



HISTORIC PRESERVATION MANUAL CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS REVIEW

Date: **March 30, 2023**

Project: **Stephenson Building, 101 Old Fitzhugh Rd.
Dripping Springs, TX 78620**

Applicant: **City of Dripping Springs c/o Michelle Fischer, City Administrator (512) 858-4725**

Historic District: **Mercer Street Historic District**

Base Zoning: **GUI-HO**

Proposed Use: **Community, Cultural and Civic Uses**

Submittals: Current Photograph Concept Plans Exterior Elevations **Renderings**
 Color & Materials Samples **Photomontage**
 Sign Permit Application (if applicable) **N/A**
 Building Permit Application **N/A**
 Alternative Design Standards (if applicable) **N/A**

The following review has been conducted for 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:

"Rehabilitation, Adaptive Reuse & Addition" Proposed repairs, refurbishment, and improvements to **Stephenson High School (ca. 1939)** a **Contributing Resource** and **High Preservation Priority** in the **Mercer St. National Register Historic District (NRHD)**.

Review Summary, General Findings: **"Approval in Concept Recommended"**

General Compliance Determination- **Compliant** Non-Compliant Incomplete

City of Dripping Springs
P.O. Box 384
Dripping Springs, Texas 78620
512-858-4725

Staff Recommendations / Conditions of Approval:

1. **Approval in Concept:** Architectural Design Development and Construction Documents shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission for consistency with this COA prior to issuance of Building Permits.
2. **Staff Review and Assistance:** Staff review, and assistance is recommended to provide support as needed during discovery process and building rehab, to review found conditions and make supportive recommendations which are consistent with the City’s Historic Preservation Program, goals, and Implementation Manual.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS- Staff Review Summary:

Historic Resource Background /Survey Information:

(Resource #18) Stephenson High School, ca. 1939. Contributing.

“Stephenson High School is a one-story limestone building with a rectangular footprint. It is located behind Dripping Springs Academy off Old Fitzhugh Road and is accessed by a wide curving driveway. The front, or east, elevation has four rectangular windows and an off-center inset entry porch. The building has a large metal hipped roof.

By the 1930s, Dripping Springs Academy was too small to accommodate students in the town and surrounding area. Under the Works Progress Administration (WPA), local laborers built a new building to be opened for the September 1939 school term. It was named for a popular student, Allen J. Stephenson, who died from complications of a broken leg. The building operated as a high school only eleven years when a new school building was completed in 1949. The Stephenson school building continued to serve the student body as an auditorium for graduation ceremonies and other meetings and has served various educational uses since that time. A window was added on the north wall and an entrance door to the superintendent’s office on the south wall. Otherwise, the building is virtually the same as it was originally built. The school building is a contributing resource in the historic district.”

(US Dept. of the Interior / Mercer Street NRHP Registration #13000504- 5/31/15)

“Stephenson Building- Rehabilitation, Adaptive Reuse & Addition:”

This project seeks to adaptive re-use and bring new life to this significant, surviving and contributing historic resource in the heart of Downtown near Mercer St and Old Fitzhugh Rd. The proposed adaptive re-use will rehabilitate and restore the original building to prepare it for a variety of community, cultural and civic uses. An attached new addition of compatible design is needed provide modern facilities, functional spaces, and operational office support for the new uses.

Recognizing the significance and contribution of the original building, the design approach will preserve its character, materials, and unique craftsmanship, and ensure that all work, including alterations, will

City of Dripping Springs
P.O. Box 384
Dripping Springs, Texas 78620
512-858-4725

adhere to the established Historic Preservation Standards and Design Guidelines. The proposed new addition will be consistent the existing historic structure and harmonious in design, with and compatible with the massing, scale, color, materials, and character of the Mercer St. Historic District.

Staff finds the proposed project to be exemplary of the city’s established Historic Preservation Goals, Design Guidelines and Standards and recommends an **“Approval in Concept,”** subject to review of Architectural Design Development and Construction Documents phases by the Historic Preservation Commission as the concepts are more fully developed and detailed **(Condition of Approval #1).**

Due the public ownership, significance, age of the building and its building envelope, and the sensitivity needed in its rehabilitation, it is recommended that Staff be directed to provide support to the Applicant as needed during the rehabilitation and adaptive re-use, to review any newfound conditions and all proposed replacement elements or materials, and make supportive recommendations consistent with the City’s Historic Preservation Program, goals, and Implementation Manual. **(Condition of Approval #2).**

Approval in Concept is recommended, with Conditions of Approval as stated above.

“Mercer Street Design and Development Standards:”

The proposal is found to be consistent with applicable design and development standards (Comparative Summary Below), and “Approval with Conditions” is recommended.

Character/Vision: Consistent: “Preserve Historic Resources- Rehab & Adaptive Re-Use; Promote Revitalization.”

Design Principles: Consistent: “Protect Historic Pedestrian Scale & Main Street Character; New Construction shall be compatible with surroundings.”

Preferred Uses: Consistent: “Pedestrian- Oriented.” Building is walkable to Mercer and Old Fitzhugh.

Site Planning & Building Placement: N/A- (Existing) Building Placement not affected.

Parking Arrangement: N/A- (Existing) Parking Arrangements are not affected.

Building Footprint / Massing / Scale: Consistent: (Existing) Building Footprint preserved; footprint, massing and scale of proposed Addition is compatible with the existing building and surroundings.

Street Frontage / Articulation: Consistent: (Existing) Building Frontage preserved; massing and articulation of proposed Addition complies, is compatible with the existing building and surroundings.

Porches: N/A- Existing Covered Entry to be preserved and enclosed.

Roofs: Consistent: (Existing) Corrugated Metal Roof to be refurbished “in kind,” with new Roof of the proposed Addition to match.

City of Dripping Springs
P.O. Box 384
Dripping Springs, Texas 78620
512-858-4725

Materials: Conditional Approval Recommended. (Existing) Native Limestone Masonry craftsmanship shall be cleaned and refurbished with non-damaging methods as reviewed by City Staff. New materials, details, and replacement elements (e.g., windows & doors, trim, etc) shall be compatible and consistent with the building’s history and reviewed for appropriateness by City Staff. **(Condition of Approval #2).**

Color Palette: Consistent: see Colored Renderings “muted, rustic earth-toned hues.”

Tree Preservation: N/A- No proposed impact to existing trees.

Landscape Features: N/A- no existing landscape features affected.

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.

See detailed summary above. 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

(c) ORIGINAL QUALITIES PRESERVED: “Compliant with Conditions of Approval.”

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.

Compliant Non-Compliant Not Applicable

City of Dripping Springs
P.O. Box 384
Dripping Springs, Texas 78620
512-858-4725

- (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.
 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. *“Compliant with Conditions of Approval.”*
 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.
 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.
 Compliant Non-Compliant Not Applicable
- (m) **HISTORIC DISTRICT CONTEXT- OVERALL COMPATIBILITY:**
Construction plans are compatible with surrounding buildings and environment vis. 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? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Façade Alterations facing Public Street or ROW? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Color Scheme Modifications? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Substantive/Harmful Revisions to Historic District? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |

* * *

Please contact (512) 659-5062 if you have any questions regarding this review.



By: **Keenan E. Smith, AIA**

City of Dripping Springs
P.O. Box 384
Dripping Springs, Texas 78620
512-858-4725