



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

April 4, 2005

To: City Council

From: City Manager

Subject: APPEAL OF A DECISION BY THE DESIGN COMMISSION TO APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING STOREFRONT AT 396 SOUTH LAKE AVENUE (Draper's & Damon's/Rangonis)

It is recommended that the City Council:

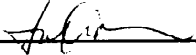
1. Adopt recommendation 1 from the March 14, 2005 staff report (attached).
2. Do not adopt recommendation 2 from the March 14, 2005 staff report.
3. Adopt the following new recommendations:
 - a. Acknowledge that the applicant has agreed to modify the design of the storefront to comply with revised recommendations from the Design Commission issued on March 28, 2005.
 - b. Approve the application for consolidated design review with the conditions recommended by the Design Commission on March 28, 2005 and listed on Attachment 1.

On March 14, 2005 the City Council continued its review of an appeal of a decision by the Design Commission on a proposal to alter the original storefront at 396 South Lake Avenue to April 4, 2005. The Council asked the Commission to meet with the property owner and architect to explore a modified proposal that might satisfy all parties. In response to this request, the property owner met on March 23 with a three-member subcommittee of the Commission and again on March 28 with the Design Commission. The outcome of these meetings was a revised recommendation from the Commission to approve the project with conditions. The property owner, James Simpson, has agreed to these conditions and to work with the Commission on resolving the final design details of the project.

Respectfully submitted,


CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
City Manager

Prepared by:



Jeff Cronin
Principal Planner

Approved by:

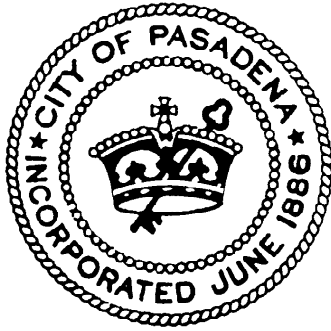


Richard J. Bruckner, Director
Planning & Development Department

ATTACHMENT 1

Recommendation from the Design Commission
March 28, 2005
Appeal of Decision on Storefront Alterations
396 South Lake Avenue
Draper's/Rangonis

- Maintain the "5S2" status code in the City's historic resources survey for the Central District (eligible for landmark designation) for the building at 396 South Lake Avenue and apply the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings to the proposed alterations.
- Require the restoration of original storefront material—including the travertine cladding and the original post-mounted display box on the Lake Avenue elevation.
- Approve the application of two surface-mounted display boxes on the spandrel and a clock feature if they are detailed to be removable in the future.
- A final design proposal that reflects these modifications shall be submitted to the Design Commission for final review and approval.



Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: March 14, 2005

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: APPEAL OF A DECISION BY THE DESIGN COMMISSION TO APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING STOREFRONT AT 396 SOUTH LAKE AVENUE (Draper's & Damon's/ Rangonis)

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Acknowledge that the proposed alterations to the storefront at 396 South Lake Avenue are categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (Class 31, §15331. Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation).
2. Affirm the decision of the Design Commission on December 20, 2004 to approve the application for consolidated design review with conditions listed in ATTACHMENT A.

BACKGROUND

The case before the City Council is an appeal of a decision by the Design Commission. This decision, issued on December 20, 2004, was an appeal of an earlier staff-level decision, issued on October 28, 2004, on the same application.

At issue is a proposal to alter an existing one-story storefront at 396 South Lake Avenue in the CD-5 zoning district. The storefront, directly across from the east entrance to the Macy's Department Store, is one of the earliest (1950) storefronts on South Lake Avenue. It is among the least altered of this "first generation" of Late Moderne/International Style storefronts, which date from the transition of the street, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, from residential to commercial uses. The building is included in the recently updated historic resources survey for the Central District, a project undertaken in conjunction with the Central District Specific Plan. This survey assigns the building a status code of "5S2," indicating that it is individually eligible for local designation as a landmark. The building possesses significance for the intact condition of its architectural design and for its association with architect H. Roy Kelley (1893-1989), who designed a large inventory of Period Revival houses in Pasadena and

regionally. Additional descriptions of the building are in the Notice of Decision from the Design Commission (December 22, 2004—ATTACHMENT A). The application, as documented in the attached drawings and plans (ATTACHMENT B), proposes:

- Removal of the existing travertine¹ cladding on the spandrel²;
- Installation of a replacement cladding in metal panels;
- Installation of two glazed display boxes penetrating the wall of the spandrel and surmounted by a stylized clock at the roofline;
- Installation of four freestanding glass display boxes in the recessed exterior landing of the storefronts; and
- Rehabilitation and repair of the existing storefront framing, paving, and entrances.

