

DATE: March 5, 2024

TO: Town of Los Gatos
Historic Preservation Committee

FROM: Hannah Micallef, Studio KDA

SUBJECT: Letter of Justification: 137-139 N Santa Cruz Ave. (Coup de Thai) Exterior Modifications

This memorandum provides information about the proposed exterior modifications to 137-139 N Santa Cruz Ave., and their conformance to the Town's Commercial Design Guidelines. The building was originally constructed in 1938 as the Peerless Stage Depot. Its distinctive green tiling and scalloped patterning are a great local example of the Art Deco style. Our proposed modifications do not alter any of the historically significant components of the building that were found in our research. The proposed new facade materials are black ceramic tiling, with a thin gold accent band. We are also proposing (2) new decorative sconces, a new awning, and replacing the existing door to the 139 space with a fixed window. The materials are intended to provide an elegant, durable and timeless facade for the business, while also providing a subtle nod to the building's Art Deco style.

Design Intent:

- Provide a single entry to the combined tenant spaces
- Visually unify the two storefronts
- Provide new facade materials that both elevate the pedestrian experience, and respect the history and context of the building's facade.

Summary of Modifications:

- Demolition of (E) wood and glass entry door to 139 storefront
- Installation of (N) fixed window and sill in place of existing door. New window will have a wood frame and match the look of the existing adjacent window
- New awning at 139 storefront to match existing awning at 137 storefront
- Demolition of existing tile at both storefronts
- Installation of new black ceramic tile, and gold accent band to both storefronts. See proposed materials and exterior rendering at sheet A102 of submitted drawings
- Installation of (2) new decorative sconces at 139 storefront. See drawings for locations.
- (N) paint at all existing window frames and entry door.
- **No changes proposed to original green square ceramic tile**

Conformance with Town of Los Gatos Commercial Design Guidelines (C-2, C-2A Subdistrict):

3.1 Basic Design Principles:

Architectural character and detailing shall be sensitive to the historic structures remaining in the CBD

National historic guidelines emphasize that new elements must be compatible with the building's historic features, but also be differentiated in order to preserve the existing building's character. We selected an appropriately scaled, dark neutral rectangular tile for the storefront. It serves as a backdrop to the ornate Art Deco tile and does not compete with the original tile detailing of the overall building. This black tile, with a subtle gold pinstripe detail, alludes to the building's Art Deco styling, but is easily differentiated from the original tile.

Storefronts shall be constructed of high quality materials that are consistent with those historically used in the Town.

Ceramic tile is proposed for the modified storefront, as it is durable and consistent with the materials of the overall building.

Diversity of design shall be encouraged with timeless character sought over trendy architectural styles.

The proposed facade uses black tile and only subtle gold highlights, creating a timeless, elegant and understated look.

3.3 Building Design (C-2A Subdistrict):

3.3.2: Design buildings along North Santa Cruz Avenue and Main Street to be compatible with traditional architectural styles.

(b) Provide architectural details to enhance the interest of facades.

The use of ceramic tile at both the 137 and 139 spaces will unify the two storefronts, and elevate their street presence from the existing tile at 137, and the painted over tile at 139. We are also proposing (2) new exterior sconces to create more interest at the pedestrian level.

3.3.3 Emphasize display windows and storefront entries

3.3.4 Maintain transparent storefronts and public right-of-way walls

We do not propose any changes to the existing large storefront window at the 139 storefront. The existing entry door will be replaced with a fixed window to maximize the connection between the tenant space and pedestrian traffic.

3.3.5 Provide vestibules at building entries

(a) Recess entry doors three to six feet from the facade

The existing recessed entry at 137 is to remain.

3.3.6 Utilize high quality storefront materials

(b) Wood window frames are common in this area and are strongly encouraged

(c) Alternatively, vinyl covered or dark anodized aluminum metal storefront window and door frames are suggested.

The new fixed window at the 139 storefront will have a painted wood frame to match the adjacent window.

3.3.8 Install awnings when weather and sun exposure protection are desired

(a) Fabric awnings are the preferred material.

(b) Fabric awnings should be installed on painted tubular metal frames. End panels returning to the building face are optional.

(e) Relate awning placement to the major architectural elements of the facade.

The proposed awning at 139 is to match the existing awning at 137 (see project photos in submitted plans). The new awning will help to unify the two storefronts and will not cover any of the original green ceramic tile.

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