i>
<i>General Area</i>	1-2	Hipped and gabled pitch; flat; Spanish Pueblo Revival Bungalow, Queen Anne, New Mexico Vernacular, Contemporary; 1840's to current	Unclassified Residential and commercial.
<i>Site to the North</i>	1	Pitched gable roof, New Mexico Vernacular	Commercial
<i>Sites to the South</i>	1	Pitched gable roof, New Mexico Vernacular, ca.	Commercial
<i>Sites to the East</i>	2	Flat, shed roofs; contemporary; 1970's	Residential
<i>Site to the West</i>	2	Flat, Spanish Pueblo Revival circa 1940's.	Residential and commercial

Background, History and Context

The applicant proposes to build a new, two-story, mixed-use building at the Northwest corner of a tract in Old Town that contains four existing buildings and several site walls. The building directly to the south of the new building on this site (424 San Felipe) is a New Mexico Vernacular building (or Simplified Queen Anne) with a gabled roof built circa 1918. Traditionally, the area on which the new building is proposed to be built was a garden associated with 424 San Felipe.

Also on this property are three smaller buildings (422 San Felipe) circa 1947, two of which were given substantial upgrades by the applicant in 2004 – 2005. The site is not within the State registered Old Albuquerque Historic District. Buildings outside of the registered historic district are unclassified.

The new building is one-story at the street rising to two-stories towards the rear. It could be described as a modified Pueblo Revival style with stepped parapets reminiscent of New Mexico Vernacular style buildings that rose to popularity in the 1930's. It has a stucco exterior finish, and simple detailing that includes wood lintels over the windows and wood trellises.

Of the buildings in the H-1 zone, only San Felipe de Neri church can be shown to date to the Spanish Colonial period. A few buildings may be in whole or in part from the early nineteenth century, but the majority of the buildings were built between 1870 and 1900. The most common type is the New Mexico Vernacular house, such as 424 San Felipe, with its pitched roof, tall windows and Queen Anne trim.

Almost every building has seen some degree of remodeling, resulting from the area's growth as a tourist-oriented commercial center after 1940. Old Albuquerque became "Old Town", a district of shops, boutiques, galleries and restaurants. Many buildings acquired Pueblo Revival portals, protruding false vigas and other stylistic elements thought to be conducive to a tourist atmosphere.

There have been few new buildings in the zone in the recent decades. In all, the district has an eclectic mix of one and two-story buildings that includes both commercial and residential uses. New buildings can be found in the 300-foot buffer zone on Mountain Road and Rio Grande Blvd.

APPLICABLE PLANS, ORDINANCES, DESIGN GUIDELINES & POLICIES

Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan of 1988, amended 2003

The plan sets out goals and policies concerning land use, environmental protection and heritage conservation.

LAND USE

Section II.B.5 This site is located in the Established Urban Area as defined in the Comprehensive Plan. The Goal of the Established Urban Area is to "create a quality urban environment which perpetuates the tradition of identifiable, individual, but integrated communities within the metropolitan area and which offers variety and maximum choice in housing, transportation, work areas, and life styles, while creating a visually pleasing built environment." Applicable Established Urban Area policies include:

Policy d: "The location, intensity, and design of new development shall respect existing neighborhood values, natural environmental conditions and carrying capacities, scenic resources, and resources of other social, cultural, and recreational concern."

Policy o: "Redevelopment and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods in the Established Urban Area shall be continued and strengthened."

Section II.B.6 This site is also located in the Central Urban Development Area, a portion of the Established Urban Development Area as defined in the Comprehensive Plan, and is subject to the Central Urban policies as well as the Established Urban Area policies. The Goal of the Central Urban Area is to "promote the Central Urban Area as a focus for arts, cultural, and public facilities/activities while recognizing and enhancing the character of its residential neighborhoods and its importance as the historic center of the City."

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Section II.C.5 The goal for Historic Resources is "to protect, reuse or enhance significant historic districts and buildings." Applicable Historic Resources policies include:

Policy b: "Research, evaluation, and protection of historical and cultural properties in the City and County shall be continued where appropriate."

