



Landmarks & Urban
Conservation Commission



Agenda Number: 4
Case No.: 09LUCC-50025
Project # 1007892
August 12, 2009

Staff Report

Agent	Cherry/See/Reames Architects	Staff Recommendation APPROVAL of Case # 09LUCC-50025, Project #1007982, a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for alteration, based on the Findings 1-7 on page 9. Maryellen Hennessy Staff Planner
Applicant	Albuquerque/Bernalillo Co. Library	
Request	Certificate of Appropriateness	
Legal Description	Lots 2-6, Block 13, Huning Highland Addition	
Address/Location	423 Central NE	
Size		
Zoning	SU-2/RO	
Historic Location	City Landmark	

Summary of Analysis

The application is for alterations to the interior of the Old Main (Special Collections) Library at 423 Central NE, a designated City Landmark.

The proposed alterations are appropriate and the historic and architectural character of the Special Collection Library is sufficiently preserved to meet applicable guidelines.

PRIMARY REFERENCES:

Landmarks and Urban Conservation Ordinance; Design Guidelines for the Old Main Library

City Departments and other interested agencies were given the opportunity to review this application from 7/16/09 to 7/12/09. Agency comments that were received were used in the preparation of this report, and begin on page 12.

Development Review Division Report:

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

Requests	<i>Certificate of Appropriateness for alteration</i>
Historic Location	<i>City Landmark</i>

AREA HISTORY AND CHARACTER

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

	# of Stories	Roof Configuration, Architectural Style and Approximate Age of Construction	Historic Classification & Land Use
General Area	1-3	Flat, gabled, Queen Anne and Folk Victorian, Commercial block, 1900-2007	Contributing and non-contributing, residential and commercial
Site to the North	1	Gabled, Tudor Revival ca.	Contributing, commercial
Sites to the South		Flat roofed commercial block ca. 2007	Contributing, commercial
Sites to the East	1	Pop n Taco	Non-contributing, commercial
Site to the West	1	Flat roofed commercial block ca. 2007	Non-contributing, commercial

Background

The original portion of the Old Main Library was constructed in 1925 on a parcel of land donated to the city in 1900 by Joshua and Sarah Reynolds. The library was designed by Arthur Rossiter and included interior decorations by prominent Taos artist Gustav Baumann. Additions, including Botts Hall at the front of the early building, were completed in 1947 and 1951, but much of the original form and detailing – both interior and exterior – are still apparent. Local architect Gordon Ferguson designed the additions.

The building is an excellent example of Spanish-Pueblo Revival architecture. The parapet, central bell tower, corner buttress towers, protruding beams, and entryway with exposed beams and corbel brackets are design features consistent with this important regional style. The original Prairie-style windows are relatively rare in Albuquerque.

Interior detailing includes heavy wooden columns and beams, and two corner fireplaces. Much of Mr. Baumann’s interior decorations have been covered over by later remodeling, but some detailing at the top of each column remains visible.

The Old Main Library now houses special collections, including a genealogy section, the Southwest Collection and the Center for the Book. Much of the building remains open to the public.

In May of 2009, a staff approval was issued for improvements to the exterior landscaping and streetscape at the library.

In this application, alterations to the interior of the library and rehabilitation of the windows are proposed. The scope of work is to restore the Prairie style windows and doors, provide a new sign and improve alarm system. Botts Hall would receive various minor alterations intended to improve the acoustics, thermal comfort, lighting, and audiovisual systems. In the main reading room a new service desk, improved lighting and floor covering are proposed. The scope of work is well detailed in the submittal.

APPLICABLE PLANS, ORDINANCES, DESIGN GUIDELINES & POLICIES

Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan of 1988, amended 2003

This site is a Historic Resource in terms used in the *Comprehensive Plan*. The plan sets out goals and policies concerning land use, environmental protection and heritage conservation. Chapter II, Section 5, Historic Resources Goals and Policies (pp. II-61-II-62) states:

“The Goal for Historic Resources is to protect, reuse or enhance significant historic buildings and districts.”

Applicable Historic Resources policies include:

Policy a: Efforts to provide incentives for the protection of significant buildings and districts shall be continued and expanded.

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

Policy c: Increase public and inter-agency awareness of historic resources and preservation

This site is contained 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 policies of Section II.B.5 (Established Urban Area) as well as the Central 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.”

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.”

Specific Development Guidelines for the Old Main Library

Each City Landmark has its own development guidelines. The guidelines for Old Main Library, adopted by the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission in August 1990 are provided as an attachment to this report.

Landmarks and Urban Conservation Ordinance

This site consists of a contributing property in the Fourth Ward Historic Overlay Zone. 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."

ANALYSIS

Specific Development Guidelines for the Old Main Library

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES OLD MAIN LIBRARY 423 Central NE

The initial building analysis conducted for the Old Main Library identifies the following significant architectural features:

1. The Pueblo-Spanish Revival details of the building's exterior
2. The volume and design details of the interior public spaces

In any rehabilitation of the Old Main Library:

Exterior design details (massing, roofline, parapet, corner buttress towers, bell tower, protruding beams, and entryway with exposed beams, corbel brackets, and lanterns) should be preserved.

