



HISTORIC PRESERVATION MANUAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS REVIEW

Date: **August 6, 2026**

Project: **Thurman's Restaurant, 299 Mercer, Dripping Springs, TX 78620**

Applicant: **Kristin Schieffer**

Historic District: **Hays Street Historic District**

Base Zoning: **Commercial Services**

Proposed Use: **Restaurant on Mercer St**

Submittals: ☒ Current Photograph ☒ Concept Plan ☒ Exterior Elevations
☒ Color & Materials Samples ☐ Sign Permit Application

The following review has been conducted by the City of Dripping Springs to determine compliance and consistency with the City of Dripping Springs CODE OF ORDINANCES, Title 2 BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, Chapter 24, BUILDING REGULATIONS, Article 24.07: HISTORIC PRESERVATION, Section 24.07.014: "CRITERIA FOR ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS."

Project Type & Description:

This project consists of an adaptive reuse, rehabilitation, and renovation of the "Haydon Central Garage" building, which was built in 1937, serving as a Magnolia (Mobil) Gas station and garage. The former Gas station features a combination of petrified wood, fieldstone, and ironstone veneer along its original building elevations, and is a contributing structure to the Mercer St National Register Historic District.

Review Summary, General Findings: **"Approval with Conditions"**

General Compliance Determination- ☒ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ N/A

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Staff Recommendations / Conditions of Approval:

The Mercer St Historic District design guidelines require the preservation of native stone or wood on all walls for 75% of the net square footage area. The applicant will preserve all the existing stone along the building's existing elevations, and is also proposing a new building addition of approximately 2,050 SF, in a Stucco finish.

The portion of the existing building that is adjoining the proposed addition features wood siding. Staff considers that the selection of an alternative material that is more closely aligned with the existing wood siding (for example a wood or cementitious Hardi-plank siding with an elevation and wood grain finish that is compatible with the original wood siding) would be a more appropriate choice than the proposed Stucco, as Stucco is not a material that is consistent with the Historic District Design Guidelines.

In addition, the applicant is proposing to replace several existing windows and doors with new windows and doors. Staff recommends preserving, repairing, and restoring original windows and doors whenever feasible. Any new or replacement windows and doors must be compatible and appropriate with the existing historic building profiles. Since the plans submitted with the COA application remain conceptual, additional review by Staff will be required for these and other items before any approval of building permits.

As such, Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions:

- a. The exterior cladding of all existing elevations must be preserved. Clarify if there will be any repair to the existing rear elevation façade material or if this will remain as-is.**
- b. The final colors and materials palette for the new building addition shall be architecturally compatible with the existing building and comply with established Mercer St Design Standards. These materials shall be reviewed & approved by City Staff prior to issuance of Building Permits.**
- c. The existing historic windows, doors, and trims along the Mercer Street façade shall be preserved and repaired whenever feasible. Any new or replacement window and door materials, trim colors, and details on all the existing and new building elevations shall be reviewed & approved by City Staff prior to the issuance of Building Permits. These new building elements shall be compatible, consistent, and complementary to the building's history.**
- d. Flat roofs may be allowed behind parapets for the proposed building additions per historic districts guidelines; all rooftop equipment shall be screened from view from any adjacent property line, per City Ordinance.**
- e. The proposed wall signs in the COA plans will require variances as these exceed the maximum number of permitted wall signs. The proposed weathervane roof sign and middle pole sign are considered appropriate. However, the second triangular exterior pole sign design is not considered historically appropriate, as it was added sometime after the historically contributing period of the National Register- Listed Mercer Historic District (1855-1945).**

- f. **The proposed storage container needs additional design information and is not a part of this COA. It must be compatible in design and materials with the existing building, and meeting all applicable regulations, codes, and standards.**
- g. **The proposed dumpster shown in the conceptual plan shall be screened from view via an enclosure that will be reviewed for compliance with City Ordinance prior to issuance of City Building permits.**
- h. **The proposed low wall enclosing a portion of the outdoor Mercer patio seating area shall be of a material that is of a consistent color and finish with the proposed trellis canopies and planters on the site for the proposed low wall area.**

Case History / Findings of Fact:

This property is centrally located in the Mercer District, and was historically used as a garage until 1964. The Historic Preservation Commission previously reviewed applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for a restaurant concept named Roxie's at this location.

