



Planning Commission Staff Report

September 24, 2008
Item 6.c.

- SUBJECT:** PAP-125 (Appeal of PDR-725)
- APPELLANT:** Anne Fox, Planning Commissioner
- APPLICANT:** Jessica Hoshen, AIA, Reel Grobman & Associates, for Comerica Bank
- PROPERTY OWNER:** Norman Cornett/Peak Property Main Street, LLC
- PURPOSE:** Appeal of the Zoning Administrator's approval for design review to install an automated teller machine (ATM), night deposit box, and wall-mounted light on the south wall facing Division Street for Comerica Bank located at 600 Main Street.
- ZONING:** Zoning for the property is Central Commercial (C-C), Downtown Revitalization, Core Area Overlay District.
- LOCATION:** 600 Main Street
- ATTACHMENTS:**
1. Exhibit "A," Site and Floor Plan, Elevation, and Color Examples
 2. Exhibit "B," Zoning Administrator's Approval Letter dated August 27, 2008
 3. Exhibit "C," Emailed Appeal from Anne Fox dated "Received September 2, 2008"
 4. Exhibit "D," Location Map
 5. Exhibit "E," Staff Photographs of the Site
 6. Exhibit "F," Approved Plans and Conditions of Approval for Phase 1 and Phase 2 Improvements at 600 Main Street
 7. Exhibit "G," Excerpts from the Minutes of the July 12, 2006, Planning Commission Meeting
 8. Exhibit "H," July 12, 2006, Planning Commission Staff Report with the Following Attachment:
 - a. Historical Resource Evaluation by the City's Consultant Architectural Resources Group
 9. Exhibit "I," Noticing Map for the Appeal

I. BACKGROUND

Comerica Bank will occupy the first floor of the existing 600 Main Street building (known as the “Kolln Hardware Building”). On August 27, 2008, the Zoning Administrator approved a design review application for Comerica Bank (Case PDR-725) to remove an existing first floor window on the Division Street side of the building and install an ATM, night deposit box, and wall-mounted light. The Zoning Administrator has discretionary design review over minor building additions and changes as reflected in the scope of design review criteria of Section 18.20.030 of the Municipal Code. The Zoning Administrator reviewed the design criteria and determined that the proposed project would not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and general welfare. Therefore, design review approval was granted subject to conditions. A copy of the approval letter is attached as Exhibit B.

On September 2, 2008, Commissioner Fox appealed the Zoning Administrator’s approval. Commissioner Fox requested the appeal for the reasons outlined in the attached email (see Exhibit C) and, therefore, it is now before the Planning Commission for action. This appeal is for the ATM and related modifications and does not reopen the prior design review approvals for the Kolln Hardware building, which have been actuated by the issuance of building permits.

Prior Approvals

Norman Cornett purchased the property in 2004. His vision was to repair and restore the existing Kolln Hardware building and add new building area. The scope of the project was separated into two phases:

- Phase 1 was the repair and restoration of the existing Kolln Hardware building.
- Phase 2 was the addition.

In September 2005, Mr. Cornett received design review approval by the Zoning Administrator for the first phase of his project: weatherproofing, structural/seismic repair, and restoration of the Kolln Hardware building. During building permit plan check review of Phase 1, a window and double doors on the Division Street side of the building were also approved to be removed and replaced with a new recessed entry and window. These changes were necessitated to meet Building Code requirements. The Planning Director found the window/door modification to be in substantial conformance and approved the modification.

In July 2006, Mr. Cornett received design review approval by the Planning Commission for the second phase: relocating and restoring the two, one-story buildings and constructing an approximately 3,896-square-foot two-story addition to the Kolln Hardware building. A variance was also granted by the Planning Commission to reduce the number of required parking spaces

for the project by four spaces since the retention and relocation of the historic one-story buildings required that a four-space parking lot be removed. The project also received a parking credit for 844 square feet of non-historic floor area that was demolished. With this parking credit and the four-space parking variance, the project was required to provide ten parking spaces. As allowed by the Municipal Code, the applicant obtained an in-lieu parking agreement for the ten parking spaces. The in-lieu parking fees will be used to construct public parking lots in the Downtown. The project also added a new public on-street parking space on Division Street (the applicant did not receive parking credit for this space). Building permits have been issued for both phases and the project is nearing completion.

II. SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject site is an approximately 0.17-acre (7,500 square foot) parcel on the northeast corner of Main Street and Division Street. The subject site currently contains the main corner building, the two-story addition, the two, one-story buildings, and a trash enclosure. All of the buildings are currently vacant. There is no parking on the property. There are no trees or other forms of vegetation on the subject site. The site topography is generally flat.