The property owners requested removal of the travertine because it had failed in several places and the stone veneer had become a hazard to pedestrians on the public sidewalk. They placed protective barricades in front of the store and in November they removed the travertine from the face of building.

Since 1985, the City has required design review of all new construction, new signs, new storefronts, and alterations to existing buildings in the CD-5 zoning district. The code requires a finding of consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation for all reviews affecting buildings, such as 396 South Lake, that are "listed as significant in the City's Architectural and Historical Inventory" §17.92.110 (B) of P.M.C.

In its review of the application on December 20, 2004, the Design Commission cited the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and imposed a condition of approval that the spandrel be resurfaced in the original material, if feasible, or in new travertine to match the original. It also determined that the proposal to add two openings in the spandrel for large display boxes would irreversibly alter the planar wall and simplicity of the original design of the building and fail to comply with the Standards. It suggested that a smaller surface-mounted display box, possibly integrated with the roof-mounted clock, might be an alternative that would comply with the Standards.

At that meeting, the applicants presented two arguments. The first argument, from the design architect, questioned the long-term suitability of travertine, which is fragile and porous. A metal cladding, he added, could be detailed to resemble the stone veneer and provide a weatherproofed surface. An architectural historian presented the second argument and contended that the building lacks innovation and is an undistinguished

¹ A light-colored porous marble.

² The flat wall surface above the street-level glazed storefront.

work by H. Roy Kelley. He submitted a four-page letter to the Commission (ATTACHMENT C).

One member of the public spoke in favor of the appeal.

In response to these arguments, the Commission observed that travertine has been used in architecture since antiquity and continues to be used in new construction. It was their conclusion that the original design has architectural integrity. Several members complimented the design architect for the proposed new design. They concluded, however, that their primary responsibility is to uphold the Secretary's Standards in the Central District. The Commission then unanimously approved a motion to affirm the original decision by the staff.

CONCLUSION

The appeal rests on the classification of the building in the historic resources survey for the Central District (ATTACHMENT D). This survey, adopted in October 2004 by the Historic Preservation Commission and Design Commission, includes 602 properties (out of 1,248 properties in the Central District) with varying levels of historic and/or architectural significance. It updates earlier survey work in the Central District from the early 1980s.

The survey follows the standard procedures of the National Park Service and the California Office of Historic Preservation, in which a rating (California Historical Resource Status Code)³ is assigned to each property to identify its historic and/or architectural significance. The codes generally range from "1" to "6": "1S" for properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places to "6L" for properties ineligible for a historic designation but "worthy of consideration in the local planning process."

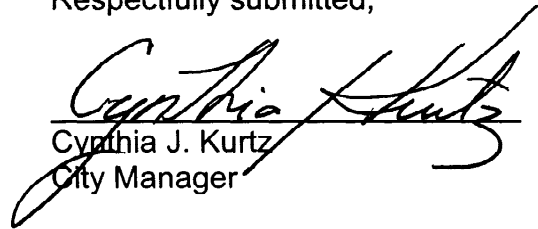
With the classification of "5S2" the building falls within the required findings in the municipal code of adhering to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Without this classification, the building would have fewer limitations for design review of exterior alterations, and in all likelihood the staff and Design Commission would have approved the proposed alterations to the storefront as submitted

FISCAL IMPACT

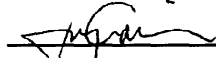
A decision on this appeal does not impact revenues to the City, nor does it impact the construction tax for the storefront alterations or the fees for a building permit. Applicants seeking land-use entitlements, including design review, are required to pay fees to the City, which cover the cost of staff work.

³ State of California Office of Historic Preservation, August 2003.

Respectfully submitted,

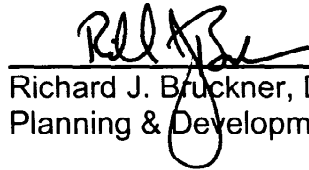

Cynthia J. Kurtz
City Manager

Prepared by:



Jeff Cronin
Principal Planner

Approved by:



Richard J. Bruckner, Director
Planning & Development Department

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Notice of Decision, 396 South Lake Avenue, December 22, 2004

ATTACHMENT B: Plans, Elevations, Drawings Submitted with Application

ATTACHMENT C: Letter from Scott Wolf to Design Commission, December 20, 2004

ATTACHMENT D: Primary Record Form, Central District Historic Resources Survey,
396 S. Lake Avenue.