The current applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the adaptive reuse of the existing building to house Thurman's Steakhouse restaurant. This exterior scope of this project includes the following updates:

- New exterior doors and windows along the existing concrete masonry block portion of the front Mercer St façade
- A new prefabricated aluminum entrance awning and replacement of 3 existing doors (2 man doors and 1 rollup garage door) along the College St façade (2 new doors, and 1 new window)
- New metal planters and prefabricated trellis canopies along the front Mercer St and side College St elevations that are a weathered rust color, inspired by the existing pole sign bases on-site.
- 2 decorative gas station architectural elements along the front Mercer St façade
- New floor to ceiling windows along the rear elevation, which will replace the existing corrugated metal wall and man-door
- New 2,050 SF building addition
- Updated pedestrian access, landscaping, vehicular access/egress, and parking along College St and Mercer St
- New on-site rear lot parking spaces, dumpster area and storage building (details for dumpster and storage building design to be provided prior to obtaining permits)
- Updated signage (weathervane on roof, 2 existing pole signs along Mercer St, and 2 new wall signs on the interior side and rear elevation walls); Staff notes that three variances will be required to exceed the maximum number of wall signs, and a variance will be required to use the pole signs (lost non-conforming status)

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS- Staff Review Summary:

Historic Resource Background /Survey Information:

Mercer Historic Resource Preservation Priority Rating: “High” – This is a contributing structure in the National Register Historic District, as well as a contributing structure in the National Register Listed Historic District.

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Design Standards Consistency: “Mercer Historic District”

Character/Vision: Consistent: “Preserve Historic Resources- Rehab & Adaptive Re-Use; Promote Revitalization. Foster a Community Focal Point.” – This project proposes a sensitive rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of a community focal point at an important intersection in the Mercer District.

Design Principles: Consistent: “Protect Historic Pedestrian Scale & Main Street Character; Promote Walkable Scale & Sidewalk Activity Zones; Provide Pedestrian Shading Devices Along Sidewalk Frontages; New Construction shall be compatible with surroundings.” – This project proposes several planters, shaded canopy seating areas and trellises for outdoor dining along Mercer and College St, reinforcing the pedestrian scale and fostering sidewalk activity.

Preferred Uses: Consistent: “Pedestrian- Oriented.” Outdoor dining contributes to pedestrian activity and Family-friendly uses on Mercer and College St)

Site Planning & Building Placement: Consistent: (Existing) Building Placement not affected. New Additions appear to comply with setbacks (0’ Front & Sides, 10’ Rear).

Parking Arrangement: Consistent: “Parking at rear of lot”. Site plan shows both on-site parking located at the rear of the building, and on-street street parking, which may also count toward required parking in the Mercer District.

Building Footprint / Massing / Scale: Consistent: “The maximum allowable building footprint in the Mercer Street Historic District is 10,000 square feet for a contiguous building footprint, with maximum massing increments of 2,500 square feet.” The existing building (4,281 SF) and proposed addition (2,050 SF) comply with building footprint & massing increments.

Street Frontage / Articulation: Consistent: “Building widths may not exceed forty (40) feet or must include articulation at a maximum of 40-foot increments.” The existing building (with proposed additions) complies with storefront width and articulation requirements.

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Porches: Consistent: “ All primary building entrances along Mercer Street shall be covered by an awning or porch, that will extend across a minimum of 50% of the building façade.” Existing building canopy, with proposed Trellis Patio additions complies with this requirement.

Roofs: Conditional: “ Roofs shall be flat parapets or sloped metal roofs (standing seam or other approved type & finish): Preservation of the existing Building metal roofs complies with standing seam Roof Requirements. Flat Roofs for building additions will comply if they are behind parapets, and rooftop equipment screening requirements shall be reviewed by Staff for compliance prior to building permits being issued.

Materials: Conditional: “Native stone or wood on all walls, and wood porch structures and trims” – While this project does not modify the material of the existing stone siding along the Mercer and College St facades, it does propose a new building addition and several new or replacement windows, trims and doors, which must be reviewed by staff for compliance and compatibility with existing building and district guidelines for materials, prior to building permits being issued.

Color Palette: Conditional: “Muted Earth Tones, full range of colors for exterior doors” – Exterior Color Palette at proposed building additions shall be compatible and consistent with the building’s history. Colors shall be reviewed by Staff at Design Development and comply with Design and Development Standards.

Tree Preservation: Consistent: “Replace trees over 8ft; Preserve heritage trees over 18 ft¹” – No trees will be removed for this project.