The style, size, location, spacing, material and trim detail of the Prairie style windows should be retained.

Design details of the interior (volume of the main room, exposed beams, columns with corbel brackets, corner fireplaces) should be preserved.

Any alterations to this property should retain these significant features. Where necessary, these elements should be repaired rather than replaced; any replacement should utilize materials, texture and design matching the original. In addition to these guidelines, The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects should be utilized in reviewing proposed changes to the property.

Additions the building could be allowed if necessary to facilitate reuse of the property. Additions should be compatible in scale, massing and exterior material with the original structure and should be designed so that it is possible to clearly distinguish the original structure from the later addition.

City staff is authorized to review and approve proposals for minor changes that do not require a building permit, as well as proposals for changes to freestanding walls, fences, and signs. Staff may refer applications for these items to the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission if there are concerns regarding potential impacts on the architectural or historical character of the property.

The guidelines identify the Pueblo-Spanish Revival details of the building's exterior and the volume and design details of the interior public spaces as the most significant architectural features. The exterior of the building is not affected by this proposal. The windows will be maintained including repair where needed, but the appearance will not be affected.

The proposed circulation desk and new flooring in the main (1925) reading room does not impact the characteristic features noted in the guidelines. Both the desk and the flooring have been changed over the years.

The interior of Botts Hall (1950) has a considerably different character than the 1925 reading room. The room serves different functions, and is generally of a simple mid-century character. The proposed work to accommodate improvements to thermal control and acoustics do not negatively impact the interior. The addition of the interior vestibule is a sensitive solution to the issues, retains the existing doors and is reversible.

LUC Ordinance

The table below provides an evaluation of the submittal as it relates to the LUC Ordinance.

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 proposed alterations are consistent with the development guidelines.	YES
§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 proposed alterations do not affect the significant character defining features of the building.	YES
§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 proposed alterations do not affect the significant character defining features of the building.	YES
§14-12-8 (B) (5) Deteriorated architectural features should be	Not applicable	

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;		
§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 Broadway Central Corridors Partnership and the Huning Highland Neighborhood Association were notified of the request. No comment has been received as of the date of this report.

Conclusions

The library is a resource that continues to serve the function it was built for. Improvements to keep the historic building functioning at reasonably efficient level are to be expected.

The library has experienced alteration over the years since 1925, most notably the addition of Botts Hall. Previous alterations are very well documented in the submittal. The alterations proposed are sensitively planned and do not affect the significant architectural detail of Old Main Library.

FINDINGS for a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations - Case # 09LUCC50025 / Project # 1007982 (August 12, 2009)

1. This application is a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for alteration t Old Main Library at 423 Central NE, described as Lots 2 - 6, Block 13 of the Huning Highland Addition, a designated City Landmark, zoned SU-2/RO.
2. The scope of work is to restore the Prairie style windows and doors, provide a new sign and improve the alarm system. Botts Hall would receive various minor alterations intended to improve the acoustics, thermal comfort, lighting, and audiovisual systems. In the main reading room a new service desk, improved lighting and floor covering are proposed.
3. The work that is described above is consistent with applicable provisions of the Development Guidelines for Old Main Library adopted by the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission in August 1990. The proposed alterations do not affect the significant character defining features of the building, cited in the Development Guidelines as the Pueblo-Spanish Revival details of the building's exterior and the volume and design details of the interior public spaces.
4. Alterations to the property are subject to the provisions of LUC Ordinance.
5. The LUC Ordinance specifies that an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be approved if it complies with several specified criteria. The work that is described above is consistent with relevant provisions in the LUC Ordinance Section 14-12-8-B- 1, 2, and 4 as analyzed in the staff report. The significant character defining features of the building are not affected in the proposal and the historic and architectural character of the building or site are not negatively impacted.
6. This proposal furthers the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies for historic resources that include to "protect, reuse or enhance significant historic buildings and districts."

***RECOMMENDATION - Case No. 09LUCC50025/ Project # 1007892 –
(August 12, 2009)***

APPROVAL of 09LUCC50025/ Project # 1007892, an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for alteration at Old Main Library at 423 Central NE, described as Lots 2 - 6, Block 13 of the Huning Highland Addition, a designated City Landmark, zoned SU-2/RO based on the above 6 Findings.

**Maryellen Hennessy, Senior Planner
Development Review Division**

Attachments:

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE AGENCY COMMENTS

ZONING CODE SERVICES DIVISION

NO RESPONSE

BUILDING & SAFETY SERVICES DIVISION

APPROVED

ADVANCE PLANNING HISTORIC PRESERVATION

NO RESPONSE

HOUSING CODE SERVICES DIVISION

PNM

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

FIRE DEPARTMENT/Planning

COMMENTS FROM OTHER AGENCIES, WHEN APPLICABLE:

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