Section 11.C.9 Community Identity and Urban Design goal is "to preserve and enhance the natural and built characteristics, social, cultural and historical features that identify Albuquerque and Bernalillo County sub-areas as distinct communities and collections of neighborhoods."

Policy b: "In each Community Area, strategic planning, neighborhood planning, development and redevelopment shall be evaluated in light of its relationship to and effect upon (3) Local history, specifically architectural styles and traditions and current and historic significance to Albuquerque.

City of Albuquerque Comprehensive Zoning Code

The Old Town Historic Zone was developed in 1957 with the adoption of the first Zoning Code for the City of Albuquerque. Old Town was recognized even then as a very special location within Albuquerque, and the H-1 Zone was developed specifically to address the development within Old Town. The H-1 Zone was later amended to include a 300 foot "buffer" zone surrounding Old Town to ensure a coherent visual character for the district. Signage, architectural style, and permissive uses are controlled through the H-1 Zone. The code provides for Certificates of Appropriateness for development with the H-1 and the Buffer zones. (§14-16-2-25, R.O.A., 1994.)

Old Town Historic Zone Design Guidelines

Design Guidelines (as amended through April 9, 1998) have been adopted by the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission for building projects in the H-1 Historic Old Town Zone. The Specific Development Guidelines for the Old Town Historic District also apply to the buffer zone within 300 feet of the historic district. The Guidelines are general, and along with standards applicable to the rehabilitation of historic properties, they address new buildings and pedestrian safety.

Landmarks and Urban Conservation Ordinance

This site consists of a contributing property in the H-1 Historic Zone and the project is subject to certain provisions of the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Ordinance (Article 12, R.O.A., 1994). The purpose of this ordinance is to:

“Preserve, protect, enhance, perpetuate and promote the use of structures and areas of historical, cultural, architectural, engineering, archeological or geographic significance located in the city; to strengthen the city’s economic base by stimulating the tourist industry; to enhance the identity of the city by protecting the city’s heritage and prohibiting the unnecessary destruction or defacement of its cultural assets; and to conserve existing urban developments as viable economic and social entities.”

Section 14-12-8 (A) of the LUC ordinance provides that:

"Within the boundaries of a historic zone, urban conservation overlay zone, or landmark site, the exterior appearance of any structure shall not be altered, new structures shall not be constructed, and existing structures shall not be demolished until a Certificate of Appropriateness has been duly approved."

The following Design Guidelines (as amended through April 9,1998) have been adopted by the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission for building projects in the H-I Historic Old Town Zone and in the 300-foot buffer zone surrounding Old Town.

1. Every reasonable effort should be made to provide a compatible use for buildings, which will require minimum alteration to the building and its environment.
2. Rehabilitation work should not destroy the distinguishing qualities or character of the property and its environment. The removal or alteration of any historic material or architectural features should be held to the minimum, consistent with the proposed use.
3. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of original features, substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs of the availability of different architectural features from other buildings.
4. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize older structure and often predate the mass production of building materials should be treated with sensitivity.
5. Many changes to buildings and environments, which have taken place in the course of time, are evidence of the history of the building and the neighborhood. These changes may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected.
6. All buildings should be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations to create an appearance inconsistent with the actual character of the building should be discouraged.
7. The design and general appearance of any development or alteration in the Old Town Historic Zone should be limited to the range of design options possible and commonly chosen in Albuquerque prior to the opening of the Santa Fe Railroad in April 1880. The design of any alteration to currently existing structures erected between 1880 and 1912 should be limited to the range of design options possible and commonly chosen at the time of the buildings construction.
8. Contemporary design for new buildings and additions to existing buildings or landscaping in the 300 foot transition zone surrounding the Old Town Historic Zone should not be discouraged if such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the neighborhood, buildings, or its environment.
9. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to buildings should be done in such a manner that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the original building would be unimpaired.
10. Every effort should be made to safeguard the public welfare along vehicular and pedestrian traffic ways. Placement of walls, building projections, fences, planters, shrubs, signs, ramps, steps, etc. should be planned and positioned so that they do

not present a potential hazard. Provisions for the handicapped should be planned so that the essential character of the property is not damaged.