Site Plan

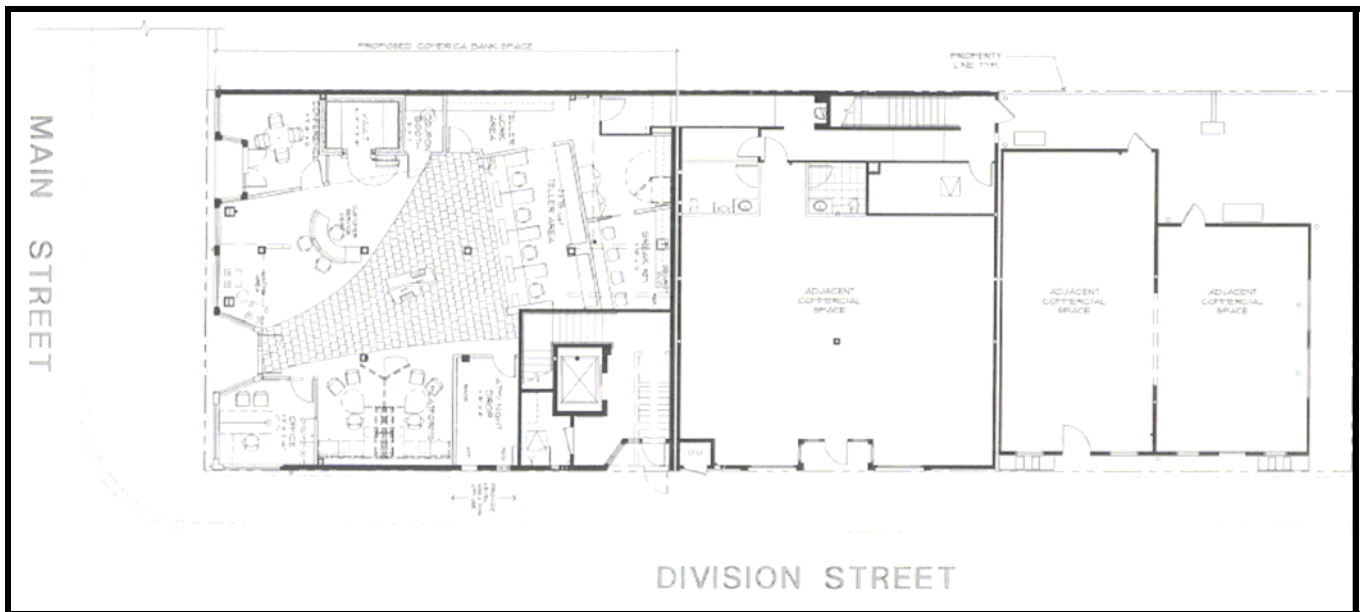




Figure 1-Buildings Prior to the Renovation and Addition



Figure 2-Buildings Prior to the Renovation and Addition



Figure 3-Buildings Today (photo taken 9/5/08)



Figure 4-Division Street Elevation (photo taken 9/5/08)

Adjacent Properties

Properties adjacent to this site include: a commercial building and private parking lot to the north (608 Main Street); a dentist's office to the east (215 Division Street); commercial buildings to the south (550/560 Main Street), on the opposite side of Division Street; and the City Museum and the Washington Mutual Bank to the west, on the opposite side of Main Street.



2005 Aerial of the Site

III. PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed application consists of the installation of an ATM, night deposit box, and wall-mounted light on the Division Street side of 600 Main Street (see elevation below). The ATM surround, night deposit box, and light would utilize an antique-finished bronze material. A non-storefront window measuring 2-feet 10-inches wide by 7-feet tall would be removed to accommodate the project. This window was installed as part of the Phase 1 building improvements. It is not an original window as can be seen on Figures 1 and 2 above.



IV. ANALYSIS

Location

The subject property is located in the Downtown Specific Plan Area and Downtown Revitalization District and is subject to the Downtown Design Guidelines. The Downtown Specific Plan, Downtown Design Guidelines, and Downtown Revitalization District do not specify where ATMs or night boxes should be located on a building. Therefore, the location and design of ATMs are subject to case-by-case review as part of a design review application. For the Downtown, staff generally tries to locate ATMs on the sides or rear of a building when the building has storefront windows along the entire front (Main Street) elevation. For instance, Valley Community Bank's ATM was located along the Rose Avenue side of the building, although the night drop box was allowed to be located in a Main Street window. When Mount Diablo Bank was located at 349 Main Street (now occupied by Tully's), the ATM was installed in the rear of the building. After Mount Diablo Bank left, the ATM was removed and the building wall and landscaping restored to its original condition. Likewise, when Comerica Bank first requested to install the ATM and night deposit box in two large storefront windows along the Main Street and Division Street elevations and to fill in the remainder of the windows (plus a window in the recessed entryway on Main Street) with opaque black panels, staff directed the applicant to relocate the ATM and night box to the Division Street side of the building and as far as feasible from Main Street. The current location complies with staff's direction and would allow all of the storefront windows on Main and Division Streets to be retained (as noted in the "Project Description" above, the Division Street window that would be removed is a non-storefront window measuring 2-feet 10-inches wide by 7-feet tall). A part of the support by staff was the acknowledgement that the window was not originally part of the structure but was added as part of the Phase 1 improvements.

