

LANDMARK COMMISSION MINUTES

March 5, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Christy Graham	■ Acting Chairwoman
Joel Hartmangruber	■ Member
Andy Lee	■ Member
Noros Martin	■ P&Z Liaison
Marcela Medellin	■ Member
Janel Ponder Smith	■ Member
Monica Aguon, Assistant City Attorney	■ City Staff
Terry Floyd, Development Services Director	■ City Staff
Karen Montgomery-Gagné, Principal Planner/HPO	■ City Staff
Jennifer Loeffler, Senior Admin Assistant	■ City Staff
Derek Brown, IT/Facilities Administrator	■ City Staff
Michael Smith	■ Council Liaison

ABSENT:

Michele Derr	■ Chairwoman
John Dickinson	■ Member

GUESTS:

Steve Wood, BYSP	■ 1300 7 th St.
Matt West, BYSP	■ 1300 7 th St

I. Call to Order, Introductions and Welcome

Acting Chairwoman Christy Graham called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. Ms. Graham had Commission members, staff and guests, introduce themselves.

II. Nominations: 2024 Chair and Vice-Chairperson

Acting Chairwoman Graham opened the floor for nominations for the 2024 Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. Mr. Andy Lee nominated Ms. Marcela Medellin for Chairperson. Mr. Noros Martin seconded the nomination. A vote unanimously approved Ms. Medellin as the 2024 Chairperson. Ms. Janel Ponder Smith nominated Ms. Christy Graham for Vice-Chairperson. Mr. Lee seconded the nomination. A vote unanimously approved Ms. Graham as the 2024 Vice-Chairperson.

III. Review & Approval of Minutes from: Nov 28th, 2023

Acting Chairwoman Graham called for review and approval of the Nov 28th, 2023 Landmark Commission meeting minutes. Ms. Smith made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. Joel Hartmangruber seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved 5-0.

Regular Agenda

IV. Action Item: Design Review – 1300 7th Street (Memorial Auditorium – City Hall)

Acting Chairwoman Graham introduced the item. Ms. Montgomery-Gagné noted for the record that Mr. Hartmangruber had declared and filed the necessary conflict of interest forms with the City Clerk's office prior to the meeting due to his professional work on the Memorial Auditorium case as a project architect with BYSP Architects. Staff highlighted the proposed exterior components of the Memorial Auditorium renovation project which triggered design review consideration by the Commission:

- 1) Replace 116 windows in the city hall portion of the building;
- 2) Remove drive up kiosk/awning and replace with a new arched topped window and infill with salvaged brick and patch awning attachment holes;
- 3) Repoint brick facade and on city hall portion of building repair cast terracotta elements as needed up to 10ft on the first floor;
- 4) Install a new recessed butted-glass window wall behind the 7th St facade main entry portals enclosing the entry vestibule; and
- 5) Redesign the entry plaza/grounds/accessibility leading to the main entrance with a two-tiered plaza, new landscaping, ground lighting, signage and move in existing monuments to a more prominent location. Staff went through a detailed power point presentation for the Commission noted a 40-year commitment to historic preservation with the building's designation as a landmark in 1984. The Memorial Auditorium was built in 1927 and took 60 years to renovate in 1960, and another 60 years to renovate in 2024. BYSP Architect representatives and project spokesperson, Mr. Steve Wood, followed up with additional renovation details and explanation regarding why items were being repaired/replaced.

Ms. Smith moved to break down Agenda IV alterations into five separate motions. Ms. Medellin seconded. After a vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Steve Wood of BYSP, project architect, explained his team wanted to keep the historical integrity of the building. They want to update the historic building while being respectful of its architectural character and community significance. BYSP in concert with City leadership worked to find quality windows from manufacturers.

- Double-pane to increase energy efficiency.
- No interior changes.
- Match standard aspects by using the same steel aluminum.
- Arched window installation where kiosk is currently would be an improvement.

Mr. Wood said they were tasked with defining a space for gathering during events at the auditorium. Representatives from BYSP Architects, Derek Brown, City IT/Facilities Administrator, and Blake Jurecek, Assistant City Manager, toured Tobin Center in San Antonio where they had created a divider look while keeping the transparency of the historic façade. He stated that there is an extra cost to create a design that maintains historical façade, and that enlarging the foyer by using the existing vestibule will keep transparency to allow the building to be displayed still, as well as keep air and heat maintained in the building.

Landscape Entry

- BYSP redesigned the entry steps to eliminate the side ramp, and created 2 new ADA ramps on both sides that allow for easier access.
- Create outdoor gathering space.
- New monument style signage added to flank the central entrance.

Discussion:

Ms. Smith asked Mr. Wood if there would be another place for people to pay their water bills. Mr. Wood stated that the new home at the renovated Auditorium building for Utility Collections would be on the 1st Floor along with Public Works, Planning and Building Inspections/Permitting and as of now, there would be no kiosk installed on the property. The plan was to have the public offices on the 1st floor as more accessible to the public. Mr. Brown said they were looking at the possibility of remote locations where people could pay their water bills. Mr. Martin asked how many people currently utilize the drive-up kiosk. Mr. Brown was not able to provide an answer at the time. The new council chambers location will be on 3rd floor with easy accessibility by the public for meetings.