11. Any security devices that prevent major features of doors and windows such as ornament, panels, glass panes, and mullions from being seen are prohibited.
12. Property owners are considering installing security devices are urged to contact LUCC staff for advice and a free handout on how to increase security without detracting from the historic character of a building.
13. An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for work, which does not require any type of building or construction permit, may be approved by staff.

AMENDMENTS: 9/1/82, 4/9/98

Analysis

The development guidelines for the Old Town Historic Zone are oriented towards the rehabilitation or alteration of existing buildings. Guidelines seven and ten are the most relevant to new construction. The design and general appearance of any development or alteration in the Old Town Historic Zone should be limited to the range of design options possible and commonly chosen in Albuquerque prior to the opening of the Santa Fe Railroad in April 1880. The H-1 Ordinance declares that the Spanish Colonial, Territorial, or Western Victorian styles of buildings and structures constructed before 1912 in the area comprise the traditional architectural character of the Old Town Historic Zone. The style of the proposed building is not any of those.

Development standards for the H-1 Historic Zone are contained in the Comprehensive Zoning Code. §14-12-2-25 regulates building height (limited to twenty six feet), lot size (no minimum), density (.75 floor area ratio maximum), off street parking (none except for loading), and setback. The ordinance specifies that there is no minimum setback required but the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission may require setbacks up to but not exceeding those of the R-1 zone when such are found important to the scale and character of the immediate area. The Commission may also require lower structure height where such is found appropriate to the scale of the immediate area.

The new building is setback about five feet behind the existing sidewalk, and the corner entrance provides additional space at the Southeast corner. There is an existing telephone pole that is in the middle of the existing sidewalk. The sidewalk/utility easement is narrow and the additional five-foot setback for pedestrian and accessible space is critical. The corner entrance adds beneficial space and dimension to the streetscape. The adjacent pitched roof buildings have a larger front setback, however; several other buildings on this street are also right at the sidewalk, and several buildings in Old Town have a similar corner entrance.

The massing and scale of the new building, although different from the adjacent buildings, is comparable to several buildings in Old Town. Old Town includes an eclectic mix of buildings,

some of which are two-stories in height. Across the street to the west is a Spanish Colonial style building that had a stepped-back second story element added on some time ago. So the massing or scale of the proposed new building is not unique in Old Town (see photo attachments.)

As noted, the proposed building's design is a modified Pueblo Revival style with simple detail. The parapet stepping up and down borrows somewhat from the New Mexico Vernacular buildings of the 1930's, but is not a detail typical of the Spanish Colonial style.

A shown in the photo attachments to this report, most of the buildings in Old Town, in particular the larger buildings both older and new, have a variety of architectural details that provide visual interest. The multi-paned windows on the proposed building help to add detail. With the exception of wood lintels over the windows, there are no *portales*, wood posts or corbels, *vigas*, railings, nor other details that are common to the architecture of Old Town. There is little to soften the street façade. A long *banco* offers seating, but no shade. Plants are in above ground planters.

The open "trellises" are a feature that is not typical of the district, or in the range of design options possible and commonly chosen in Albuquerque prior to the opening of the Santa Fe Railroad in April 1880. One example can be found at the corner of Romero and South Plaza. Labeled as a shade trellis, this structure actually does not provide much shade, and should not be encouraged in Old Town. The trellis on the roof does not have as great an effect as the long trellis between the buildings.

This tract of land that once contained a major garden, a vernacular house and apartment building, now has a great degree of "hardscape", including the former front yard of 424 San Felipe. Old Town is full of passageways and interior courtyards that use brick paving, often accented with plantings and *objets d'art*. This site, along with the proposed new development, offers little in the way of landscaping to the public.