ATMs are a part of the banks that are already Downtown in similar locations and the City has not received complaints, nor has there been an issue with pedestrian versus vehicle conflicts with ATM usage. Furthermore, the installation of an ATM and night deposit box would not detract from the pedestrian-friendliness of Downtown or Division Street in particular as ATM and night deposit boxes are pedestrian-oriented uses. The presence of ATMs Downtown also promotes economic vitality by providing a source of cash for Downtown purchases.

Division Street is currently a one-way street (traffic moving from east to west) with parking on the north side of the street. The Downtown Specific Plan contains the following Transportation Policy:

When Fire Station No. 1 relocates, make Division Street between Main Street and Railroad Avenue a two-way street. Study the configuration of this block of Division Street with the goal of safely establishing two-way traffic in an efficient manner, and determine if on-street parking can be retained.

The installation of the ATM and night deposit box on the Division Street side of the 600 Main Street building would not impact any ability to change Division Street.

Design

Staff worked with the applicant to utilize materials that would be compatible with the historic building. The ATM surround and night deposit box would utilize an antique-finished bronze material to help make them look dated. Staff and the applicant had discussed adding green trim around ATM and night deposit box to match the trim around the building windows, but staff ultimately felt that the ATM and night deposit box would blend in the wall better and be less noticeable without any trim.

Condition No. 4 of the Zoning Administrator's approval of the ATM requires that the replacement siding used to fill in the window opening match the design, material, and color of the existing wood siding at this location on the building. Additionally, to ensure that the replacement siding does not create an outline of the window opening after it is replaced, the condition states that the window opening shall not be replaced with short lengths of wood siding sized to match the window opening; instead, the existing wood siding around the window opening will need to be removed back to an existing joint and replaced with as few pieces as feasible to fill in the window opening.

The installation of the ATM and night deposit box would not remove any original architectural features on this heritage building. The window that would be removed to accommodate the project was a new window installed with the Phase 1 improvements. Condition No. 5 of the Zoning Administrator's approval of the ATM requires that the applicant replace this window with the original window or with a new window matching the original window when the bank leaves the tenant space. The siding that would be removed to accommodate the ATM and night deposit box is new wood siding installed with the Phase 1 improvements as the original siding on this side of the building could not be reused due to rot. The project also complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (of historic buildings) which indicate that:

New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Additionally, since the window and siding were new, there was no need to have this project analyzed by a consultant specializing in cultural resource preservation, such as Architectural Resources Group (ARG) who reviewed the Phase 2 improvements.

Parking

The Municipal Code does not require additional parking for the installation of an ATM or night deposit box and there is no nexus to require parking or the payment of additional in-lieu parking fees for this project.

Signage

The blue Comerica Bank signs shown on the plans are not a part of the current application. A comprehensive sign program for the entire site was required as part of the Phase 2 improvements and the requirement was reiterated in the conditions of approval for the ATM (condition no. 3). The comprehensive sign program has since been submitted to the City and is currently being reviewed by staff.

Pleasanton Downtown Association

On March 18, 2008, the proposed project was reviewed by the Design and Beautification Committee of the Pleasanton Downtown Association (PDA). The plan reviewed by the PDA included a stainless steel ATM and night deposit box located within an approximately eight-foot wide by six-foot tall stainless steel panel along the Division Street side of the building. The PDA supported the proposed location of the ATM and night box. The PDA requested that the stainless steel panel be eliminated and that the amount of stainless steel on the ATM be reduced as feasible. The PDA also recommended that the night box utilize period materials/colors rather than stainless steel. The revised plans comply with the PDA's recommendations.

V. PUBLIC NOTICE

Notices regarding the appeal and related public hearing were mailed to property owners and tenants within 1,000 feet of the subject property. At the writing of this report, staff had not received any responses from the surrounding property owners or tenants regarding the proposed project. Staff did receive a call from Bruce Takens, owner of the Meadowlark Dairy, indicating his opposition to the bank use. Staff notes that a bank is a permitted use for this site. Further, the Downtown Specific Plan strongly encourages retail uses on the ground floor of Main Street buildings and states that "retail" should not only include businesses that are technically classified as retail but also restaurants, personal services, banks, and theaters.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The subject building is not listed in the California Register of Historical Resources, but it is considered eligible for listing in the California Register and, thus, is an “historic resource” as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15604.5. The proposed project would not result in the physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of the historical resource would be materially impaired. Thus, this project would not result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource per Section 15064.5 of CEQA. Furthermore, minor alterations to existing structures involving negligible or no expansion of use are categorically exempt (Section 15301, Class 1) from the requirements of CEQA. Therefore, no environmental document accompanies this report.

VII. CONCLUSION

Over the past several months, staff has worked with the applicant on the location and design of the ATM and night deposit box to ensure they would be attractive and compatible with the heritage Kolln Hardware building. Staff believes that the project meets these objectives and is appropriate.

VIII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission deny PAP-125 thereby upholding the Zoning Administrator's approval of Case PDR-725.

For comments or questions concerning this project, please call: Steve Otto, Associate Planner (phone: 931-5608 or email: sotto@ci.pleasanton.ca.us)