Ms. Smith was concerned about the proposed glass window-wall system to enclose the 7th St/south facade vestibule and the amount of reflection that the glass in the foyer would create since she stated we get so much sunlight in Texas. She was also concerned about birds flying into the glass and dying, and people seeing dead birds while walking up to the building. Mr. Wood stated the improvement of lighting in the foyer, and the curve of the glass would prevent the birds from flying into the area. Mr. Wood stated that by adding the glass to the entryway, tickets could be scanned at the entrance for improved access, and there would be airlock in the enclosed vestibule. He said this would allow for more freedom to move around during events while being protected from the elements, and not having to rescan tickets which have caused issues in the past. Ms. Smith wanted a study on the glass wall provided as relates to thermal efficiency, bird hazards, and reflectivity. Mr. Wood said they reviewed these things, but did not specifically assess the bird impact. Ms. Smith wanted to know if the lights would stay on all day and night, since that was supposed to keep the birds from flying into the glass. Mr. Wood stated that was the plan, and also that a film could be applied to the glass that is invisible to the human eye, but not to birds. Mr. Lee mentioned that he had been to San Antonio several times for conventions/events at the Tobin Center, and that he never saw any problems with reflection coming off of their glass entryway. Mr. Wood said he would reach out to The Tobin Center to get glass samples and discuss if they experienced any issues with birds. Ms. Smith said that the acoustics in Kay Yeager and Midwestern State Coliseums were two examples of how people hoped for something but received a poor outcome that was not addressed post-construction, and that she wanted to prevent a similar scenario from happening again.

Ms. Medellin wanted to know if the developers had viewed samples of the glass since two different manufactures were being used. She stated that the glass could look different coming from two different places. Ms. Medellin also asked if the interior doors were under consideration. Mr. Wood responded that the plan is to replace hardware, and if the budget allows, to be able to replace doors.

Ms. Smith wanted to know what kind of monuments were going to be used in the front, as related to the picture in the presentation. Mr. Wood said that the two monuments currently on the grounds would be moved closer to the entry plaza to better highlight their importance as they memorialize fallen soldiers. Councilor Smith thought this was good because it would emphasize that Memorial Auditorium is named to pay respect to what the word memorial means.

Acting Chairwoman Graham asked if there were any comments from the public. With no other comments, Acting Chairwoman Graham asked if there was a motion for replacing the 116 non-original aluminum-steel windows on the north, south, east and west facades. With no comments, Mr. Lee made a motion to approve. Ms. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0 in favor of the proposal.

Acting Chairwoman Graham asked if there were any comments from the public on removing the non-original kiosk/drive-through awning (south facade) and replacing it with a new arched topped aluminum-steel window and infill with salvaged brick and patch awning attachment holes. With no comments, Ms. Smith made a motion to approve the item, and Mr. Martin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0 in favor of the proposal.

Acting Chairwoman Graham asked if there were any comments from the public on re-pointing the brick façade and use of cast terracotta elements on city hall building areas up to 10ft on the 1st floor. With no comments, Mr. Martin moved to approve the item, and Mr. Lee seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0 in favor of the proposal.

Acting Chairwoman Graham asked if there were any public comments on installing an inset butted-glass window wall system behind the 7th St. main entry portals enclosing entry vestibule. No public comments were made. Mr. Martin asked about the cost. Mr. Wood stated that it was between \$175,000-\$200,000, and that this cost included the glass, HVAC, and lighting as a package deal. With no other comments, Mr. Lee motioned for the item to be approved, and Ms. Medellin seconded the motion. The vote was approved by 4, and denied by 1 member, Ms. Smith. Ms. Smith stated she was still concerned the glass would be a distraction and wanted empirical data about birds flying into the glass. Mr. Martin asked Ms. Smith what information she wanted, and Ms. Smith restated that she wanted to see more empirical data about reflection and bird issues. With less than the required 5 votes, the motion failed.

Acting Chairwoman Graham asked if there were any public comments on the redesigned entry plaza grounds/accessibility leading to the main entrance with a two-tiered plaza, signage, ground lighting, and monuments. With no comments from the public, Mr. Martin moved to pass the item, and Ms. Graham seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0 in favor of the proposal.

V. Status Update: Design Review

3008 10th St.: The case withdrawn by applicant as they were able to work with a local craftsman (Mr. James Paylor) to refurbish the existing historic door. Therefore, the tabled case from November 2023 for a replacement door was no longer necessary. Staff noted refurbishment is always a preferred option over replacement and follows the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. Acting Chairwoman Graham asked if there were any comments from the public, and with no comments the case was withdrawn.

VI. Other Business:

Monthly Report: Depot Square Historic District: Report skipped due to Ms. Derr's absence.

West Floral Heights Historic District: Ms. Smith stated that the West Floral Heights Historic District would be celebrating their 20th anniversary in 2025 and they were planning two activities with one in the spring and one in the fall. Ms. Smith also stated that the Homeowners Association was rewriting their bylaws to prevent past issues, and that they are planning to use grants to install new sidewalks and to plant more trees where the drought had killed them in previous years. Ms. Karen Montgomery-Gagné discussed the installation of new plaques during 2024 for each home in the Historic District that would help potential buyers/real estate agents be more aware that a property was in a designated district with additional design standards in place in order to protect the unique architectural and historic character.

VII. Adjourn:

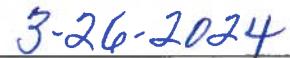
Next regularly scheduled meeting March 26, 2024 – 12 p.m.

New location: Multi-Purpose Events Center (MPEC).

Meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.



Ms. Christy Graham, Acting Chairperson



Date