Some shading for pedestrians and softening of the new building and the overall site could be achieved, if not with a portal, with street trees and other plantings, or both. The opportunity to provide some shade and visual interest at this end of San Felipe Street has not been taken.

In all, the new building and site plan as proposed is more characteristic of development in the buffer zone surrounding Old Town.

LUC Ordinance

The table below provides an evaluation of the submittal as it relates to the LUC Ordinance and the specific development guidelines as analyzed above.

LUC Ordinance (§14-12) Guidelines for New Construction	Analysis	Does the application satisfy the ordinance criteria?
§14-12-8-B-(1) The change is consistent with the designation ordinance and specific development guidelines for the historic overlay zone	The new development is generally consistent with the designation ordinance and the development guidelines. Suggested modifications would enhance compatibility with the zone.	Yes and no
§14-12-8 (B) (2) The architectural character, historical value, or archaeological value of the structure or site itself or of any historic zone in which it is located will not be significantly impaired or diminished	The new development is generally consistent with the architecture of the historic zone. Some modification is suggested.	Yes and no
§14-12-8 (B) (3) The change qualified as a “certified rehabilitation: pursuant to the Tax Reform Act of 1976	Not applicable	
§14-12-8 (B) (4) The structure or site’s distinguished original qualities or character will not be altered. Original shall mean at the time of initial construction or developed over the course of history of the structure.	The site’s original character is altered by this proposal. The open space associated with the 1918 vernacular house is covered with new development.	No
§14-12-8 (B) (5) Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, if possible. If replacement is necessary, the new material shall match the original as closely as possible in like material and design;	Not applicable	
§14-12-8 (B) (6) Additions to existing structure and new construction may be of contemporary design if such design is compatible with the historic zone in which it is to be located	Not applicable	
§14-12-8 (B) (7) Demolition shall only be permitted. . . .	Not applicable	

Additional Considerations

The Sawmill Community Land Trust and the Sawmill Neighborhood Association are the only recognized neighborhood associations affected. The applicant notified them and no comment has been received. City staff notified the Old Town Property Owners Association and the Old Town Merchants Association.

Conclusions

In all, the building draws from different elements of the architecture in old town, which makes it generally compatible, but it differs in several ways.

The detail is minimal for a building of this size. Added together with the shade trellises and stepping parapet, the overall effect is somewhat more reflective of the buffer zone surround Old Town than the H-1 zone itself. Minimal landscaping contributes to a sense of hardness about this overall site. Staff recommends, at a minimum, that the ground level trellis be eliminated and that the landscaping be enhanced. Opportunities for shade should be seriously considered, as should modifying the parapets.

FINDINGS for a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for Case#10-LUCC-50011 / Project # 1006616 (April 14, 2010)

1. This application is a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction at 224 San Felipe, described as Tract 206, MRGCD Map 38, in the H-1 Historic Zone.
2. The subject site is unclassified and not within the boundaries of the State registered Old Albuquerque Historic District.
3. The proposal is to construct a new building of approximately 2550 sq. ft. The building is designed in a modified Pueblo Revival style and is one-story at the front and two-stories towards the rear.
4. Section 14-16-2-25(D)(1) of the Comprehensive Zoning Code states “Any construction, modification, addition, alteration, moving or destruction which would affect the exterior appearance of any structure or place in the H-1 zone requires a Certificate of Appropriateness which must be approved by the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission.”
5. There are four existing buildings on the site. The new building at 224 San Felipe is one of a group of buildings on the site.
6. An existing building at 224 San Felipe is a New Mexico Vernacular style building, built as a dwelling, circa 1918. The building retains the characteristic architectural features of the style and period of construction.
7. Three smaller buildings at 222 San Felipe were constructed circa 1947 and were remodeled to reflect a Pueblo Revival style of architecture.
8. The LUC Ordinance Section 14-12(8)(B)(2) states that a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be approved if “The architectural character, historical value, or archaeological value of the structure or site itself or of any historic zone or urban conservation overlay zone in which it is located will not be significantly impaired or diminished”. The proposed new development is generally consistent with the applicable specific development guidelines for the Old Town Historic Zone numbers seven and ten.

