

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

February 05, 2025

HDRC CASE NO: 2025-007
ADDRESS: 106 E HOUSTON ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 909 (RAND GARAGE), LOT 20
ZONING: D, H, RIO-3
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: Main/Military Plaza Historic District
APPLICANT: Natalie Smith/Weston Urban
OWNER: Natalie Smith/RAND BUILDING LTD
TYPE OF WORK: Signage
APPLICATION RECEIVED: January 08, 2025
60-DAY REVIEW: March 09, 2025
CASE MANAGER: Edward Hall

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install vinyl window graphics to two storefront system segments of the parking garage at 106 E Houston. The proposed graphics will be applied to storefront system segments on the N Main façade. The northern graphic will feature Chick-fil-A branding. The southern graphic will feature Downtown West branding.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 6, Guidelines for Signage

1. General

A. GENERAL

- i. Number and size*—Each building will be allowed one major and two minor signs. Total requested signage should not exceed 50 square feet.
- ii. New signs*—Select the type of sign to be used based on evidence of historic signs or sign attachment parts along the building storefront where possible. Design signs to respect and respond to the character and/or period of the area in which they are being placed. Signs should identify the tenant without creating visual clutter or distracting from building features and historic districts.
- iii. Scale*—Design signage to be in proportion to the facade, respecting the building’s size, scale and mass, height, and rhythms and sizes of window and door openings. Scale signage (in terms of its height and width) to be subordinate to the overall building composition.

B. HISTORIC SIGNS

- i. Preservation*—Preserve historic signs, such as ghost signs or other signs characteristic of the building’s or district’s period of significance, whenever possible.
- ii. Maintenance*—Repair historic signs and replace historic parts in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair.

C. PLACEMENT AND INSTALLATION

- i. Location*—Place signs where historically located and reuse sign attachment parts where they exist. Do not erect signs above the cornice line or uppermost portion of a facade wall, or where they will disfigure or conceal architectural details, window openings, doors, or other significant details.
- ii. Obstruction of historic features*—Avoid obscuring historic building features such as cornices, gables, porches, balconies, or other decorative elements with new signs.
- iii. Damage*—Avoid irreversible damage caused by installing a sign. For example, mount a sign to the mortar rather than the historic masonry.
- iv. Pedestrian orientation*—Orient signs toward the sidewalk to maintain the pedestrian oriented nature of the historic districts.

D. DESIGN

- i. Inappropriate materials*—Do not use plastic, fiberglass, highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read, or other synthetic materials not historically used in the district.
- ii. Appropriate materials*—Construct signs of durable materials used for signs during the period of the building's construction, such as wood, wrought iron, steel, aluminum, and metal grill work.
- iii. Color*—Limit the number of colors used on a sign to three. Select a dark background with light lettering to make signs more legible.
- iv. Typefaces*—Select letter styles and sizes that complement the overall character of the building façade. Avoid hard-to-read or overly intricate styles.

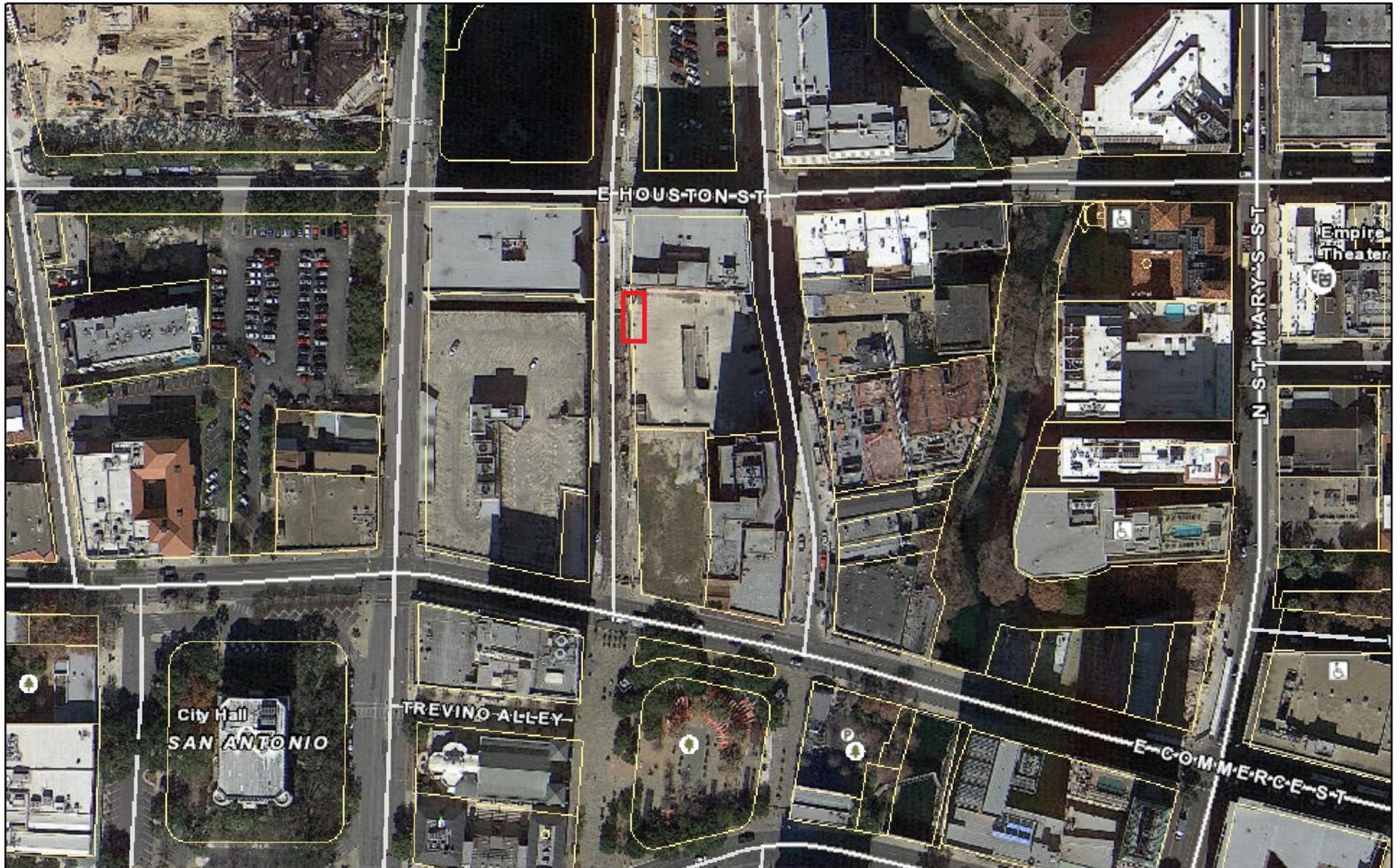
FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install vinyl window graphics to two storefront system segments of the parking garage at 106 E Houston. The proposed graphics will be applied to storefront system segments on the N Main façade. The northern graphic will feature Chick-fil-A branding. The southern graphic will feature Downtown West branding.
- b. ALLOWABLE SIGNAGE – The Unified Development Code recommends one major and two minor signs per application, not to exceed fifty (50) square feet total. Additionally, the UDC notes that signage should be designed to be in proportion to the façade. The Commission may approve additional signage and square footage.
- c. WINDOW GRAPHICS – Staff finds the proposed vinyl window graphics to be appropriate. Staff finds the marketing components of each to be minimal.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval as submitted based on findings a through c.

City of San Antonio One Stop



January 27, 2025