Landscape Features: Consistent: “Preserve historic walls, gates, fences, outbuildings, cisterns, and notable landscape features” – Landscaping will be added along Mercer and College St, planters will be a rustic color that is inspired by existing pole signs on site.

CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS **(SECTION 24.07.014)**

(a) STANDARDS & DESIGN GUIDELINES OBSERVED:

Project is guided by applicable Historic Preservation Standards and Design Guidelines.
Conditions in report must be met in order to be compliant.

☒ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable

(b) MINIMAL ALTERATION:

Reasonable efforts made to adapt property requiring minimal alteration of building, structure, object site & environment.

☒ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable

¹ Updated Landscaping and Tree Preservation ordinance requires the preservation of all Heritage trees over 18 ft.

- (c) **ORIGINAL QUALITIES PRESERVED:**
Distinguishing original qualities or characteristics not destroyed. Removal or alteration of historic material or distinguishing architectural features avoided.
- Compliant ☒ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable ☐
- (d) **PERIOD APPROPRIATENESS:**
Buildings, structures, objects, sites recognized as products of their own time. Alterations without historic basis or creating an earlier appearance discouraged.
- ☒ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable
- (e) **CUMULATIVE & ACQUIRED SIGNIFICANCE:**
Cumulative changes with acquired and contributing significance are recognized and respected.
- Conditions in report must be met in order to be compliant.* ☐
- ☐ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable
- (f) **DISTINCTIVE STYLISTIC FEATURES & CRAFTSMANSHIP:**
Distinctive stylistic and characteristic features and examples of skilled craftsmanship are retained where possible.
- ☒ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable
- (g) **DETERIORATED ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES:**
Deteriorated architectural features repaired rather than replaced. Necessary replacements reflect replaced materials. Repair or replacement based on historical evidence not conjecture or material availability.
- Conditions in report must be met in order to be compliant.*
- ☐ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable
- (h) **NON-DAMAGING SURFACE CLEANING METHODS:**
Surface Cleaning Methods prescribed are as gentle as possible. No sandblasting or other damaging cleaning methods.
- Staff to verify compliance during rehabilitation.*
- ☐ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable
- (i) **ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES PRESERVED:**
Reasonable efforts made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by, or adjacent to project.
- ☐ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☒ Not Applicable

- (j) **CONTEMPORARY DESIGN- CONTEXT SENSITIVE & COMPATIBLE:**
Contemporary alterations & additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural material and are compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.
Conditions in report must be met in order to be compliant.

☒ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable

- (k) **RETROVERSION- ESSENTIAL FORM & INTEGRITY UNIMPAIRED:**
Future removal of new additions & alterations will leave the essential form & integrity of building, structure, object or site unimpaired.

☐ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☒ Not Applicable

- (l) **PAINT COLORS- HISTORICAL BASIS:**
Paint colors based on duplications or sustained by historical, physical or pictorial evidence, not conjecture.
Conditions in report must be met in order to be compliant.

☒ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable

- (m) **HISTORIC DISTRICT CONTEXT- OVERALL COMPATIBILITY:**
Construction plans are compatible with surrounding buildings and environment - height, gross volume and proportion.

☒ Compliant ☐ Non-Compliant ☐ Not Applicable

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (SECTION 24.07.015)

- (g) **EXPEDITED PROCESS FOR SMALL PROJECTS: ELIGIBILITY = “Not Eligible”**
Expedited process for small projects (cumulative costs < \$10,000); must be “No” to all:

Building Footprint Expansion/Reduction?	☐ Yes	☒ No
Façade Alterations facing Public Street or ROW?	☒ Yes	☐ No
Color Scheme Modifications? Additional info req'd	☒ Yes	☐ No ☐
Substantive/Harmful Revisions to Historic District?	☐ Yes	☒ No

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Please contact svarvarigos@cityofdrippingsprings.com if you have any questions regarding this review.

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Reviewed By: Sara Varvarigos, AICP, City of Dripping Springs



“Current Conditions, view from Mercer St”. Applicant image 2026 and Google Maps image.

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“Current Conditions, view from College St”. Applicant image, 2026 and Google Maps image.

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“Current Conditions, view from interior/ rear parking lot”. Applicant image, 2026



“Current Conditions, view from Interior Side Elevation. Applicant images,

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Historic Photo. Waits, C. (2003). The Complete History of Dripping Springs And the P.A. Smith Survey.



Historic Resource Survey image. (1988) HHM

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