9. The proposal, subject to the stated conditions of approval, complies with LUCC Ordinance sections 14-12-8-(B)(1) and (B)(2) as analyzed in the staff report.
10. The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan contains goals and policies related to Environmental Protections and Heritage Conservation. Section 11.C.5 Historic Resources goal is to protect, reuse, or enhance significant historic districts and buildings. The proposal subject to the stated conditions of approval supports the Historic Resources goal.
11. Section 11.C.9 Community Identity and Urban Design goal is “to preserve and enhance the natural and built characteristics, social, cultural and historical features that identify Albuquerque and Bernalillo County sub-areas as distinct communities and collections of neighborhoods.” Policy b states “In each Community Area, strategic planning, neighborhood planning, development and redevelopment shall be evaluated in light of its relationship to and effect upon (3) Local history, specifically architectural styles and traditions and current and historic significance to Albuquerque. The proposal subject to the stated conditions of approval supports the Community Identity and Urban Design goal.

RECOMMENDATION - Case No. 10-LUCC-50011/ Project # 1006616 – April 14, 2010

APPROVAL of 10-LUCC-50011/ Project # 1006616, an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction, located at 224 San Felipe NW. This property is more specifically described as Tract 206, MRGCD Map 38, a property in the Old Town Historic Zone, zoned H-1, based on the above 11 Findings and subject to the following Conditions:

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL - Case No. 10-LUCC-50011/ Project # 1006616 – April 14, 2010

1. The trellis at the south façade of the new building is to be deleted.
2. Applicant is to submit a revised landscaping plan, subject to approval of staff, which includes a minimum of one tree and additional plantings towards the San Felipe Street.
3. Applicant is to comply with all other relevant City plans, policies and permits requirements.

**Maryellen Hennessy, Senior Planner
Current Planning Division**

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE AGENCY COMMENTS

ZONING CODE SERVICES DIVISION

1. Proposed Uses – Retail/Gallery & Single Family Residence are allowed permissively in the H-1 Historic Old Town Zone;
2. Height – The proposed structure height of 25-feet meets the height requirements contained within the H-1 Historic Old Town Zone;
3. Lot Size – No requirements;
4. Setbacks – The LUCC shall make the decision as to the setbacks and may require a greater front-yard setback than 5-feet, but not exceeding 20-feet as specified in the R-1 zone, as an effort to safeguard the public welfare along vehicular and pedestrian traffic ways. Placement of the new two-story building should be planned and positioned in such a way as to not present a potential hazard.
5. Density - The total square footage of the heated floor area of the 4-existing buildings and the 1-new two story building meet the density requirement contained within the H-1 Historic Old Town Zone.
6. Off-Street Parking – The applicant must provide one properly paved off-street loading space of at least 9 x 25 feet for the commercially used premises. On-premise ground space is available.
7. Landscaping – As to the mixed-uses (retail/gallery & single family residence), all applicants for construction of a new building over 200 square feet shall submit and have approved by the Planning Director and/or LUCC a landscaping plan prior to issuance of a related building permit.

BUILDING & SAFETY SERVICES DIVISION

Approval upon submittal of project. Submit two sets of Architect stamped drawings to include design data.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION/ADVANCED PLANNING

NO COMMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Site Layout: If changes are made to the parking lot layout, a full Traffic Circulation Layout (TCL) will be required for this site prior to any building permit approval. This TCL must include additional geometric information and clarify existing versus proposed conditions prior to a complete review. The ADA accessible pathways must be clearly shown, and details must be provided.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER AGENCIES, WHEN APPLICABLE:

PNM

***ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT***

FIRE DEPARTMENT/Planning

TRANSIT DEPARTMENT

POLICE DEPARTMENT

PARKS AND GENERAL SERVICES

OPEN SPACE DIVISION

BERNALILLO COUNTY

ALBUQUERQUE FLOOD CONTROL AUTHORITY

ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS